

Resolution no. 67/2014 of the Governing Council of 10/04/2014, whereby the academic Regulations on doctoral courses at the University of Lleida were passed

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Preamble

Pursuant to Organic Law 6/2001, of 21 December, on universities, amended by Organic Law 4/2007, of 12 April, and by Royal Decree Law 14/2012, of 20 April, university courses are divided into three cycles: bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees. Doctoral courses, which belong to the third cycle, lead to an official doctoral degree, which is valid throughout Spain.

Royal Decree 99/2011, of 28 January (Official State Journal of 10 February), which regulates official doctoral courses, stipulates that doctoral schools, pursuant to the university legislation in force, are responsible, within the scope of their powers, for running doctoral courses and activities inherent to them.

The Governing Council of the University of Lleida approved the creation of the Doctoral School of the University of Lleida at a meeting held on 30 March 2011, as set out in Resolution 63/2011.

The Doctoral School of the University of Lleida was created pursuant to Order ECO/180/2013, of 19 July (Official Journal of the Government of Catalonia of 2 August).

One of the main aims of the Doctoral School of the University of Lleida is to promote doctoral degrees and make them closer to the structure of international research programmes and more relevant to society so that greater contributions can be made to the big challenges facing us today.

The Doctoral School of the University of Lleida is responsible for standardising doctoral degrees and developing a new legal framework for doctoral courses, in addition to organising and planning them, and monitoring the students who take them, who under the provisions of the new decree hold the status of trainee researchers.

Chapter I. Doctoral courses

Article 1. Definition and objectives

- 1.1 Doctoral courses, which belong to the third cycle, lead to an official doctoral degree that is valid throughout Spain.
- 1.2 The aim of the doctoral courses taught at the University of Lleida is ensure that trainee researchers become top quality scientific researchers able to bring about the transformation of society through innovation.
- 1.3 Doctoral courses are governed by the provisions set out in Royal Decree 99/2011, of 28 January (Official State Journal of 10 February), amended by Royal Decree 534/2013, of 12 July (Official State Journal of 13 July); Organic Law 6/2001, of 21 December, on universities, amended by Organic Law 4/2007, of 12 April; and by these regulations and any additional ones that may come into force.
- 1.4 Doctoral courses at the UdL are divided into doctoral programmes. Each doctoral programme must have an academic committee, chaired by the programme coordinator.
- 1.5 Each doctoral programme is made up of a set of training activities, which are not awarded credits from the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). By the time they have completed a programme, students will have acquired the competencies and skills required to obtain a doctoral degree.

Chapter II. Doctoral programmes

Article 2. Organisation of doctoral courses

- 2.1 The research and training activities at the Doctoral School are taught through the doctoral programmes taught there.
- 2.2 The learning activities involved in the assignments completed by trainee researchers at the Doctoral School fall into two types: transferable and specific.
- 2.3 The transferable competencies taught enable the trainee researchers to acquire the skills they need to join the job market.
- 2.4 The specific competencies taught must be set out in each of the doctoral programmes run by the Doctoral School, as they are restricted to each field of specialisation.

Article 3. Organisation of doctoral programmes

- 3.1 The UdL runs UdL-specific and inter-university programmes. The latter are organised jointly with other universities through specific agreements entered into for this purpose.
- 3.2 Each doctoral programme must have an academic committee, which is responsible for the content, update, quality and coordination of the programmes, as well as for monitoring the progress of the research projects and academic workload of the trainee researchers. The committees are chaired by the coordinator, who supervises and coordinates her/his doctoral programme, and ensures its objectives are coherent and are met. The coordinator must also supervise all information relating to the lines of research.

- 3.3 The academic committee of any given doctoral programmes is made up of the programme coordinator, three PhD holders who are working on the research lines proposed by the programme coordinator for the programme, and a trainee researcher from the doctoral programme selected by the committee.
- 3.4 The academic committee is chaired by the doctoral programme coordinator and has an academic secretary, who is appointed by the committee from amongst its members.
- 3.5 The coordinator of a doctoral programme at the UdL is appointed and removed by the rector. Proposals must be put forward in a report drawn up by the Steering Committee of the Doctoral School.
- 3.6 The coordinator of an inter-university doctoral programme is appointed by mutual agreement between the rectors of the participating universities. Should a coordinator belong to the UdL, the proposal must be upheld through a report drawn up by the Steering Committee of the Doctoral School. Should the coordinator not belong to the UdL, the rector must appoint a coordinator to represent the University on the academic programme of the inter-university doctoral programme.
- 3.7 The functions of the coordinator are set out in article 16.5 if the internal Regulations of the Doctoral School of the UdL.

Article 4. Tutors

- 4.1 Tutors must ensure that all academic matters that affect the preparation, submission and defence of doctoral theses are properly carried out, and that the trainee researchers interact with their programme's academic committee.
- 4.2 The academic committee of any given doctoral programme assigns tutors to the trainee researchers and, whenever required on justified grounds, it may change the tutors assigned.

Article 5. Supervisors

- 5.1 The functions of doctoral thesis supervisors are set out in article 19.5 of the internal Regulations of the Doctoral School of the UdL.
- 5.2 The academic committee of a doctoral programme must appoint a doctoral thesis supervisor within a maximum deadline of six months following the enrolment of trainee researchers on the programme.
- 5.3 If the thesis supervisor is a member of the UdL's teaching or research staff and belongs to a doctoral programme, she/he may also act a tutor.
- 5.4 Once a supervisor has been assigned, she/he, the tutor, if applicable, and the trainee researcher must sign the commitment to best practices (doctoral charter).
- 5.5 At the proposal of the academic committee of a doctoral programme, a thesis supervisor or trainee researcher, an application may be made to change a thesis supervisor up until the time prior to its submission. Applications must be submitted in writing with reasons given for the change and they must be approved by the academic committee of the doctoral programme in question.
- 5.6 If a change in thesis supervisor involves a change to another doctoral programme, the procedure set out in article 11 of these regulations must be followed.
- 5.7 Following a change in thesis supervisor, a new doctoral charter must be signed to make the commitment to best research practices firm.

Article 6. Trainee researchers

- 6.1 Anyone who has been admitted to a doctoral programme managed by the Doctoral School of the UdL and who has enrolled for it is considered to be a trainee researcher, or doctoral student.
- 6.2 The rights and obligations of the trainee researchers are set out in articles 21 and 22 of the internal Regulations of the Doctoral School of the UdL.

Chapter III. Access, admission and completion of doctoral courses

Article 7. Access requirements for doctoral courses

- 7.1 To access doctoral courses, candidates must hold an official Spanish bachelor's degree, or equivalent, and a university master's degree.
- 7.2 People in any of the following circumstances will also be admitted:
 - 7.2.1. Holders of an official Spanish university qualification, or from any other country that belongs to the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) that entitles them to join a master's degree in accordance with the provisions set out in article 16 of Royal Decree 1393/2007, of 29 October, and who have passed at least 300 ECTS credits in their university studies overall, of which at least 60 must be of master's degree level.

- 7.2.2 Holders of official Spanish bachelor's degrees that are only awarded if at least 300 ECTS credits have been passed, in compliance with EU laws. Such candidates must mandatorily take a bridging course, unless the curriculum of the degree course they passed included research training credits equivalent to the weighting of those awarded on a master's degree course.
- 7.2.3 Holders of a university qualification who, subsequent to obtaining a place on a specialised course in the health sciences by passing the entrance examination, have successfully passed at least two years of a training programme to obtain any of the official qualifications in the health sciences specialisations.
- 7.2.4 Holders of a degree obtained in education systems abroad, which will not be subject to homologation if the UdL is able to verify that the degree in question has been accredited to a level equivalent to a Spanish master's degree and that it entitles students from the issuing country to access doctoral courses. Under no circumstances will such admissions be subject to the homologation of the degree held by the interested party or its recognition other than for the purposes of joining a doctoral course.
- 7.2.5 Holders of another doctoral degree obtained in accordance with the above university regulations.
- 7.2.6 Degree holders, architects and engineers who hold a diploma of advanced studies, obtained pursuant to the provisions of Royal Decree 778/1998, of 30 April, or who have obtained the research proficiency certificate regulated by Royal Decree 185/1985, of 23 January, as provided for in the second additional provision of Royal Decree 99/2011, of 28 January.
- 7.2.7 Holders of 300 ECTS credits, or the equivalent, who have subsequently passed 32 credits on doctoral programmes regulated by Royal Decree 185/1985, of 23 January, or 32 credits on doctoral programmes regulated by Royal Decree 778/1998, of 30 April, may directly access doctoral courses.
- 7.2.8 Holders of an official Spanish degree, or a diploma in a technical subject or architecture obtained in the education system prior to the official introduction of the European Higher Education Area, providing their admission is approved by the academic committee of the doctoral programme and it considers that they fulfil the access requirements set out in article 6.2a of Royal Decree 99/2000, of 28 January, which regulates doctoral courses.

Such admissions approved by the academic committees of doctoral programmes will only be valid for accessing a doctoral programme. Under no circumstances will they imply the recognition of credits from master's degree courses or the award of a master's degree.

- 7.3 For the purposes of calculating credits, 1 LRU credit (awarded before the introduction of ECTS credits) is equivalent to 1 ECTS credit.
- 7.4 Should the course documentation provided by students not show the number of LRU credits (1 credit = 10 teaching hours) or ECTS credits (1 credit = 25 hours of total workload) the following validations will be awarded:
- Three-year diploma course = 180 ECTS credits
 - Three-year diploma course in a technical subject = 180 ECTS credits
 - Three-year bachelor's degree course = 180 ECTS credits
 - Two-year second cycle course in a technical subject = 120 ECTS credits
 - Four-year bachelor's degree course = 240 ECTS credits
 - Four-year degree course/course in a technical subject = 240 ECTS credits
 - Five-year (or more) degree course/course in a technical subject = 300 ECTS credits
 - One-year master's or postgraduate degree that entitles holders to access a doctoral course in the issuing country = 60 ECTS credits
 - Two-year master's or postgraduate degree that entitles holders to access a doctoral course in the issuing country = 120 ECTS credits

Article 8. Access to doctoral programmes

- 8.1 To join a doctoral programme, trainee researchers must have been admitted by its academic committee.
- 8.2 To gain admittance to a programme, candidates must submit an application to its academic committee in accordance with the procedure established for doing so.
- 8.3 The academic committee of any given programme may set additional access requirements for the admission of trainee researchers on its programme.

Article 9. Admissions procedure on doctoral programmes

- 9.1 Applications for admission must include the preferred research line on which the doctoral thesis will be written. Applications must be sent to the Doctoral Section with the documentation required for the admissions pathway chosen, including the documents that prove that a candidate fulfils the admissions requirements.
- 9.2 Candidates who hold a master's degree qualification issued by a foreign institution of higher education must apply for the equivalence of their qualification in order to be able to access a doctoral programme. This application for the equivalence of a qualification is screened by the director of the Doctoral School and is not valid unless the fee set in the price table of the Government of Catalonia has been paid.

- 9.3 Documents issued abroad must be official, original copies issued by the competent authorities, and they must have been legalised through diplomatic channels. This procedure must be processed in each of the following organisations in the order given below:
1. Ministry of Education in the country of origin for academic qualifications and certificates, and the corresponding ministry in the case of birth and nationality certificates.
 2. Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the country in which the documents were issued.
 3. The embassy or consulate in Spain of the country in which the documents were issued.

All documents issued by foreign embassies or consulates must be legalised by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

For the legalisation of documents from signatory countries to the Hague Convention, of 5 October, the above requirements are substituted for an apostille affixed to them by the competent authority in the country in which they were issued.

Documentation from countries that belong to the European Union is not subject to legalisation, unless there are doubts about its authenticity, legitimacy or official nature.

The required documents must be accompanied by a sworn translation into Spanish if they are written in another language. Sworn translations may be done:

- By any embassy or consulate of Spain abroad.
- By any embassy or consulate in Spain of the country of which the applicant is a subject or, if applicable, in which the document was issued.
- By duly authorised or registered sworn translators in Spain.

The original documents must be submitted with a photocopy, and will be returned to applicants once the procedure for proving their authenticity has been completed.

If the photocopies have been compared with the originals and legalised by a Spanish embassy or consulate in the country of issue or before a notary, it is not necessary to submit the original copies.

- 9.4 The Doctoral Section will check that all administrative requirements have been met and will send the admissions document, with a report about the applicant's academic period to the doctoral programme's coordinator.
- 9.5 The coordinator of the doctoral programme will process the admissions application with the Doctoral Section once it has been accepted and signed by the assigned tutor and the required bridging course passed, if applicable. An indication will also be given of whether a trainee researcher is to be taken on a full-time or part-time basis.
- 9.6 In the case that a candidate is accepted, the Doctoral Section will notify her/him and give instructions on the next steps to be taken, which are as follows:
- 9.6.1. Enrolment for academic supervision.
 - 9.6.2. Submission of the research programme during the first year of supervision, which must be approved by the academic committee of the doctoral programme.
- 9.7 Should an application be rejected, the Doctoral School will notify the interested party with instructions on any appeals that may be lodged and the grounds for the rejection.
- 9.8 Applications that have been accepted shall only be valid for two academic years running: the year in which the candidate was admitted and the following year. Failure to enrol for academic supervision during these two academic years will render admissions null and void.

Article 10. Change of research line on the same doctoral programme

- 10.1 Trainee researchers may apply for a change of research line on the same doctoral programme.
- 10.2 The interested party must submit an application to the doctoral programme coordinator, as well as a favourable report from the heads of the initial and final research lines.

Article 11. Change of doctoral programme

- 11.1 Trainee researchers may apply to change doctoral programme.
- 11.2 The interested party must apply for admission on the corresponding new doctoral programme, as well as provide a favourable report from the coordinator of the doctoral programme she/he wishes to leave.

Article 12. Enrolment for academic supervision

- 12.1 Trainee researchers must enrol for academic supervision every academic year while their doctoral courses last.
- 12.2 Enrolment for academic supervision on the second year may not be registered unless the academic committee of the doctoral programme has approved the research programme submitted in the previous academic year.
- 12.3 Applications for enrolment must be submitted together with all supporting documentation to the Doctoral Section, in accordance with the following procedure:

- 12.3.1 The enrolment application form for the doctoral programme in question must be filled in.
- 12.3.2 It must be sent to the Doctoral Section for the enrolment to be completed along with all of the required documentation.
- 12.3.3 Students who are entitled to free enrolment or a discount on the fee must submit the document that provides proof of the exemption or discount given.
- 12.3.4 The fee for teaching aids, the obligatory student insurance and any services taken out must be paid in full at the time of enrolment.
- 12.4 Enrolments will not be deemed to have been completed until paid in full. If trainee researchers fail to register their enrolments in any given academic year, they will be subject to the retroactive payment of the corresponding fees. Failure to enrol for academic supervision during two academic years running will entail definitive withdrawal from the doctoral programme.
- 12.5 The Government of Catalonia sets and approves the fees of academic services at public universities in Catalonia annually by virtue of a decree, which establishes that the failure to pay enrolment fees, of any of their instalments, will give rise to the temporary suspension of the trainee researcher concerned until the end of the academic year. The suspension becomes definitive at the end of this period. In such cases, enrolments are cancelled and shall not entitle trainees to any refund whatsoever. The UdL demands payment for any academic supervision pending enrolment from previous academic years if a trainee has not officially de-registered from a doctoral course.
- 12.6 Student insurance is mandatory for any trainee researchers under the age of 28.
- Foreign trainee researchers who are 28 or older must submit the original and a copy of a health and accident insurance policy that is valid throughout Spain.
- 12.7 The total withdrawal of an enrolment may be applied for if a tutor has given a favourable report to do so. The approval of such withdrawals does not imply that the enrolment fees will be refunded.

Article 13. Duration of doctoral courses Academic progress regulations

- 13.1 Duration of full-time courses
Doctoral courses last for a maximum of three years to be counted from the date on which a trainee researcher enrolls until the submission and defence of the doctoral thesis.
- Should this three-year term elapse without an application to submit a thesis having been made, the academic committee responsible for the programme may grant a further one-year extension on this term that, under exceptional circumstances, may be extended for an additional year, under the conditions established by the corresponding doctoral programme.
- 13.2 Duration of part-time courses
The academic committee of a doctoral programme may authorise trainees to complete a doctoral course on a part-time basis. In such cases, courses will last for five years to be counted from the first year in which a trainee researcher enrolls until the submission and defence of the doctoral thesis.
- Should this five-year term elapse without an application to submit a thesis having been made, the academic committee responsible for the programme may grant a further two-year extension on this term that, under exceptional circumstances, may be extended for an additional year, under the conditions established by the corresponding doctoral programme.
- 13.3 For the purposes of calculating the above periods, sick leave, maternity leave or any other leave provided for under current legislation will not be counted, providing the relevant paperwork and supporting documentation have been submitted, and a favourable decision handed down.
- 13.4 Trainee researchers may apply for temporary de-registration from a programme whenever situations arise such as a work-related disability, risk during pregnancy, maternity leave, paternity leave, adoption or fostering, and risk during the lactation period.
- In such cases, trainee researchers may apply for the time allowed to complete the doctoral thesis to be suspended and must provide a certificate or accreditation of when their leave started and ended in order to do so. These applications must be submitted with all the supporting paperwork to the academic committee responsible for the programme, which must then hand down a decision on whether to accept a trainee researcher's application.
- Extensions on the time allowed to complete a thesis must be processed when the last enrolment for academic supervision is submitted.

Article 14. Definitive de-registration

- 14.1 The following are grounds for definitive de-registration:
- 14.1.1 The interested party has applied for definitive de-registration from a programme.
- 14.1.2 The term for meeting academic progress requirements has come to an end and, if applicable, the corresponding extensions.
- 14.1.3 The rejection of an extension.

14.1.4 The failure to enrol for thesis supervision over two academic years running without having applied for temporary de-registration from a doctoral programme.

14.1.5 The non-payment of enrolment fees.

14.1.6 The failure to submit a research programme within the set deadline.

14.1.7 The rejection following the award of a definitive fail mark in the assessment of the research programme by the academic committee of the doctoral programme, as provided for in chapter IV of these regulations.

14.2 The definitive de-registration from a programme means a trainee can no longer attend it and the academic record of the trainee will be closed.

However, such trainee researchers may subsequently reapply for admission on a doctoral programme at the UdL.

Article 15. Transfer of academic records

15.1 The transfer of academic records to another university is subject to the following procedure:

- a signed application expressly asking for the change to another university must be submitted by the interested party
- a copy of the firm offer of a place at the other university must be submitted
- the payment of the transfer fee to the UdL

15.2 The transfer of the academic record of a person who has started a doctoral course at another university but wishes to continue the doctorate at the UdL is subject to the following procedure:

- application for admission to the doctoral programme at the UdL as described in these regulations
- the payment of the transfer fees to the university where the doctoral course was started
- enrolment for the doctoral programme as described in these regulations

Chapter IV. Research programme and doctoral training log

Article 16. Research programme

16.1 This is a document that must be submitted by trainee researchers in the first year that they enrol for a doctoral degree.

16.2 This programme, which must be signed by the thesis supervisor and tutor, must contain:

- the provisional title of the doctoral thesis
- a full description of its objectives
- the study materials and methods
- a work plan with an indication of the anticipated schedule

16.3 A pass mark in the assessment of the research programme entitles trainees to enrol for the second year of thesis supervision.

16.4 A fail mark, grounds for which must be given, means that trainee researchers must submit a new programme, which will be assessed within six months to be counted from date of the first assessment.

16.5 A second fail mark will mean the definitive de-registration of trainee researchers from a doctoral programme.

16.6 The workload of doctoral thesis supervisors is described in the Time Commitment Plan for Teaching Staff.

16.7 Theses may have more than one supervisor if there are academic grounds that justify this, with the approval of the academic committee of the doctoral programme in question, in the following cases:

- joint supervision with an experienced supervisor
- doctoral thesis involving interdisciplinary fields
- theses with joint tutors
- theses that are written with contributions from other universities or research centres
- other special cases that must be assessed

All supervisors have the same responsibilities.

Article 17. Doctoral training log of trainee researchers

17.1 Trainee researchers who have enrolled for a doctoral programme must report the activities they carry out in a system established by the UdL. This information will be used to prepare an individual record of each trainee researcher's activities.

17.2 The trainee researchers must enter the following information in this application:

- publications
- stays at other universities and research centres
- contributions to research projects
- attendance at congresses
- attendance on courses and seminars
- attendance at conferences and workshops
- patents
- other contributions made directly related to the research carried out as a result of writing the thesis

Article 18. Thesis supervisor's report

- 18.1 Thesis supervisors must write an annual report for submission to the academic of the doctoral programme.
- 18.2 This report is confidential and should enable the academic committee to assess the progress of the trainee researchers in the research they carry out in the second and subsequent years while they are writing their thesis.
- 18.3 The report should assess such aspects as:
- courses and training activities
 - stays at other universities and research centres
 - attendance at congresses
 - submission of conference presentations
 - submission of papers to journals
 - fulfilment of the work schedule
 - progress made in research

Article 19. Report by the academic committees of doctoral programmes

- 19.1 The academic committee of a doctoral programme must assess the research programme and the training log in the first year.
- 19.2 Until the thesis is completed, an annual assessment must be made on the trainee researcher's training log.
- This annual assessment must be made between the months of June and September, depending on what the academic committee of a doctoral programme decides to this regard.
- 19.3 In the case of serious disagreements during the different stages of the doctoral degree, the general procedure in place at the UdL must be followed for conflict resolution to which doctoral courses are subject.

Chapter V. Doctoral thesis

Article 20. Submission

- 20.1. A doctoral thesis consists of an original piece of research on a subject related to the field of science, technology or art inherent to any given doctoral programme.
- 20.2 Theses may be submitted providing trainee researchers have passed the assessments to which their research programme is subject.
- 20.3 Thesis supervisors must approve the submission of doctoral theses in a document signed by them. If a thesis supervisor is a person from outside the UdL, the UdL tutor must also submit a report.
- 20.4. Trainee researchers must enrol for the defence of their doctoral theses before they submit the final version.
- 20.5 The thesis must be written in Catalan, Spanish, English or French, or in one of the languages commonly used in scientific writing in the field of knowledge.
- 20.6 A full version of all theses must also be submitted in electronic format (PDF file or similar), and digitally signed using any of the digital certificates accepted by the UdL. Alternatively, a printed version may be handed in accompanied by the electronic version.
- This copy of the thesis must be numbered and should give readers a general idea of the research carried out. It will only be necessary to encrypt information that is essential to ensure the protection or transfer of results.
- 20.7 At least the following information must appear on the cover or first page of a thesis:
- "University of Lleida"
 - title of the doctoral thesis
 - name and surname of the author
 - name of the doctoral programme
 - name and surname of the thesis supervisor, or supervisors, if applicable
 - name and surname of the tutor, if applicable
 - year in which the thesis is submitted
- 20.8 The thesis must include an abstract in Catalan, Spanish or English and, if considered appropriate, any other language.
- 20.9 Trainee researchers must hand in the following to the Doctoral Section:
- the application, addressed to the doctoral programme coordinator, asking for authorisation to register their doctoral thesis
 - a copy of the doctoral thesis, as described in article 20.6
 - the documentation required for an international doctoral degree, if the option for this mention has been chosen (see article 29)
 - the documentation required for a thesis submitted as academic papers, if this the format chosen for submission (see article 28)

- the thesis data sheet required for its mandatory publication in the UdL repository, the TDX repository and the TESEO database.

- 20.10. Thesis supervisors must hand in the following to the Doctoral Section:
- the report issued by individual supervisors on the suitability of a thesis
 - the report issued by individual tutors on the suitability of a thesis
 - the proposal of the five people who are to be the panel, of whom three must be regular members and two must be substitute members, signed by the thesis supervisor with the approval of the tutor, if applicable
 - the two reports issued by evaluators from outside the UdL
 - the documents that accredit that a thesis is subject to protection or knowledge and technology transfer processes, if applicable

Chapter VI. Doctoral thesis defence procedures

Article 21. Review

- 21.1 The Doctoral Section will review the documentation and the thesis submitted to ascertain whether all administrative requirements have been met as set out in the regulations.
- 21.2 Should the Doctoral Section observe that the documentation does not fulfil requirements or that documents are missing, the trainee researcher in question will be required to amend or provide the missing documents within two calendar days, as well as giving notification that failure to do so will be understood to mean that the application will be withdrawn once a final decision has been handed down to this regard.
- 21.3 If all of the documentation is found to be in order following review, the Doctoral Section will send it to the academic committee of the doctoral programme in question.
- 21.4 The academic committee of the doctoral programme must decide whether the thesis submitted meets the academic requirements necessary to authorise its defence.
- 21.5. If the academic committee of a doctoral programme considers that a thesis is not up to the required standard for the doctoral programme, it will be returned to the trainee researcher with a report with observations that should be taken into account to meet standards.

Once changes have been made, the academic committee of the doctoral programme will reassess the thesis and decide whether or not to authorise its defence.

Article 22. Panel

- 22.1 At the meeting held whereby a trainee researcher is given the go-ahead to start processing the paperwork for thesis defence, the academic committee of the doctoral programme must also review the proposal of the three regular members and two substitute members of the panel who are to grade the thesis.
- 22.2. In this proposal, which will have been approved by the Steering Committee, reasons must be given why the people proposed to assess the content of thesis are suitable. The academic committees of the doctoral programmes appoint the members of the panel on the basis of their curricula.
- 22.3 The panel is chaired by the member of the highest academic rank and, if members are of equal status, by the member with greatest seniority.
- Of the regular members, one, and only one, must be from the University of Lleida, pursuant to the general criteria set out in article 14 of Royal Decree 99/2011. The UdL member may act as secretary or as chair.
- Of the two substitute members, one must be from the UdL and the other from outside the UdL.
- 22.4 The thesis supervisor may not form part of the panel, with the exception of theses submitted in the framework of bilateral joint supervision agreements with foreign universities that have such provisions in place.
- 22.5 If the option for an international mention in a doctoral degree has been taken, the provisions set out in article 29 of these regulations must be taken into account.
- 22.6. If a thesis is submitted as academic papers, the provisions set out in article 28 of these regulations must be taken into account.

Article 23. Registration of doctoral theses

- 23.1 Once a thesis has been accepted by the academic committee of a doctoral programme, the copy of the doctoral thesis will be held for 10 calendar days by the UdL's Office of the General Secretary. Registration must be notified through any media that ensures maximum disclosure. In any event, this disclosure will also be posted on the Doctoral School's website, which means that the academic committee of a doctoral programme must send all details required to the director of the Doctoral School.
- 23.2 During this period, the thesis may be consulted by any PhD holder, who may address the academic committee of the doctoral programme in writing to express any considerations they deem fit. In such cases, the Standing Committee of the Steering Committee will take any decisions it deems fit, once the thesis supervisor, the

academic committee of the doctoral programme and any experts considered suitable have had their say on the matter.

Article 24. Doctoral thesis defence authorisation

- 24.1 Once the time has elapsed for arguments to be put forward against a thesis, or once they have been resolved by the Standing Committee of the Steering Committee, the academic committee of the doctoral programme will authorise thesis defence and will notify the interested party, the thesis supervisor, or the tutor if the supervisor is from outside the UdL, so that the latter is able to send a copy of the doctoral thesis to each of the members of the panel. The defence must take place within a maximum deadline of five months to be counted from the time of a thesis' approval by the academic committee of the doctoral programme in question.
- 24.2 If there is good reason to defend a thesis outside of the UdL, the Standing Committee of the Steering Committee must give its express permission to do so.
- 24.3 The academic committee of the doctoral programme must send the Doctoral Section the names and personal details of the members of the panel so that it can notify them of their appointment to grade the thesis defence.
- 24.4 The thesis defence must be held on a teaching day.
- 24.5 The member of the panel who belongs to the UdL, following the approval of the panel's chair, if applicable, must notify the academic committee of the doctoral programme of when the thesis defence will take place at least 15 calendar days before it is held.
- 24.6 The academic committee of the doctoral programme must immediately notify the Doctoral Section of the scheduled date for the thesis defence so that it is able to publicise it accordingly, as well as issue any documentation required for the defence.

Article 25. Assessment of doctoral theses

- 25.1 The defence and assessment of a doctoral thesis must take place at a single session divided into two parts.

In the first part, which is open to the public, the defence takes place. This consists of the trainee researchers giving an oral presentation of their thesis to the members of the panel. PhD holders attending the session may ask any questions at the time and in the way specified by the panel's chair.

In the second part, which is not open to the public, the panel assesses the thesis, and issues a report and the overall grade awarded to the thesis based on the following scale: fail, pass, good and excellent.

The panel may propose that a thesis be awarded a *cum laude* distinction if the overall grade is excellent and if the secret votes cast to decide on this matter are unanimous.

- 25.2 The votes on the award of this distinction must be cast in a separate session to the doctoral thesis defence session.

The vote count must take place after the thesis defence session, at the Doctoral Section, in the presence of the vice-rector for Research or the director of the Doctoral School.

Minutes must be taken of the votes cast and it must be stated whether or not the *cum laude* distinction has been awarded, following a re-count of the votes. These minutes must be attached to the remainder of the documentation relating to the defence so that the provisional doctoral degree certificate can be issued.

Article 26. Theses subject to confidentiality agreements

- 26.1 Whenever a thesis is subject to confidentiality agreement or if it possible that patents could come out of the content of a thesis, the author must submit a written document explaining this situation at the time the copy of the thesis is handed in to the academic committee of the doctoral programme.
- 26.2 A copy of the agreement signed with a business or institution must be submitted in which it must be specifically stated that the contents of the doctoral thesis must be treated as confidential.
- 26.3 The members of the academic committee of the doctoral programme to which the author belongs are duty-bound to maintain strict confidentiality on the content of the doctoral thesis and they must sign the corresponding confidentiality agreements, in which the length of time confidentiality is to be kept must be stated. These signed agreements must be kept in the safekeeping of the secretary of the academic committee of the doctoral programme in question. The trainee researcher may ask for a copy.
- 26.4 If the people who review a thesis do not form part of the panel proposed for its defence, they must also sign a confidentiality agreement before the review process, and must return a copy on paper to the author, if it was issued in this format, once the corresponding review report has been issued.
- 26.5 Express notification must be given to the members of the panel that grade a doctoral thesis defence of the circumstances surrounding such a thesis. They must have access to the complete version of the thesis and are obliged not to disclose its content and maintain it in the strictest confidence, which is why they must sign a confidentiality agreement, and they must return the copy on paper to the author on the day of the defence, if it has been issued to them in this format.

Article 27. Digital publication

- 27.1. Once a doctoral thesis has been approved, the University of Lleida takes responsibility for adding it in electronic format to the UdL's open access repository and to the institutional repository for registering theses that have been defended and given a pass mark by the universities in Catalonia's university system (TDX, www.tdx.cat), pursuant to the resolution adopted by the Inter-university Council of Catalonia at its meeting on 6 October 2011. To this end, the author of such a thesis must hand in a signed authorisation so that it can be published.
- 27.2. If parts of a thesis are confidential or if the author has signed an agreement with a publisher to which the copyright has been transferred, the publication of the thesis on the TDX will be carried out once the process of thesis protection has come to an end or the period of copyright transfer to a publisher has expired.

Article 28. Theses submitted as papers

- 28.1 At the time such a doctoral thesis is submitted, it must contain at least four papers, of which at least two must have been published or accepted.

Proof of such must be submitted with the thesis that the academic committee of the doctoral programme is to review.

- 28.2 Only papers published less than four years before the submission of a thesis will be accepted, in which the trainee researcher must be the first or second author.

Of the articles published or accepted, at least two must have been published in journals that occupy relevant positions (quartiles 1, 2 and 3) in the science or social science editions of the *Journal Citation Reports*. Likewise, journals will be accepted that occupy the same quartiles on the portal SCImago Journal & Country Rank according to subject category, as well as journals found on databases such as the Science Citation Index (SCI), Social Science Citation Index (SSCI), Arts & Humanities Citation Index (A&HCI), Scopus and the Carhus plus lists (A or B).

A document must be submitted to the thesis supervisor describing the status of each of the papers (published or accepted) and the impact index of each of the papers that form part of the thesis.

- 28.3 Papers that have co-first authorship may not form part of a doctoral thesis.

In the case of co-authorship, the trainee researcher must provide a document signed by the other authors of a paper in which the following appears:

- a declaration stating that the paper has not been included in any other doctoral thesis
- an authorisation from the co-authors who are not PhD holders for the trainee researcher to include it in her/his thesis

- 28.4 The thesis must include:

1. An abstract of no longer than one page in Catalan, Spanish, English or any other language, if considered appropriate.
2. Introduction to the subject matter of the research and the objectives it intends to achieve.
3. A brief description of the methodology used.
4. Published or accepted papers that make up the thesis.
5. General discussion of the results.
6. Conclusions.
7. Bibliography.

- 28.5 The requirements for supervision, registration, the appointment of the panel and the defence of the thesis are generally the same as those established for a standard thesis.

- 28.6 Co-authors of papers may not form part of the panel chosen to grade the thesis defence examination.

They may likewise not be chosen as external evaluators of a thesis.

Article 29. International mentions in doctoral degrees

An international mention may be included on the back of a doctoral degree certificate, providing the following requirements are met:

- 29.1 That while trainee researchers have been enrolled for thesis supervision, they must have completed at stay of at least three months doing research work outside of Spain at an institution of higher education or a research centre that has been recognised by the UdL. The stay and the research work must be endorsed by the thesis supervisor and authorised by the academic committee of the doctoral programme, and they must be included in the trainee researcher's training log.
- 29.2 Stays in the trainee researcher's usual country of residence will not count towards an international mention. However, in the case of such a stay it must appear in the training log.
- 29.3 That the doctoral thesis, or part of it (at least the abstract and the conclusions), must be written in one of the usual languages used in scientific writing in the field of knowledge concerned other than any of the official languages of

Spain. One part of the thesis must also be written in one of the languages referred to above. This regulation does not apply to stays in, reports or experts from a Spanish-speaking country.

29.4 That the doctoral thesis has a report written by at least two experts who belong to an institution of higher education or research centre other than that where the stay was completed, which must be outside of Spain.

29.5 That at least one member of the panel is a PhD holder who is an expert in the subject matter of the thesis and belongs to a institution of higher education or a research centre in a country other than Spain.

This person must come from an institution or research centre other than that where the stay was completed.

29.6 That the defence is held at the UdL. In the case of joint doctoral programmes, the defence may be held in one of the participating universities or under the terms set out in the corresponding collaboration agreements.

Article 30. Doctoral theses subject to joint supervision

Joint programmes are subject to Resolution 236/2013 of the Governing Council of 30 October 2013.

Chapter VII. Doctoral degree certificates

Article 31. Application and issue

31.1 Once the thesis defence examination has been passed and the final grade awarded, the interested party must submit an application for the certificate and pay the corresponding fees. The process for issuing certificates cannot begin unless this application has been submitted by the person concerned.

31.2 Whilst the Ministry of Education is in the process of issuing the definitive degree certificate, a provisional degree certificate will be issued that will accredit its holder as having been awarded a doctoral degree.

Chapter VIII. Special doctoral awards

Article 32. Special doctoral awards

32.1 The UdL confers special doctoral awards every year.

32.2 In order to become a candidate for one of these special prizes, a cum *laude* distinction must have been obtained in the doctoral thesis. PhD holders who fulfil this requirement will automatically become candidates for one of these prizes.

32.3 The Steering Committee of the Doctoral School appoints the juries that are to grant these special awards in each of the fields of specialisation and assigns each thesis to one of these fields.

32.4 One special award may be given in each field of specialisation for every five theses submitted. If fewer than five theses have been submitted in a field of specialisation during an academic year, they will be put on hold until the following year or years until a total of five has been reached.

32.5 If the number of doctoral theses in a given field of specialisation fulfils all other requisites but does not reach five, the Steering Committee may group the theses from this field together with those from other related fields, providing the number of theses defended in the current year, or that have been carried over from previous years, does not exceed five.

32.6. The jury is made up of three regular members and two substitutes. All of the members must be PhD holders specialised in the subject or subjects of the theses put up for an award. One of the regular members and one of the substitutes must be from outside the UdL. The regular members act as the chair, secretary and member. The chair is appointed in accordance with the provisions established for chairing doctoral thesis panels. Under no circumstances may the members of these juries be PhD holders who have acted as supervisors for one of the doctoral theses put forward for an award. Tutors may likewise not form part of the juries.

32.7. A jury will assess the theses in the academic year following their defence, except in the case provided for in article 32.4. The assessment of candidates takes the following into account: the doctoral thesis, the publications in which the results of the doctoral theses appear and its scientific impact based on objective criteria and other merits directly related to the doctoral thesis.

32.8 In order to ensure that all of the candidates are fairly assessed, the jury may seek the advice of other specialists and request that they write a report.

32.9 The assessment of the doctoral theses put up for an award does not count towards other work subject to assessment.

32.10. The reasons for the final decision must appear in the jury's minutes.

32.11. Once it has examined the proposals submitted by the Steering Committee, the Governing Council of the University of Lleida takes the final decision on the awards to be granted.

32.12. Candidates have one month to withdraw any documentation submitted to be counted from the time the awards are granted.

Additional provision

The Steering Committee is granted the powers to interpret and add to these regulations.

Temporary provisions

First temporary provision

1. Students who have begun a doctoral course in compliance with the above university regulations may be admitted to the courses governed by these regulations by submitting an application to the doctoral programme they wish to join, providing they fulfil the admission requirements provided for in these regulations.

2. Students who began a doctoral course before Royal Decree 99/2011 came into force are subject to the provisions that regulate courses and the issue of doctoral degrees that were in force at the time they began their course. In any event, they will be subject to the regulations relating to the panel, the defence and the assessment of doctoral theses provided for in these regulations, pursuant to Royal Decree 534/2013, of 12 July.

3. The schedule that must be taken into account in accordance with the various regulations that apply is as follows:

- a. Courses regulated by Royal Decree 185/1985. Cut-off date for theses defence: 11/02/2016 (may not be extended). These courses are no longer run and only theses may be presented for defence.
- b. Courses regulated by Royal Decree 778/1998. Cut-off date for theses defence: 11/02/2016 (may not be extended). These courses are no longer run and only theses may be presented for defence.
- c. Courses regulated by Royal Decree 56/2005. Cut-off date for theses defence: 11/02/2016 (may not be extended). These courses are no longer run and only theses may be presented for defence.
- d. Courses regulated by Royal Decree 1393/2007. Cut-off date for theses defence: 30/09/2017 (may not be extended). These courses are being phased out and once they are no longer run only theses may be presented for defence.

Once these deadlines have been reached, trainee researchers who have not defended their thesis will be de-registered from their doctoral programme. They may, however, apply for admission to a doctoral programme currently being run at the UdL.

Second temporary provision

Once the academic committees of the programmes approved by Royal Decree 99/2011 have been constituted, they may also take responsibility for PhD students who have begun a course pursuant to the above regulations and who are in the process of writing a doctoral thesis in any of the departments involved in the programme approved by Royal Decree 99/2011.

Third temporary provision

Whilst the various past curricula are still in place, it has been decided that only trainee researchers who have earned a *cum laude* distinction may be put forward as candidates for a special doctoral award and that they must have received more than three votes by the jury if the thesis defence was subject to any regulations prior to the introduction of Royal Decree 56/2005. If a defence is subject to the regulations provided for in Royal Decree 56/2007, or subsequent decrees, the provisions set out in article 32.2 of these regulations must be complied with.

Sole repeal

The Regulations on Doctoral Courses, passed by Resolution no. 215/2008 of the Governing Council 21 October, and subsequent amendments, have been repealed.

Final provisions

First final provision

Interested parties may appeal against the resolutions passed by the academic committees of the doctoral programmes and the thesis defence panels, except in the case of administrative procedures, pursuant to the conflict resolution procedure provided for in Resolution no. 105/2012 of the Governing Council of 30 May.

Second final provision

These regulations come into force on the day after they are posted on the website in the corresponding issue of the *Official journal of the University of Lleida*.

Document approved by the Steering Committee of the Doctoral School of the University of Lleida on 07/02/2014.

Resolution no. 29/2014 of the plenary Social Council of 25 April 2014