



**UNIVERSITAT POLITÈCNICA  
DE CATALUNYA  
BARCELONATECH**

# **Approval of the Academic Regulations of the Doctoral School**

**Governing Council Decision CG/2023/09/08, of 19 December  
2023, approving the Academic Regulations of the Doctoral  
School**

**Office of the Vice-Rector for Research**

- A favourable report on this document was issued by the Research Committee on 30 November 2023.



## APPROVAL OF THE ACADEMIC REGULATIONS FOR DOCTORAL STUDIES AT THE UNIVERSITAT POLITÈCNICA DE CATALUNYA

### FACTUAL AND LEGAL BASIS

On 19 July 2023, Royal Decree 576/2023 came into force, amending Royal Decree 99/2011, of 28 January, which regulates official doctoral studies. The new Royal Decree introduces changes aimed at improving the conditions in which doctoral candidates carry out their studies, establishing the requirements that students receive advisory support during their integration into doctoral studies and throughout the thesis preparation process, that they have a personal training plan, that they receive training in open science and that the duration of doctoral studies is adapted to the real needs of students. The Royal Decree also introduces changes related to the supervision and assessment of doctoral studies and with respect to quality assurance.

In addition, the 2025 Roadmap for UPC Open Science, approved by the Governing Council on 5 July 2023, provides for the establishment of an institutional research data management policy and that the Academic Regulations for Doctoral Studies must require the inclusion of a data management plan as part of the research plan that doctoral candidates must submit before the end of their first year of study.

Pursuant to Section 8 of the Regulations on the Organisation and Functions of the Doctoral School, the Doctoral School Board is responsible for proposing to the Governing Council the Academic Regulations for Doctoral Studies and any amendments thereto. On 27 November 2023, the Doctoral School Board approved the proposed Academic Regulations for Doctoral Studies set out below.

Given the above, the Governing Council, in exercising the functions conferred on it through Article 59 of the current statutes and Article 46 of the Organic Law on the University System, adopts the following

### DECISION

**One.** The Academic Regulations for Doctoral Studies approved by Governing Council Decision 130/2016 and amended by Governing Council decisions 117/2017, 21/2018, 37/2018, CG/2019/05/19 and CG/2023/02/11 are hereby repealed.

**Two.** The regulations governing the granting of special doctoral awards, approved by Governing Council Decision CG/2020/01/09, are hereby repealed.

**Three.** The Academic Regulations for Doctoral Studies at the UPC are hereby approved.

Barcelona, 19 December 2023



## Academic Regulations for Doctoral Studies Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya

[Governing Council Decision CG/2023/09/08](#), approving the Academic Regulations for Doctoral Studies, adapted to Royal Decree 576/2023, of 4 July, amending Royal Decree 99/2011, of 28 January, regulating official doctoral studies.

Office of the Vice-Rector for Research



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# Academic Regulations for Doctoral Studies at the UPC

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## Introduction

Organic Law 2/2023, of 22 March, on the University System establishes that official university education is divided into three cycles—bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees—and that the purpose of the latter is to enable students to acquire competencies and skills related to research in a field of scientific, technical, humanistic, artistic or cultural knowledge. The Organic Law also stipulates that doctoral studies must be organised in the manner laid down by the statutes or regulations that govern the organisation and functioning of each university, in accordance with the criteria approved by the Government for the award of doctoral degrees.

Following the approval and entry into force of Royal Decree 99/2011, of 28 January, doctoral studies were regulated independently from other official university degrees and postgraduate studies, and doctoral schools were created, responsible for organising doctoral degrees and activities within the scope of their management role. Since the approval of this Royal Decree, there have been three partial amendments related to the quality and internationalisation of doctoral degrees. With the publication of Royal Decree 576/2023, of 4 July, Royal Decree 99/2011 was once again amended with the aim of introducing changes to improve the conditions under which doctoral candidates carry out their studies. The new decree requires that students receive advisory support during their integration into doctoral studies and throughout the thesis preparation process, that they have a personal training plan, that they receive training in open science and that the duration of doctoral studies be adapted to the real needs of students. The Royal Decree also introduces changes related to the supervision and assessment of doctoral studies and with respect to quality assurance.

Article 34 of the UPC Statutes regulates the Doctoral School and recognises it as an academic unit with specific functions, which are outlined in the Regulations on the Organisation and Functions of the Doctoral School. The Doctoral School also approved its own internal regulations, which regulate matters such as the functions of the doctoral programmes' academic committees and the rights and duties of thesis supervisors and doctoral candidates.

In addition to including the new points mentioned above, these regulations incorporate the guidelines of the Directorate General for Universities, approved by the Board of the Interuniversity Council of Catalonia, and other regulations in force.



They also include provisions of the UPC 2025 Roadmap for Open Science, approved by the Governing Council on 5 July 2023, which provides for the establishment of an institutional research data management policy and that the Academic Regulations for Doctoral Studies must require the inclusion of a data management plan as part of the research plan that doctoral candidates must submit before the end of their first year of study. Finally, the internal regulations stipulate that doctoral candidates must submit and publish the abstract of their thesis in Catalan, in order to comply with the provisions of the 2022–2025 UPC Language Plan.



## 1. Aim

Doctoral studies are the third cycle of official university studies and lead to the acquisition of competencies and skills in high-quality scientific research and the activities involved.

A doctoral degree, the highest academic qualification, is awarded as the result of a candidate having written a doctoral thesis and successfully defended it in front of an examination committee composed of PhD holders.

The aim of these regulations is to regulate doctoral studies at the UPC.

## 2. Scope

The regulations set out in this document apply to doctoral studies offered at the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya (UPC) that have been validated in accordance with the regulations on official university degrees laid down in Royal Decree 99/2011, of 28 January, on official doctoral studies, adapted to the amendments provided for by Royal Decree 576/2023, of 4 July.

## 3. Doctoral studies

### 3.1 Structure

Doctoral studies primarily involve writing a doctoral thesis. The main activity is therefore research, combined with specific and cross-disciplinary training, which may or may not be structured in the form of ECTS credits. The Doctoral School can organise, coordinate and certify cross-disciplinary training activities designed for a specific doctoral programme or a range of them.

Doctoral studies are organised into programmes. A doctoral programme is a set of organised activities that leads to the acquisition of the competencies and skills needed to obtain a doctoral degree.

The programmes aim to provide doctoral candidates with training in various areas and must establish procedures and lines of research for the writing of doctoral theses.

Doctoral studies are completed when candidates have defended their doctoral thesis, which must include original research findings.

### 3.2 Duration

The maximum period of study for full-time doctoral studies is four years, counted from the date of first enrolment in the relevant programme until the date on which the doctoral thesis is deposited. The academic committee of the doctoral programme may authorise a doctoral candidate to pursue doctoral studies on a part-time basis. In this case, the maximum period of study is seven years from the date of first enrolment in the programme until the date on which the doctoral thesis is deposited. To calculate these periods, the date of deposit is considered to be the date on which the thesis is made publicly available for review.

If a doctoral candidate has a degree of disability equal to or greater than 33%, the maximum period of study is six years for full-time students and nine years for part-time students.

For full-time doctoral candidates, the minimum period of study is two years, counted from the date of an applicant's admission to the programme until the date on which the doctoral thesis is deposited; for part-time doctoral candidates it is four years.

When there are justified grounds for doing so, and the thesis supervisor and academic tutor have given their authorisation, doctoral candidates may request that the academic committee of their doctoral programme exempt them from the requirement to complete this minimum period of study.

Temporary disability leave and leave for the birth of a child, adoption or fostering for the purposes of adoption, temporary foster care, risk during pregnancy or infant feeding, gender violence and any other situation provided for in current regulations do not count towards these periods. Students who find themselves in any of these circumstances must notify the academic committee of the doctoral programme, which must inform the Doctoral School.

Doctoral candidates may request periods of temporary withdrawal from the programme for up to a total of two years. Requests must be justified and addressed to the academic committee responsible for the programme, which will decide whether or not to grant the candidate's request.

### 3.3 Extension of studies

If a doctoral candidate has not applied to deposit their thesis before the expiry of the deadlines specified in the previous section, the academic committee of the doctoral programme may, at the request of the doctoral candidate, authorise an extension of this deadline of one year under the conditions specified for the doctoral programme in question.

### 3.4 Consequences of exceeding the time limit for the completion of doctoral studies

Doctoral candidates who exceed the maximum time allowed for completion of doctoral studies according to their mode of study (full- or part-time), and any approved extension, will be dismissed from the doctoral programme. Dismissal from the programme implies that the doctoral candidate cannot continue studying at the UPC and the closing of their academic record.

They may, however, apply for admission to other doctoral programmes at the UPC. Admission to the same doctoral programme may be sought when at least two years have passed since the date of withdrawal. A new research plan must be submitted in both cases.

## 4. Access

As a rule, applicants must hold a Spanish bachelor's degree or equivalent and a Spanish master's degree or equivalent, provided they have completed a minimum of 300 ECTS credits on the two degrees.

Applicants who meet one or more of the following conditions are also eligible for admission:

- a) Holders of official Spanish degrees or equivalent Spanish qualifications, provided they have passed 300 ECTS credits in total and they can prove they have reached Level 3 in the Spanish Qualifications Framework for Higher Education.
- b) Holders of degrees awarded in foreign education systems in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), which do not require homologation, who can prove that they have reached Level 7 in the European Qualifications Framework, provided the degree makes the holder eligible for admission to doctoral studies in the country in which it was awarded.
- c) Holders of degrees awarded in a country that does not belong to the EHEA, which do not require homologation, on the condition that the University is able to verify that the degree is of a level equivalent to that of official university master's degrees in Spain and that it makes the holder eligible for admission to doctoral studies in the country in which it was awarded.
- d) Holders of another doctoral degree.

e) Holders of an official university qualification who, having been awarded a post as a trainee in the entrance examination for specialised medical training, have successfully completed at least two years of training leading to an official degree in a health-sciences specialisation.

## 5. Admission

### 5.1 Admission and selection

The academic committee of the doctoral programme may establish requirements and criteria for the selection and admission of students, which must be specified in the validation report for each doctoral programme. In particular, the backing of a researcher as a possible doctoral thesis supervisor may be required for admission to the programme.

Admission to a doctoral programme may be conditional on the completion of bridging courses.

The admission systems and procedures of each doctoral programme must reserve 5% of the places offered for students with a recognised degree of disability equal to or greater than 33% and for students who have ongoing special educational needs due to personal disability-related circumstances and who have required resources and support in previous courses of study to ensure their full inclusion. In the case of students with special educational needs related to a disability, the programme must ensure adequate support and advisory services, and the need for adaptations must be considered if necessary.

The academic committee of the doctoral programme must ensure that applicants have secured a thesis supervision commitment before they are admitted.

### 5.2 Admission due to change of programme

A doctoral candidate may request a change of programme, in which case, they must apply for readmission. Admission to the new doctoral programme will be decided by the academic committee of the relevant programme, which may require that the student take new bridging courses. The coordinator of the programme the candidate was previously enrolled in must sign a document authorising the change and, if applicable, accept the transfer or cancellation of the doctoral candidate's research plan.



If the change is accepted by the academic committee of the doctoral programme the candidate is switching to, the coordinator of that programme must recognise the candidate's academic record in full or in part.

The doctoral candidate must sign a new activity report and research plan, if the latter has not been recognised, and the commitment agreement referred to in Section 7.4 of these regulations.

When a student is admitted in this way, the academic committee of the programme may exempt them from the requirement to complete the minimum period of study specified in Section 3.2 of these regulations.

### **5.3 Bridging courses**

Depending on a student's previous training, doctoral programme admission processes may include the requirement to successfully complete bridging courses, as specified in the corresponding validation report. Bridging courses may not exceed 60 ECTS credits, and they are based on official postgraduate activities offered by the University.

For the purposes of determining fees and awarding grants and scholarships, bridging courses are treated as doctoral-level training. They must be successfully completed during the initial stage of work on the thesis, within a maximum period of one academic year.

### **5.4 Admission and assignment of a tutor**

An applicant seeking admission to a doctoral programme must submit an application to that programme's academic committee.

In accordance with the admission and selection requirements in effect, the academic committee will propose that the application for admission be accepted or rejected, and if the applicant is admitted, it will assign a tutor.

Admission procedures and information on documents required and deadlines must be made public.

Admission to a doctoral programme will be officially confirmed by a decision issued by the programme coordinator. Unless otherwise specified, admission decisions remain in effect until the end of the next ordinary enrolment period. A decision to admit a doctoral candidate to a programme is a prerequisite for enrolment.

## **6. Enrolment**



## 6.1 Completion of enrolment

A doctoral student is an individual who has been admitted to a doctoral programme and has completed the enrolment process. This status is maintained as long as the student enrolls every year.

Failure to pay the enrolment fee or any of its instalments before the deadlines set by the University entitles the University to temporarily suspend a student's rights and, if applicable, to cancel their enrolment and its attendant effects without the right to a refund.

Paying outstanding enrolment fees on any degree or in any academic year is a condition for enrolment and the issuing of degrees and certificates.

If a candidate has been admitted and does not enrol before the deadline, the admission expires and the candidate must enrol again.

## 6.2 Procedure and calendar

Students must complete their first enrolment at the start of their doctoral degree, preferably within the ordinary enrolment period. If doctoral studies start after the end of the ordinary enrolment period, extraordinary enrolment periods may be opened throughout the academic year.

Subsequent enrolments must be completed within the periods specified in the academic calendar for doctoral studies.

Failure to enrol by the specified deadline will be grounds for exclusion from a doctoral programme, subject to prior notification to the parties concerned and a request to rectify the situation.

# 7. Supervision

## 7.1 Thesis supervisor

The academic committee of the doctoral programme assigns a thesis supervisor to each doctoral candidate when they are admitted or enrol for the first time, taking account of the thesis supervision commitment referred to in the admission decision.

The thesis supervisor must ensure that training activities carried out by the doctoral candidate are coherent and suitable, and that the topic of the candidate's doctoral thesis will have an impact and make a novel contribution to knowledge in the relevant field. The thesis supervisor must also guide the doctoral candidate in planning and, if necessary, tailoring the thesis to any other projects or activities undertaken. The thesis supervisor is generally a UPC professor or researcher who holds a doctoral degree and has proven research experience. This includes PhD-holding staff at associated

bodies (as determined by the Governing Council) and UPC-affiliated research institutes (in accordance with corresponding collaboration and affiliation agreements). When thesis supervisors are UPC staff members, they also act as the doctoral candidate's tutor.

The academic committee of the doctoral programme may approve the appointment of a PhD-holding expert who is not a UPC staff member as the candidate's thesis supervisor. In such cases, a PhD-holding UPC staff member who has proven research experience must also be proposed to act as a co-supervisor, or as the candidate's tutor if one has not been assigned.

For the purposes of this section, proven research experience means having at least one period of research activity recognised by the Spanish National Commission for Research Evaluation, in application of Royal Decree 1086/1989, of 28 August, on the remuneration of university academic staff, or, if research experience cannot be demonstrated in this way, having comparable research merits, according to the criteria published by the Research Assessment Committee, which is responsible for evaluating the research work of teaching and research staff in Catalan public universities for the purpose of awarding additional supplements for research merits.

A thesis supervisor may step down from this role if there are justified reasons (recognised as valid by the committee) for doing so. If this occurs, the academic committee of the doctoral programme must assign the doctoral candidate a new thesis supervisor.

Provided there are justified reasons for doing so, and after hearing any relevant input from the doctoral candidate, the academic committee of the doctoral programme may assign a new thesis supervisor at any time during the period of doctoral study.

## **7.2 Co-supervision**

If there are academic reasons for doing so (an interdisciplinary topic, joint or international programmes, etc.) and the academic committee of the programme so decides, an additional thesis supervisor may be assigned. The additional supervisor must be a PhD holder who meets the same requirements as regards proven research experience. The academic committee may authorise the co-supervision of a thesis by PhD holders who do not meet the requirement for proven research experience.

Supervisors and co-supervisors have the same responsibilities and academic recognition.



The maximum number of supervisors for a doctoral thesis is two: a supervisor and a co-supervisor.

For theses completed under cotutelle or international agreements, and in the case of industrial doctorates, the academic committee of the doctoral programme may request authorisation from the Doctoral School's Standing Committee to appoint a third co-supervisor. This notwithstanding, the maximum number of supervisors belonging to the UPC is two.

In no case may the number of supervisors exceed three.

### **7.3 Full- or part-time study**

Doctoral candidates must decide whether they are going to study full-time or part-time when they are assigned a thesis supervisor, and this decision must be authorised by the doctoral programme committee.

Doctoral candidates' full- or part-time status must be indicated on their commitment agreement, research plan and training plan.

They may apply just once to the academic committee of the programme to change this status before the maximum period of study ends and as long as no extension thereof has been authorised, if they can justify the need for it.

### **7.4 Commitment agreement**

Once a doctoral candidate has been assigned a thesis supervisor, and before the candidate submits a research plan, a commitment agreement will be drawn up. This document will be signed by the director of the Doctoral School, the candidate, the head of the academic committee of the programme, the thesis supervisor, the co-supervisor and the tutor (if there is one). It will include a dispute resolution procedure and cover issues related to intellectual/industrial property rights and confidentiality. Any external company or institution involved will also be included in the commitment agreement.

If any changes are made to the thesis supervision (or co-supervision) arrangements, the commitment agreement must be updated within 10 administrative working days from the day on which the new thesis supervisor is assigned. If, for reasons attributable to the doctoral candidate, a commitment agreement is not drawn up and signed, the candidate's admission and enrolment in the doctoral programme will be cancelled and the candidate will not be entitled to a refund of enrolment fees.

## **8. Follow-up**



## 8.1 Doctoral student activity report

The doctoral student activity report is an individual record of activities carried out by a doctoral candidate. It is used to record all the activities that contribute to the candidate's development.

A doctoral student activity report is generated when a student first enrolls. The doctoral candidate is responsible for keeping this record up to date by providing evidence of training activities that develop research skills and cross-disciplinary competencies. Where appropriate, the thesis supervisor will provide certifications for activities carried out.

The activity report must be regularly reviewed by the student's thesis supervisor and academic tutor and assessed by the academic committee of the doctoral programme using whatever procedure has been agreed internally.

Members of the academic committee of the doctoral programme must be able to consult the activity report at any time.

The University will establish mechanisms so that this document is in electronic format.

## 8.2 Research plan and personal training plan

Each doctoral programme will specify the content of the research plan, which must include at least the following: a review of the state of the art, the research objectives, the methodology to be used, the resources to be employed, a timeline for achieving the objectives, and a data management plan.

The doctoral candidate's personal training plan must include a summary of training activities to be carried out during the doctoral thesis period (courses, seminars, mobility actions, etc.), some of which must be related to open science. This document may be improved and refined with additional details over the course of the programme and must be approved by the candidate's supervisor and tutor.

Within one year of completing their first enrolment, doctoral candidates must prepare a research plan and submit it to the academic committee of the programme. The research plan must be endorsed by the thesis supervisor and academic tutor (if there is one) and may be improved and made more specific over the course of the programme.

## 9. Assessment



## 9.1 Assessment procedure

On an annual basis, by the deadline set in the academic calendar of the doctoral programme for each academic year, the academic committee of the programme assesses each candidate's progress in relation to the doctoral research plan, the activity report, the reports of the supervisor and co-supervisor, and the report of the academic tutor if applicable, according to the criteria established by the committee.

The academic committee of the doctoral programme is responsible for informing doctoral candidates of the deadline and the assessment procedure, and for communicating the assessment results to them within one month of the date of the assessment. Doctoral candidates can check the results in their academic record via the e-Secretaria.

In addition to annual assessments, the research plan and work done must be presented in public and defended before a committee composed of three PhD holders in the manner determined by each academic committee. The reading and public defence take place on the University's or the collaborating entity's premises and may not be carried out by videoconference.

In the event of a negative assessment of a candidate's research plan, the examination committee issues a report specifying the deficiencies to be remedied and the deadline for submitting a new research plan, which may not exceed six months. Candidates will not be required to publicly defend their thesis a second time.

The results of research plan assessments are considered in the annual assessment.

## 9.2 Consequences of assessment

A positive assessment is essential for the doctoral candidate to continue on the programme. If the academic committee identifies significant deficiencies and the result of the assessment is negative, the doctoral candidate must be reassessed within six months. The academic committee of the doctoral programme will issue a report justifying the negative assessment, in which it must indicate the points to be corrected and the time limit for making the changes required. The month of August does not count towards this deadline. If the deficiencies are not remedied and the second assessment is also negative, the academic committee, after hearing the person concerned, will issue a reasoned report and the doctoral candidate will be dismissed from the programme. Any student who does not attend a follow-up meeting without justification will be dismissed from the programme.

Dismissal from the programme implies that doctoral candidates cannot continue studying at the UPC and the closing of their academic record.

They may, however, apply for admission to other doctoral programmes at the UPC. Admission to the same doctoral programme may be sought when at least two years

have passed since the date of withdrawal. In both cases, a new research plan and a new personal training plan must be submitted.

### 9.3 Review of assessment results

Doctoral candidates may appeal against assessment reports issued by their thesis supervisor and/or tutor, or against assessment reports issued by the academic committee of the programme, by submitting a duly substantiated written statement to the relevant academic committee within seven calendar days of the publication of the report. The academic committee must decide on the appeal within 15 administrative working days. Assessment reports issued by an academic committee may be contested by lodging an appeal with the rector.

#### 9.3.1 Dismissal from the doctoral programme

A doctoral candidate may be dismissed from a doctoral programme for the following reasons:

- The doctoral candidate submitting a justified application to withdraw from the programme.
- The doctoral candidate not having completed their annual enrolment or applied for a temporary interruption.
- The doctoral candidate not having formalised annual enrolment on the day after the end of the authorisation to temporarily interrupt or withdraw from the programme.
- The doctoral candidate receiving a negative reassessment after the deadline set by the academic committee of the doctoral programme to remedy the deficiencies that led to a previous negative assessment.
- The doctoral candidate having been the subject of disciplinary proceedings leading to their suspension or permanent exclusion from the UPC.
- A refusal to authorise the extensions applied for, in accordance with the provisions of Section 3.3 of these regulations.
- The doctoral candidate not having submitted the research plan in the period established in Section 8.2 of these regulations.
- The maximum period of study for the doctoral degree having ended, in accordance with the provisions of Section 3.4 of these regulations.

Dismissal from the programme means that the doctoral candidate cannot continue studying at the UPC and that their academic record will be closed. This notwithstanding, they may apply to the academic committee of the programme for readmission, and the committee must reevaluate the candidate in accordance with the criteria established in the regulations.

A doctoral candidate who has been dismissed due to having exceeded the time limit for completing doctoral studies or due to an unsatisfactory assessment may not be

admitted to the same doctoral programme until at least two years have elapsed from the date of dismissal, as provided for in sections 3.4 and 9.2 of these regulations.

## 10. Doctoral theses

### 10.1. Definition

A doctoral thesis is original research carried out by a doctoral candidate and is intended to develop the skills needed to carry out independent R&D work.

A doctoral thesis must include, at minimum, an introduction to the topic of study, the objectives to be achieved, a presentation of the key research carried out, a discussion of the results, the conclusions and a references section. It may also include as many appendices as the doctoral candidate deems appropriate.

The thesis must contain at least two reports issued by PhD-holding experts in the field from outside the University, who may suggest areas for improvement. These experts may be members of the examination committee that will assess the thesis. Depending on the content of these reports, the academic committee will give the doctoral candidate a period of time to respond and make any necessary changes to the thesis before it is deposited.

Candidates may write and defend the thesis in Catalan, Spanish or English. If, for justified reasons, a candidate requests permission to write and/or defend their thesis in another language, the academic committee of the doctoral programme may authorise them to do so.

### 10.2 Article-based theses

Doctoral programmes may have their own regulations regarding the submission of article-based theses. Such regulations must be approved by the Doctoral School's Standing Committee, which must ensure consistency across doctoral programmes. Once these regulations have been approved, a thesis may be submitted as an article-based thesis. It corresponds to the academic committees of the doctoral programmes to authorise the submission of an article-based thesis. If it is authorised, this must be communicated to the Doctoral School's Standing Committee when the thesis is deposited.

In all cases, theses of this type must contain an introduction to the topic of study, the objectives to be achieved, the articles published, a general discussion of the results obtained and the conclusions. They may also include as many appendices as the doctoral candidate deems appropriate.

Articles must be included in a version that allows open publication in public repositories.

The regulations governing article-based theses must address the following points:

- a) Documents to be submitted. Required documents may include a report from the thesis supervisor, a list of articles, copies of the articles, quality indicators, and so on.
- b) Procedure and deadlines.
- c) Measures to ensure that publications submitted as part of the thesis cannot be presented as an integral part of any other thesis.
- d) Measures to ensure that research papers written before the candidate started doctoral studies are not included.
- e) A rule concerning whether papers submitted or accepted at the time of application may be included in an article-based thesis.
- f) Indicators attesting to the quality of the publication. Specifically, for journal articles, the rules should establish a minimum impact factor or a particular quartile. In the case of conference papers, candidates should be required to specify the conferences and cite indicators which demonstrate that the quality of such papers is comparable to that of journal articles.
- g) The rules should include a guide to the preparation of an article-based thesis, which should specify the length (in pages) of the introduction and the content (abstract in English, Catalan and Spanish, justification of the thematic unity of the thesis, discussion of results, conclusions, etc.). The introduction must be accompanied by a copy of the papers published.

### 10.3 Theses containing confidential material

In the case of industrial doctorates, or where companies or other entities have been involved in the development of the thesis and a confidentiality agreement has been signed, procedures must be established to ensure that all persons who have access to confidential information—whether as a result of their participation on the academic committee of the doctoral programme, as an examiner or as an external expert—are aware of these agreements and undertake in writing not to disseminate the information. These persons must maintain absolute confidentiality regarding the content of the thesis and sign a confidentiality agreement to this effect.

It is the responsibility of the thesis supervisor to inform the programme coordinator of any confidentiality agreements in effect. The programme coordinator is in turn responsible for activating confidentiality protocols in assessment and review processes and for safeguarding the signed confidentiality agreements.



In addition, in the above cases, or where patents may be generated in relation to the content of the doctoral thesis, a special procedure may be requested for the deposit and defence of the thesis to ensure that aspects identified as confidential are not made public.

The doctoral candidate must expressly request that the academic committee of the programme apply this procedure, before the deposit and in the manner stipulated by the committee. The application must include the following documents:

- a) A report from the candidate's thesis supervisor justifying the activation of the confidentiality protocol.
- b) Originals or certified copies of documents certifying that the thesis is subject to confidentiality agreements, or a report on the patentability of the results of the thesis issued by the Innovation Management Service of the UPC.

The application will be approved only if it is demonstrated that secrecy is absolutely essential for the success of the protection or transfer process.

If the deposit of a doctoral thesis subject to confidentiality restrictions is authorised, the doctoral candidate must provide the academic committee of the doctoral programme with a full copy of the thesis and an encrypted copy that allows readers to get an idea of the research work carried out. Therefore, only those elements vital to the protection or transfer of the results should be encrypted.

Both the academic committee of the programme and the Standing Committee may require the doctoral candidate to modify the content or format of the encrypted copy of the doctoral thesis and to provide any supporting documents that they deem necessary to review the application or the deposit.

When the deposit of a doctoral thesis subject to this procedure is announced, the Doctoral School will inform the university community that the thesis is being treated as confidential. PhD holders who wish to consult the encrypted thesis on deposit must request access in writing. If a PhD holder wants or needs access to the full text of the doctoral thesis, they must submit a reasoned request to the Doctoral School's Standing Committee, which will forward the request to the thesis supervisor for comment before deciding on it. Anyone granted access to the full text of the doctoral thesis will be expressly informed that the thesis is subject to a protection or transfer process and that they have an obligation to strictly maintain the secrecy and confidentiality of its content. To this end, anyone who has access to the doctoral thesis must first sign a confidentiality agreement and submit it to the Doctoral School. The





full unencrypted text must always be consulted in person at the Doctoral School, during normal opening hours. Theses may not be viewed online.

The announcement of the doctoral thesis defence will indicate that the thesis is subject to a confidentiality agreement. The defence of theses subject to confidentiality measures will be conducted in two parts: a public session and one conducted behind closed doors. The latter part will be attended only by the candidate and the examiners, who must have signed the relevant confidentiality clause when they agreed to serve on the examination committee.

#### **10.4 Temporary embargo**

In exceptional circumstances, such as the participation of companies in the writing of the thesis, the existence of confidentiality agreements with companies, the eminent publication of a work stemming from the thesis or the possibility of generating patents related to the content of the doctoral thesis, the doctoral candidate may request that the publication and archiving of the doctoral thesis in the institutional repositories be deferred a maximum of 24 months from the date of the defence of the doctoral thesis.

Requests for a temporary embargo, approved by the thesis supervisor, must be submitted by the doctoral candidate to the programme's academic committee, which will forward the request to the Doctoral School. The Doctoral School's Standing Committee will decide on the embargo request after examining the supporting documentation submitted and the reports of the academic committee and the thesis supervisors. Requests should preferably be submitted together with the candidate's application to deposit the thesis.

### **11. Authorisation of the thesis deposit**

When previous assessments have been satisfactory and the thesis is considered complete and ready for public defence, the doctoral candidate will begin the process of applying to deposit their thesis.

Before undertaking this process, the doctoral candidate may request the following, if they have not already done so:

- The International Doctorate mention.
- The Industrial Doctorate mention.
- The submission of an article-based thesis.
- The application of protection processes and/or confidentiality agreements.
- A temporary embargo on the dissemination of the thesis.

The thesis supervisor will write a report stating the reasons why the thesis is considered to be of sufficient quality, and this report must be submitted to the programme's academic committee for approval to proceed with the defence. The report must be ratified by all co-supervisors and by the tutor, if one has been assigned. If the supervisor changes or a new one is added, the thesis may not be deposited until a year after the change or addition. If the appointment of a new supervisor is for reasons not attributable to the doctoral candidate, the academic committee of the doctoral programme may authorise the deposit of the doctoral thesis before the end of this period.

The academic committee of the programme must validate the quality of the thesis in order to authorise its deposit and request reports from two or more PhD holders from outside the programme and the UPC. These experts must be specialists in the field of the thesis. They may suggest improvements and may act as examiners on the committee that will assess the thesis. Based on the content of these reports, the academic committee will give the doctoral candidate a period of time to respond and make any necessary changes to the thesis before it is deposited.

Once the changes indicated in these comments have been made, the academic committee will validate the thesis based on quality indicators that are internationally recognised in the relevant field of study.

When it authorises the thesis deposit, the academic committee of the doctoral programme will provide the Doctoral School's Standing Committee with a prioritised list of five or seven proposed examiners. Three or five of those proposed will serve as committee members and the other two as substitutes. The majority of proposed examiners must be external to the University and to the doctoral programme.

## 12. Deposit

Once the academic committee of the doctoral programme has approved the deposit of a doctoral thesis, the doctoral candidate must enrol for the thesis defence.

The doctoral programme's administrative unit will request that the doctoral candidate provide the information required to complete their enrolment and deposit application.

If the thesis is to be defended within the framework of a cotutelle agreement, the deposit application must specify whether the defence will take place at the UPC or at the partner university. Theses defended at a partner university must also be deposited at the UPC.



Once the documentation has been received and validated by the Doctoral School, the doctoral thesis deposit period will commence. Identifying details and an abstract will be published on the Doctoral School website. The academic committee of the programme, with the assistance of the administrative unit, will disseminate this information among the teaching and research staff of the unit or units responsible for the programme.

The doctoral thesis dissemination period will last 10 administrative working days, counted from the day the deposit is announced. During this period, PhD holders may ask to consult or comment on the content of the doctoral thesis by writing to the Standing Committee of the Doctoral School, following the procedure established by the Standing Committee. If authorisation to consult the thesis is given, the applicant must accept and sign a confidentiality agreement in which they undertake not to disseminate information related to the thesis, during the period established, or the full or partial content of the thesis by any means. If any claims are submitted, the Doctoral School must communicate them to the doctoral candidate, the thesis supervisor and the academic committee of the programme. The academic committee will have five administrative working days to inform the Doctoral School of its position on the content of the claim and whether it will allow the thesis defence to go forward or, on the contrary, it must be suspended.

### **13. Authorisation of the thesis defence and appointment of the examination committee**

Once the 10 administrative working days of the deposit period have elapsed with no observations having been put forward, or any observations that have been put forward have been dealt with, the Doctoral School's Standing Committee will authorise the thesis defence, announce it on the Doctoral School website and validate the examination committee so that the rector, or the person this task is delegated to, can appoint the chair, secretary and members of the examination committee in accordance with the prioritised list put forward by the academic committee. Comments made during the deposit process must be addressed within 15 administrative working days.

The thesis defence must take place within three months of the date on which it is authorised, except in the case of theses completed under a cotutelle arrangement, in which case the deadline may be six months, or in cases of justified force majeure, which must be approved by the Doctoral School's Standing Committee. Once this period has ended, if the defence has not taken place, the thesis must be enrolled and deposited again in accordance with the standard procedure.

Examiners must provide a brief curriculum vitae, which may be published, and meet the following requirements:

- i. They must be PhD holders who are recognised in their field and have proven research experience, as established in Section 7.1 of these regulations for thesis supervisors.
- ii. The majority of members must be external to the programme and to the UPC, and to the participating universities in the case of interuniversity doctoral programmes.
- iii. The doctoral thesis supervisors and the tutor may not act as examiners, except in the case of theses presented within the framework of cotutelle agreements with foreign universities that provide for such an arrangement.
- iv. Persons attached to the collaborating entities that have been responsible for training or research placements completed by the doctoral candidate during their studies may not act as examiners.

Steps should be taken to encourage balanced representation of women and men on examination committees.

Honorary doctoral degrees, or doctoral degrees that were not awarded for the preparation and public defence of a doctoral thesis, do not qualify their holders to serve on an examination committee.

For the purpose of calculations related to point (ii) above, the attachment of academic staff to their home university will be considered even if they are not currently in active employment at that institution.

In the exceptional event that any examiner is a co-author of a publication arising from the thesis, the academic committee will ensure that their participation on the committee is fully justified.

The academic committee of the programme will provide the examination committee with the following information and documents, at least 10 administrative working days before the thesis defence date:

- i. The notification of their appointment to the committee.
- ii. The proposed date, time and place of the defence.
- iii. An electronic copy of the thesis (the same version that has been deposited at the Doctoral School), so that they can assess it.
- iv. The doctoral student activity document, which is not given a quantitative mark but does provide a basis for qualitative assessment that complements the

assessment of the doctoral thesis.

- v. The reports from external experts and the doctoral candidate's response, if applicable.
- vi. The notification that the thesis is subject to confidentiality protocols, if applicable.

## 14. Actions of the examination committee

The programme coordinator, or the programme's administrative unit on their behalf, will officially summon the doctoral candidate and all the members of the examination committee (including the substitutes) to the thesis defence, and will also inform the Doctoral School and the rest of the members of the academic committee of the doctoral programme at least 10 administrative working days in advance. This information, together with the composition of the examination committee, is published on the Doctoral School's website.

Once the defence has been convened, the chair of the examination committee must take steps to ensure that any examiners who resign from the committee or are unable to attend the defence are replaced by substitutes. If they cannot be substituted from among the members of the committee appointed, the academic committee of the programme must submit a new prioritised proposal for the committee's composition to the Standing Committee.

If, on the day set for the public defence of the thesis, any of the members do not attend, the substitutes must be included in the committee. If this is not possible, the chair must suspend the defence and set another date that must have been agreed by the committee members, the doctoral candidate and the academic committee of the programme. The Doctoral School must be notified of this change. In the case of examination committees with five members, if it is not possible to incorporate substitutes, the chair may reduce the number of members to three, provided the majority are external members. In no case may a thesis defence be conducted with fewer than three examination committee members.

At any time up to immediately before the defence and public presentation of the thesis, the Doctoral School's Standing Committee may suspend the procedure due to serious unforeseen circumstances. If it is necessary to take this step, the suspension of the thesis defence must be communicated to the chair of the examination committee, the doctoral candidate and the academic committee of the programme.

## 15. Public defence of the thesis

The academic committee must ensure that mechanisms are in place for hosting the thesis defence on its own premises or in other UPC facilities. If the defence is to take place outside the UPC, the academic committee must submit an application to the Doctoral School's Standing Committee giving details of the proposed venue and guaranteeing that it complies with these regulations and the assessment procedures.

The thesis defence must take place in a public session on a teaching day.

The academic committee may establish mechanisms to enable the chair and members of the examination committee to participate by videoconference, provided that the room in which the defence is held has the necessary equipment and meets technical conditions required to ensure a good connection. In any event, the secretary of the chair and the doctoral candidate must be physically present at the thesis defence.

Similarly, the academic committee of the doctoral programme may decide for each thesis defence whether the public may attend via videoconference in addition to attending in person at the venue where the defence is held. In both cases, it is the responsibility of the secretary of the examination committee to set up and moderate the online session.

### 15.1 Reading and defence

The defence consists of the doctoral candidate's presentation of the research conducted, the methodology used, the content of the thesis and the conclusions drawn. Specific mention must be made of original contributions.

In particular cases, the academic committee of the doctoral programme may take measures to ensure that aspects of the thesis liable to be patented are not disclosed during the defence, as laid out in Section 10.3.

Based on the candidate's presentation, examiners may ask any questions and request clarification as they deem appropriate. Any PhD holder present at the defence may also ask questions at the time and in the manner indicated by the chair of the examination committee.

### 15.2. Assessment

Once the defence and discussion of the thesis ends, the examination committee deliberates and issues a written, reasoned assessment report on the thesis using the Doctoral School's standard form. The assessment report must allow examiners to express individual opinions (with supporting arguments).

Lastly, the examination committee will award the final mark it deems most appropriate: Fail, Pass, Good or Excellent. This mark will be recorded in the doctoral thesis assessment results, which must be signed by the committee's secretary.

Before adjourning the session, the chair of the examination committee will verbally communicate the mark awarded to the doctoral candidate and to the rest of the people present. The secretary of the examination committee will submit all documents related to the assessment of the thesis, together with the doctoral thesis assessment results, to the Doctoral School. This can be delegated to the staff of the administrative unit of the doctoral programme or the coordinator, or they can be sent by registered post (as long as the sender is the secretary of the committee).

The doctoral candidate may request full certified copies of the doctoral thesis assessment results and the reasoned report.

### **15.3 *Cum laude* distinction**

When a candidate is awarded a mark of Excellent, the examination committee may award a *cum laude* distinction. The award of this distinction requires a unanimous vote by secret ballot. The academic committee must ensure that secrecy is properly maintained during voting. Votes will be counted in a separate session by the Doctoral School's Standing Committee following the established procedure.

### **15.4 Filing a doctoral thesis**

To enhance the visibility of theses and increase the citation impact of their authors, once a doctoral thesis has received a positive assessment it will be published in the UPC's open-access repository for doctoral theses (UPCommons) and in the repository for Catalan universities (TDX).

To this end, the author must sign a document containing a declaration of authorship and provisions related to the regulation of rights and any other authorisations required for the dissemination of the thesis. The administrative unit will provide these documents to the doctoral candidate when the thesis is deposited.

If the thesis contains any confidential material, or if the author has signed a contract or undertaking with a publication to which they are transferring the copyright, it will be published in the TDX repository when the thesis protection or copyright transfer process ends.



The Doctoral School must send a copy in electronic format, along with any additional information required, to the Ministry of Universities for publication in a national repository managed by the General Secretariat for Universities.

If errors are detected in the copy of the thesis, or the examination committee believes changes should be made based on its recommendations or those made by other PhD holders during the public defence of the thesis, the secretary of the examination committee will draw up a report to this effect, make note of this on the official thesis defence record and send the signed original of the report to the Doctoral School. The Doctoral School will attach the report drawn up by the secretary to the copy of the thesis held in the repository.

## 16. Doctoral degrees

### 16.1 Issuing of degree certificates

Any candidate who has successfully completed doctoral studies may be awarded a doctoral degree, the name of which is indicated in the Register of Universities, Centres and Qualifications (RUCT). The doctoral degree certificate issued is an official qualification that is recognised throughout Spain.

A doctoral degree certificate is issued at the request of the person concerned and upon payment of the corresponding fee.

### 16.2 International Doctorate mention

The doctoral degree certificate may include the International Doctorate mention on the front. In this case, the doctoral candidate must meet the following requirements:

- i. During the period of training leading to the award of the doctoral degree, the doctoral candidate must have completed one or more placements outside Spain, with a total duration of at least three months, at one or more higher education institutions or recognised research centres, with the aim of complementing and deepening their research training. If the doctoral candidate has completed multiple placements, at least one must have a minimum duration of one month. The stays and activities carried out must be endorsed by the thesis supervisor and authorised by the academic committee of the programme. The candidate must provide a certifying document issued by the person responsible for the research group of the body or bodies where the stay or activity was completed. This information will be added to the doctoral student's activity report.

- ii. Part of the thesis (at least the abstract and conclusions) must be written and presented in one of the languages commonly used for science communication in the relevant field of knowledge, which must not be an official language of Spain. This rule does not apply to stays and reports in Spanish or to experts from Spanish-speaking countries.
- iii. At least two of the experts who wrote the thesis reports referred to in Section 10.1 must be attached to a non-Spanish university or research institute. These persons must not be the researchers who received the doctoral candidate and acted as tutors or exercised supervisory functions at the host institution.
- iv. The thesis examination committee must have included at least one PhD-holding expert from a higher education or research institution outside Spain who was not responsible for the candidate's stay abroad described in point (i) above.
- v. The thesis defence must have taken place on UPC premises or, in the case of joint programmes, at the location specified in the collaboration agreement.

### **16.3 Industrial Doctorate mention**

1. An Industrial Doctorate mention is awarded when doctoral studies have been carried out with the collaboration of the social and economic fabric to promote collaboration and the transfer and exchange of knowledge between the academic world and the social and economic world, whether public or private. An Industrial Doctorate mention may be awarded if the following conditions are met:

- i. The thesis involved carrying out a research project of industrial, commercial, social or cultural interest for an entity, public or private company, or public administrative body. Universities, public research organisations (national or regional) and university hospitals are excluded. Exceptionally, the studies may have been carried out at any of these institutions, except universities, provided that the content of the thesis is highly application-oriented. The direct relationship between the doctoral thesis and the work carried out by the doctoral candidate in the entity or company must be formally documented in a scientific-technical report, which must be approved by the University.
- ii. An agreement on the academic development of the doctoral thesis must have been signed between the entity, company or public administrative body and the University. At a minimum, this agreement must define the obligations of the parties and include provisions relating to any industrial property rights that may be generated.
- iii. The candidate must have been employed by the institution, company or public



administrative body where they carried out the research project for at least one year during the development of the thesis, and a substantial part of the thesis work must have been carried out at the institution, company or public administrative body.

2. Each doctoral candidate will have a thesis tutor appointed by the University and a supervisor appointed by the entity, company or public administrative body, who may, where appropriate, act as the thesis supervisor. Under no circumstances may the company-appointed supervisor be a member of the thesis examination committee.

The agreement in effect must regulate the process for selecting the doctoral candidate.

## 17. Special doctoral awards

The Doctoral School will announce a call for applications for special doctoral awards during the second semester of each academic year.

The call will be approved by the Doctoral School's Standing Committee, and the conditions that apply must include at least the following:

1. The call is open to doctoral degree holders who have obtained a *cum laude* distinction for the defence of their thesis in the academic year specified in the call.
2. A maximum of one special award may be given for every 10 theses (or fraction thereof) defended in each of the Doctoral School's areas of study. In exceptional cases, the Doctoral School's Standing Committee may decide to give a higher number of awards in one or more areas, provided that the maximum of one proposed special award for every 10 doctoral theses or fraction thereof defended at the UPC as a whole is not exceeded.
3. The awards will be judged by a specific jury for each area of knowledge. Each jury will be composed of five members and two substitutes, all of whom must be PhD holders with proven research experience.
4. The final decision concerning the awards will be taken by the Doctoral School's Standing Committee and ratified by the UPC's Governing Council.

## 18. International cotutelle doctorates, joint programmes and collaboration agreements



## 18.1 Cotutelle agreements

In order to encourage and facilitate internationalisation, doctoral theses may be completed within the framework of international cotutelle agreements in accordance with the provisions of this section. In such cases, the front of the degree certificate issued will include a statement that the thesis was written under a cotutelle agreement and the name of the other university involved, provided that the following requirements are met:

- a) The thesis must be supervised by PhD holders from two or more universities, one of which must be the UPC and the others foreign universities, under a cotutelle agreement between the participating universities.
- b) The doctoral candidate must obtain two or more degrees for their doctoral thesis, one from each of the higher education institutions responsible for the development of the thesis.
- c) During the period of training leading to the award of a doctoral degree, the doctoral candidate must have spent at least six months doing research work at each of the institutions with which the cotutelle agreement was concluded, in one or more periods. The periods spent at these institutions and the activities carried out must be specified in the cotutelle agreement.
- d) Candidates who complete their thesis within the framework of a cotutelle agreement may also be entitled to have an International Doctorate mention added to their doctoral degree certificate if they spend periods of research or study at institutions other than those involved in the relevant agreement, as stipulated in paragraph (a) above, and provided that the conditions set out in Section 16.2 are met.

The purpose of cotutelle agreements is to establish the conditions for the awarding of doctoral degrees by the signatory universities.

Joint and cotutelle doctoral programmes are governed by the agreements between the participating institutions and by these regulations. Notwithstanding this, in order to adapt to the regulations and procedures of the other university, cotutelle agreements may regulate specific aspects of organisation related to enrolment procedures, the composition of examination committees and the deposit and defence of the thesis at the universities, as well as other specific aspects. Specific cotutelle agreements must comply with national regulations.

The agreements must be written in at least one of the official languages at the UPC or in English, a language recognised by the international scientific community.

As a rule—except in the case of cotutelles stemming from joint, collaboration and mobility programmes signed by the UPC that establish other directives—doctoral candidates must enrol the doctoral thesis every year and pay the corresponding administrative and academic fees for supervision, tutoring and continuous assessment, in addition to the fees for the thesis deposit and the issuing of the degree certificate.

Under a cotutelle agreement, thesis examination committees must follow these general principles:

- i. The committee must include at least one member appointed by the UPC.
- ii. The university at which the defence takes place will bear the associated costs, unless the agreement provides otherwise.
- iii. If contradictions arise between the regulations of the participating universities, the procedures and the mark awarded by the university hosting the defence may be accepted, provided that the following conditions are met:
  - a) The members from the UPC and the participating universities are in the minority.
  - b) All of the members are PhD holders.
  - c) The cotutelle agreement specifies the equivalence of the assessment systems of the two institutions or, in the case of systems that cannot be deemed to be equivalent, the correlation procedure for awarding the mark.

Before the rector signs the agreement, it must have the approval of the following:

- i. The academic committee of the corresponding doctoral programme.
- ii. The promoting unit of the corresponding doctoral programme.
- iii. The thesis supervisor.

## 18.2 Interuniversity doctoral programmes

In accordance with its research and doctoral training strategy, the University may establish joint doctoral programmes with other universities. In order to set up such programmes, the participating universities must conclude collaboration agreements that specify the distribution of academic, organisational and financial responsibilities.

Doctoral candidates must enrol at the university to which the thesis supervisor, or tutor if applicable, is attached. These academic regulations apply to candidates who enrolled at the UPC, without prejudice to any additional conditions regarding admission and assessment laid down in the collaboration agreement governing the university programme.

### **18.3 International joint doctoral programmes**

International joint doctoral programmes lead to the award of a joint degree issued by the universities participating in each programme. For joint programmes, the regulations specific to each programme will apply.

### **18.4 Collaboration on doctoral theses (research placements at companies or entities)**

A collaboration agreement to develop a doctoral thesis may be concluded with any public or private organisation, centre, institution or body involved in R&D activities and interested in such a collaboration. Such agreements must establish the terms of the collaboration, whether it is carried out at the company's or organisation's premises or at the UPC's premises.

### **18.5 Mobility (research placements at universities)**

For a candidate to undertake doctoral research at another university, a learning agreement must be concluded to regulate the candidate's research placement so that it can be recognised as part of their doctoral thesis work.

### **18.6 Agreements governing external academic placements**

Under UPC regulations on external academic placements, placements of this kind may be undertaken to promote the acquisition of skills that enhance the employability of UPC doctoral candidates and develop their entrepreneurial capacity. Placements must be completed within the framework of an educational cooperation agreement.

## **19. Appeals system**

Candidates may appeal against decisions taken by the academic committees of the doctoral programmes, examination committees and the Doctoral School's Standing Committee. Appeals must be lodged with the rector within one month of notification or publication of the decision in question, in accordance with general regulations for common administrative procedures. Decisions taken by the rector exhaust administrative remedies and may be appealed by lodging an application for judicial review before an administrative court.

## **20. First transitional provision. Doctoral candidates who started their studies before 19 July 2023**

For doctoral candidates who first enrolled for thesis tutorials in a doctoral programme before the entry into force (on 19 July 2023) of Royal Decree 576/2023, of 4 July, the maximum duration of full-time doctoral studies is three years and the maximum duration of part-time doctoral studies is five years. Students may apply to the academic committee of the doctoral programme for an extension of one or two years, respectively. In exceptional cases, they may request an extension of one additional year in both modes of study.

In addition, the academic committee of the doctoral programme may exempt these candidates from the requirement to submit two external reports before depositing their thesis, as provided for in Section 10.1 of these regulations, provided that the thesis is deposited before the end of the 2023-2024 academic year.

Candidates who enrolled for the first time before 19 July 2023 will also be exempt from the requirement to submit a training plan and a data management plan.

## 21. First repealing provision

The Academic Regulations for Doctoral Studies approved by Governing Council Decision 130/2016 and amended by Governing Council decisions 117/2017, 21/2018, 37/2018, CG/2019/05/19 and CG/2023/02/11 are hereby repealed.

## 22. Second repealing provision

The regulations governing the granting of special doctoral awards, approved by Governing Council Decision CG/2020/01/09, of 27 February 2020, are hereby repealed.

## 23. First final provision. Authorisation for the deployment of these regulations

The Doctoral School's Standing Committee is responsible for establishing rules and procedures on the deployment of these regulations within its area of competence.

## 24. Second final provision. Entry into force

These regulations come into force the day after their approval by the Governing Council.