



## REGULATIONS GOVERNING DOCTORAL COURSES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF LLEIDA

### *Article 1. Definition and objectives*

1.1. The doctoral courses of the University of Lleida (UdL) are aimed at training students to become high-quality researchers who are able to join national and international research teams in the public and private sectors.

1.2. The doctoral studies at the UdL are structured as doctoral programmes. Each doctoral programme includes taught courses and research activities that lead to the awarding of the doctoral degree by the UdL.

1.3. The doctoral studies are governed by the provisions of Royal Decree 1393/2007, of 29 October (Spanish Official State Gazette of 30 October), by the present regulations and by any complementary regulations that may be established.

### *Article 2. The doctoral programmes*

2.1. Each doctoral programme is the organised set of all taught courses and research activities that lead to the awarding of the doctoral degree by the UdL.

2.2. The taught courses and research activities of each doctoral programme are divided into a taught period and a research period that students must pass in order to obtain the doctorate.

2.3. The coordinator of the doctorate of each postgraduate program will propose the general objectives and admission criteria of the doctoral programme to the vice-rector's office responsible for third-cycle studies. These criteria must ensure the viability of the proposal in accordance with the guidelines laid down by the Doctoral Studies Sub-Committee:

- a) General objectives of the programme
- b) Lines of research of the programme
- d) Administrative processes (periods and procedure for pre-registration and registration) and telephone numbers and e-mail addresses of the coordinator and the administrative services of the programme.

### *Article 3. Admission to the taught period of the doctoral programmes*

3.1. To be admitted to the taught period of the doctoral programme students must follow the same procedure as for admission to the official master's degrees, as laid down in Article 16 of Royal Decree 1393/2007.

### *Article 4. Admission to the research period of the doctoral programmes*

4.1. To be admitted to the research period of the doctoral programme students must meet at least one of the following conditions:

4.1.1. Holding an official university master's degree, or one of the same level issued by a higher education institution in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA).

4.1.2. Holding a qualification obtained in accordance with education systems outside the EHEA; this qualification does not need to be homologated, but it must be accredited that it involves an equivalent level of education to that of the official Spanish university master's degrees and that it entitles the holder to be admitted to doctoral studies. Under no circumstances shall such admission imply the homologation of the original degree held by the interested party, or its recognition for other purposes than admission to doctoral courses.

4.1.3. Having obtained 60 credits from one or more university master's degrees.

4.1.4. Holding a qualification adapted to the EHEA with at least 300 ECTS credits.

4.1.5. Holding an advanced studies diploma obtained in accordance with the provisions of Royal Decree 778/1998 of 30 April, or having obtained the minimum research capacity as regulated by Royal Decree 185/1985 of 23 January, as laid down in the Fourth Additional Provision of Royal Decree 1393/2007 of 30 October.

4.2. Students must have obtained at least 300 ECTS credits (or an equivalent in length) in undergraduate and postgraduate courses. Of these, at least 60 must correspond to postgraduate courses.

#### *Article 5. Procedure for admission to a doctoral programme*

5.1. The procedure for admission to the taught period is the same as that of master's degrees belonging to the official postgraduate program.

5.2. The application for registration for the research period must state the research line in which the doctoral thesis will be carried out, the name of the person responsible for this research line, the name of the thesis supervisor and, if applicable, the name of the thesis tutor. This application must be sent to the Third Cycle Section with the appropriate documents according to the type of admission, including the documents demonstrating fulfilment of the admission conditions.

5.3. The Third Cycle Section will check the administrative requirements and send the admission document, with a report on the academic record of the applicant, to the doctorate coordinator.

5.4 The doctorate coordinator will reach a decision on the application for admission, sign it and send it to the Third Cycle Section.

5.5. If the decision is favourable, the Third Cycle Section will notify the applicant and inform him or her of the steps to follow:

5.5.1. Registration for academic supervision

5.5.2. Registration of the thesis subject, which must be approved by the Doctoral Studies Sub-Committee.

5.6. If the decision is unfavourable, the Third Cycle Section will notify the applicant, informing him or her of the reasons and of how to appeal against the decision.

## *Article 6. Registration for academic supervision*

6.1. Students must register for academic supervision each academic year for the duration of their doctoral studies.

6.2. Students may register for academic supervision before the approval of the thesis subject by the Doctoral Studies Sub-Committee. However, they may not register for academic supervision a second time until the thesis subject has been definitively approved.

## *Article 7. Registration for the doctoral thesis*

7.1. The doctoral student must present to the doctorate coordinator a thesis proposal approved by the thesis supervisor, and also by the tutor if the thesis supervision is carried out by a person outside the UdL. The registration of the thesis subject must be presented to the Doctoral Studies Sub-Committee at least one year before submission of the definitive thesis. Any variations from these norms are subject to approval by the Doctoral Studies Sub-Committee.

7.2. The doctoral thesis proposal must include the subject of the thesis, a literature review of the current state of the subject of research, the objectives, the materials and methods of study, and the schedule. The doctoral programme coordinator will decide whether to accept the proposal after consulting the director's office of the department to which the thesis supervisor belongs, or that of the department to which the tutor belongs if the supervisor is from outside the UdL.

## *Article 8. Submission and defence of the doctoral thesis*

8.1 The doctoral thesis is a work of original research on a subject related to the scientific, technical or artistic field of the doctoral programme.

8.2. Doctoral students must pay the thesis defence fee before presenting the final copy of the thesis. They must submit two copies, one for the department responsible for the thesis and one for the Doctoral Studies Sub-Committee.

8.3. The doctoral thesis must be presented in print format and written in Catalan, Spanish, English or French. It must include an abstract of at most one page in Catalan, Spanish, English and, if appropriate, any other language.

8.4. The department must submit the thesis to external assessment by two experts in the thesis subject who belong to two different units outside the UdL. The department must send the reports of these experts to the Doctoral Studies Sub-Committee together with the rest of the documents.

8.5. The thesis supervisor and the director of the department to which the thesis supervisor or the thesis tutor belong must provide signed written approval of the submission of the thesis.

8.6. At the time of submission of the thesis, the director of the department responsible for it must send to the chair of the Doctoral Studies Sub-Committee the proposal made by the competent body of the department indicating the five persons chosen for the thesis examination committee: three full members and two substitutes. Of the two substitutes, one must be from the UdL and the other from outside the UdL. This proposal, made in the format approved by the Doctoral Studies Sub-Committee must justify the suitability of the persons proposed to

form the thesis examination committee. Taking into account the curricula vitae of the persons proposed, the Doctoral Studies Sub-Committee will appoint the three full members and two substitutes of the examination committee. The committee will be chaired by the member of highest academic rank; if the academic rank is equal, it will be chaired by the person with greatest seniority in that rank. Only one of these members may be from the University of Lleida, in accordance with the general criteria laid down in Article 14 of Royal Decree 99/2011. The member of the committee from the UdL will act as secretary or chair

- 8.7. The thesis supervisor may not form part of the committee, except in the case of theses submitted within the framework of the bilateral joint supervision agreements with foreign universities in which it is permitted.
- 8.8. The department must send to the Doctoral Studies Sub-Committee:
- A copy of the doctoral thesis.
  - The reports of the external examiners.
  - The approval of the person who has supervised the thesis and the director of the department responsible for the thesis.
  - The approval of the tutor if the thesis supervisor is from outside the UdL.
  - The proposal for the examination committee with information on the suitability of each person proposed.
- 8.9. When the thesis has been accepted by the Doctoral Studies Sub-Committee, two copies must be submitted within ten calendar days, one to the General Secretary of the UdL and one to the secretary of the department responsible for the thesis. The submission must be communicated through any means that ensures the greatest possible dissemination. During this period the thesis may be consulted by any holder of a doctorate, who may send any comments he or she considers appropriate in writing to the Doctoral Studies Sub-Committee. The Sub-Committee will take any decisions it considers suitable in response to such comments, after consultation with the thesis supervisor, the department and any experts that it chooses to consult.
- 8.10. After the submission period has ended and no allegations have been presented, or those that have been presented have been resolved by the Doctoral Studies Sub-Committee, the latter will notify the doctoral student so that the department responsible for the thesis can send a copy of the thesis to each member of the committee, and the thesis defence will be authorised.
- 8.11. The date of the thesis defence will be announced and communicated to the Doctoral Studies Sub-Committee at least 15 days beforehand by the member of the committee belonging to the UdL, with the approval of the chair of the committee if this post is not held by said member.
- 8.12. The doctoral thesis must be assessed during the public thesis defence, at which the doctoral student will present to the committee and defend the research he or she has done. Doctorate holders who are present at the public defence may ask questions at the time and in the form indicated by the chair of the committee.
- 8.13. The committee will award the thesis a general qualification according to the following scale:  
“fail”, Aprobat/Aprobado, Notable or Excellent  
The committee may propose that the thesis be awarded the distinction *cum laude* if the general qualification is Excellent and it so decides unanimously through a secret ballot. The ballot for awarding this distinction will be held at a different session from that of the doctoral thesis defence. For this purpose, the counting of ballot will take place after that of the doctoral thesis defence, at the Doctorate Section, with de Vice Chancellor for Research or the Director of the Doctoral School. The result will be added to the documents of the doctoral thesis defence. All

of these documents will be sent to the Doctorate Section for the issuing of the provisional doctoral degree certificate.

- 8.14. After approval of the doctoral thesis, the University of Lleida will arrange for it to be incorporated in electronic format in an open access institutional repository. The institutional repository for depositing theses that have been successfully defended at the universities of the Catalan university system is TDX (Theses and Dissertations Online, [www.tdx.cat](http://www.tdx.cat)), in accordance with the agreement reached by the Board of the Inter-University Council of Catalonia at a meeting on 6 October 2011. To this end the author of the thesis must present the full text of his or her thesis in electronic format, together with the contract authorising publication.

#### Article 9. European mention or international mention on the doctoral degree certificate

The European doctor mention may be included on the front of the doctoral degree certificate or the international doctor mention may be included on the back of the certificate if the following conditions are met:

- 9.1. During the period of education necessary to obtain the doctoral degree, doctoral students must have spent a minimum of three months at a higher education institution or prestigious research centre outside Spain, pursuing studies or performing research work that have been recognised by the UdL. For the European mention this stay must be in a member State of the European Union (EU) and for the international mention it must be in another country.
- 9.2. All or most of the thesis, including the abstract and conclusions, must be written and partly defended in one of the habitual languages for scientific communication in its field of knowledge other than the official languages of Spain. In addition, the abstract and conclusions must also be written in one of the official languages of the UdL. This rule shall not apply when the visits, reports and experts correspond to a Spanish-speaking country.
- 9.3. The doctoral thesis must have been assessed by at least two experts belonging to a higher education institution or research centre of two states other than Spain.
- 9.4. At least one of the members of the thesis committee must be an expert doctorate holder belonging to a higher education institution or research centre of a state other than Spain in addition to the person responsible for the stay mentioned in Section 9.1.
- 9.5. The thesis must have been defended at the UdL.

#### Article 10. Extraordinary doctoral awards

- 10.1. The UdL offers extraordinary doctoral awards each year.
- 10.2. One extraordinary award may be given for every five theses that have obtained the grade “excellent *cum laude*” or “pass *cum laude*”. If the number of theses in an area of qualification approved in an academic year is lower than five, they are accumulated with those of the following academic year(s) until this number is reached. The area of qualification is assigned by the Doctoral Studies Sub-Committee on submission of the thesis.
- 10.3. If the number of doctoral theses in a given area of qualification that have received the grade “excellent *cum laude*” or “pass *cum laude*” is less than five, the Doctoral Studies Sub-

Committee may group the theses of this area with those of areas dealing with related subjects in which fewer than five theses have been defended in the same year or accumulated to date.

- 10.4. In order to qualify for the extraordinary award, students must have obtained the grade “excellent *cum laude*” for the doctoral thesis and more than three favourable votes from the thesis committee. If the thesis defence was carried out under the regulations of Royal Decree 99/2011, of 28 January (*Spanish Official State Gazette* 35, of 10 February), students must have obtained the grade “pass *cum laude*”. If the thesis defence was carried out under the regulations of Royal Decree 534/2013, of 12 July (*Spanish Official State Gazette* 167, of 13 July), students must have obtained the grade “excellent *cum laude*” Doctorate holders who meet these requirements automatically become candidates for extraordinary awards.
- 10.5. The Doctoral Studies Sub-Committee of the University of Lleida appoints the juries that award the extraordinary awards in each area of qualification.
- 10.6. The jury is composed of three members: the chair, the secretary and one ordinary member. One member should be external to the University of Lleida. All members must hold doctorates, and the thesis supervisors and tutors are not eligible to be members.
- 10.7. The jury assesses the thesis within the academic year following the thesis defence, except in the case provided for in Section 10.2. In their decision on the extraordinary award, the jury assesses the scientific contributions made by the thesis.
- 10.8. In order to ensure a correct assessment of the candidates, the jury may call in other specialists and ask for any reports they consider necessary.
- 10.9. In no cases will the assessment of the doctoral theses involve the need for students to carry out other tests to be examined.
- 10.10. The decision of the jury must express the reasons for the final proposal.
- 10.11. After examining the proposals presented by the Doctoral Studies Sub-Committee, the Governing Council of the University of Lleida is responsible for the final decision on the granting of the extraordinary doctoral awards.
- 10.12. The candidates may collect any documents presented within one month after the presentation of the extraordinary awards.

### Transitional provision

For students who started their doctoral studies before the coming into force of Royal Decree 99/2011, the provisions governing the doctorate and the awarding of the doctoral degree that were applicable when they first registered will be applied. However, the regulations on the examination committee, defence and assessment of the doctoral thesis established by Royal Decree 99/2011 will be applied to such students as of 3 February 2012.

### Final provision

This regulation comes into force the day after approval by the Governing Council.