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# Academic Regulations for the UOC's Doctoral Studies

Approved by the UOC Governing  
Council

UOC

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# Academic regulations for the UOC's doctoral studies

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## Preliminary title

### Article 1. Scope of application

1. The purpose of these regulations is to regulate the UOC's official doctoral studies, pursuant to Royal Decree 99/2011, of 28 January, regulating official doctoral studies and other applicable regulations.
2. In all matters not regulated in this text, the provisions of state or regional legislation regulating the subject will apply.
3. Unless stated otherwise, the provisions of these regulations are applicable to all of the UOC's doctoral programmes.

## Title I. Access and admission to the doctoral programmes

### Chapter I. General provisions

#### Article 2. Access to the doctoral programmes

1. The purpose of this title is to regulate access and admission to the UOC's doctoral studies.
2. The admission requirements are established for each programme and, pursuant to the provisions set forth in these regulations, comply with current legislation.
3. All those who access a doctoral programme must accredit the veracity of the personal data they have provided and compliance with the admission requirements, and also the specific admission criteria that may be applicable to their specific case.
4. Any misrepresentations or omissions in the data provided or in the admission documentation submitted to the university will cause immediate cancellation of the enrolment and removal of the academic record, without prejudice to such other legal measures available to the university.

## Article 3. Admission documents

1. All candidates who apply for admission to one of the UOC's doctoral programmes, must provide the following documentation:
  - a. Photocopy of their national ID card (DNI), foreigner ID number (NIE) or passport.
  - b. Documentation that accredits compliance with the admission requirements, as provided in Chapter III of this Title.
2. When the verification report of the doctoral degree certificate stipulates additional admission requirements and/or criteria, the documentation that must be submitted is that which accredits compliance with such requirements and/or criteria.

- Amended by agreement of the Governing Council on 17 June 2025.

## Chapter II. Call for admission applications to the doctoral programmes

### Article 4. Ordinary call

1. Each year, the university publishes the call for admission applications to the doctoral programmes it offers.
2. The number of places offered, the research lines available, the admission requirements and, if applicable, the additional admission criteria, the scientific and academic merits that are assessed in the candidate selection process, the assessment criteria and scoring applied to these merits, and the planned timetable for awarding places are set forth in the terms of the call for admission applications for each doctoral programme.
3. Provided that there are free places, the university can also admit candidates for doctoral programmes outside of the schedule for the ordinary call, subject to prior approval by the corresponding academic committee, when, among other conditions, the candidate has obtained a source of funding or a change of university and/or doctoral programme after expiry of the time limit for awarding places.
4. Candidates may only apply for a place on one doctoral programme.

- 4 added by agreement of the Executive Board on 24 July 2023.

## Article 5. Extraordinary call

Exceptionally, the university may publish an extraordinary call for admission applications to doctoral programmes when there are justified reasons approved by the UOC Doctoral School.

## Chapter III. Requirements and documentation for admission to the doctoral programmes

### Article 6. Students with a bachelor's and a master's degree, or equivalent

1. Students with an official Spanish bachelor's degree, or equivalent, and a university master's degree, or equivalent, and have obtained at least 300 ECTS credits in total between the two qualifications.
2. Students who meet this requirement for admission must submit a certified photocopy of their official Spanish bachelor's degree and university master's degree.

The following may be submitted instead of these certificates:

- a) the record from the Spanish Ministry's Register of Graduates;
- b) the provisional degree certificate, provided that it is no more than a year old;
- c) the European Diploma Supplement.

The above documents may be submitted in electronic format with current digital validation issued by a competent body.

Applicants must also provide the original document, a certified photocopy or an electronic file with current digital validation of their personal academic transcript for their bachelor's and master's degrees as proof that they have obtained at least 300 ECTS credits in total between the two qualifications.

- Amended by agreement of the Executive Board on 21 November 2016.
- Amended by agreement of the Executive Board on 24 July 2023.
- Amended by agreement of the Executive Board on 4 November 2024.
- Amended by agreement of the Governing Council on 17 June 2025.

## Article 7. Students with an official Spanish university qualification issued under previous academic systems

1. Students with official Spanish university qualifications issued under previous academic systems qualify for admission to official doctoral programmes at the UOC, provided they have obtained at least 300 ECTS credits in total between all these qualifications and they can prove that they have reached level 3 of the Spanish Qualifications Framework for Higher Education (MECES).
2. Such students must submit the documentation set forth in Article 3 and a certified photocopy of their official Spanish university qualifications proving that they have obtained 300 ECTS credits and a master's degree level 3 of the Spanish Qualifications Framework for Higher Education.

Alternatively, they may submit:

- a) the record from the Spanish Ministry's Register of Graduates;
- b) the provisional degree certificate, provided that it is no more than a year old; or
- c) the European Diploma Supplement.

The above documents may be submitted in electronic format with current digital validation issued by a competent body.

3. In this case, the university will apply the equivalences determined, for the purposes of admission to the doctoral programme, between the credits obtained in previous official university degrees and the ECTS credits, together with the assessment criteria for the 60 ECTS credits that, at least, must be considered as being master's degree-level credits. In relation to this, the university will consider applying an equivalence of 240 ECTS credits to university graduates who prove they have achieved MECES level 2.

- Amended by agreement of the Governing Council on 17 June 2025.

## Article 8. Students with non-Spanish university degrees from EHEA countries

1. Candidates with a degree awarded under non-Spanish education systems within the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) may be admitted to an official doctoral programme at the UOC, without the need for official recognition, demonstrating that they have reached level 7 of the Spanish Qualifications Framework, provided that the qualification makes the holder eligible for admission to doctoral studies in the country in which it was issued.

Admission will under no circumstances entail official recognition of the applicant's previous qualification or recognition for any purposes other than admission to doctoral studies.

2. Candidates who meet this requirement for admission must submit the documentation set forth in Article 3 and a certified photocopy of their official university degree certificate; or, alternatively:
  - a) the appropriate provisional additional certificate;
  - b) the European Diploma Supplement, issued by an EHEA higher education institution, that qualifies its holder for admission to official doctoral programmes in the country in which it was issued.

The certificate submitted must also prove that the holder has achieved EQF level 7 of the European Qualifications Framework for Higher Education.

Unless the academic documentation has been issued by a Member State of the European Union, it must be properly legalized through diplomatic channels or by means of an apostille under the Hague Convention of 5 October 1961, if applicable. Furthermore, if the original documentation is not in Catalan, Spanish or English, it must be translated as provided by law by a sworn translator, any Spanish diplomatic or consular representation abroad or the diplomatic or consular representation in Spain of the country of the student's nationality or the country of origin of the document, if applicable.

- Amended by agreement of the Executive Board on 28 June 2021.
- Amended by agreement of the Executive Board on 24 July 2023.
- 1 amended by agreement of the Executive Board on 4 November 2024.
- Amended by agreement of the Governing Council on 17 June 2025.

## Article 9. Students with non-Spanish university degrees from non-EHEA countries

1. Candidates with a degree obtained under education systems outside the EHEA, without the need for official recognition may be admitted to an official doctoral programme at the UOC, after the UOC has verified that the qualification proves that the applicant has reached a level of training equivalent to an official Spanish university master's degree and that the qualification makes the holder eligible for admission to doctoral studies in the country in which it was issued.

Admission will under no circumstances entail official recognition of the applicant's previous qualification or recognition for any purposes other than admission to doctoral studies.

2. Students from non-EHEA educational systems who meet the requirement for admission referred to in section 1 must submit the documentation set forth in Article 3 and a certified photocopy of the corresponding degree certificate, legalized, or the document in electronic format if the Hague Apostille includes current digital validation issued by a competent body.

Evidence of a training level equivalent to a Spanish university master's degree that qualifies its holder for admission to doctoral programmes in the country in which it was issued must also be provided. This must be done by submitting:

- a) the Certificate of Admission to Doctoral Programmes at the UOC; or
- b) a record of the official register for such qualifications.

If necessary, the UOC will also request the corresponding academic transcript. Unless the academic documentation has been issued by a Member State of the European Union, it must be properly legalized through diplomatic channels or by means of an apostille under the Hague Convention of 5 October 1961, if applicable.

Furthermore, if the original documentation is not in Catalan, Spanish or English, it must be translated as provided by law by a sworn translator, any Spanish diplomatic or consular representation abroad or the diplomatic or consular representation in Spain of the country of the student's nationality or the country of origin of the document, if applicable.

3. Under this admission option for doctoral programmes at the UOC, the applicant's training level must be verified as provided in Article 10.

- 2 amended and 3 added by agreement of the Executive Board on 4 November 2024.
- Amended by agreement of the Governing Council on 17 June 2025.

## Article 10. Verification of the level of training of a non-EHEA higher education qualifications

1. In accordance with the admission option indicated in Article 9, holders of qualifications obtained in educational systems outside of the EHEA who wish to gain access to the UOC's doctoral programmes, without need for official recognition, must request verification of their level of training. The request for verification of the level of training must be made through the channels and in the periods established by the university, accompanying it with the following documentation:
  - a. Photocopy of the higher education certificate.
  - b. Photocopy of the academic transcript or official document that accredits a level of training equivalent to that of the Spanish university master's degree and which entitles the holder to admission to doctoral studies in the country issuing the certificate.

The university may verify these points ex officio without the student having to provide the documentation indicated in this paragraph.

Unless the documentation has been issued by a Member State of the European Union, it must be submitted with the corresponding legalization by diplomatic channels or, if applicable, with the Apostille of the Hague Convention of 5 October 1961. Likewise, if the original documentation is not written in Catalan, Spanish or English, a translation is required from a sworn translator or from any diplomatic or consular representation of Spain abroad, or from the diplomatic or consular representation in Spain of the country of which the student is a citizen or, if applicable, of the country issuing the documentation.

2. The doctoral students who obtain verification of their level of training, may access the university by this pathway and, if applicable, complete their enrolment in the doctoral programme for which they have applied.
3. Access to doctoral studies by this pathway does not imply, under any circumstance, official recognition of the foreign higher education qualification or its declaration of equivalence at any academic level nor access to courses of study other than those to which the candidate has applied for admission.

- Amended by agreement of the Governing Council on 17 June 2025.

## Article 11. Students with a doctoral degree

1. Students with a doctoral degree are eligible for admission to official doctoral programmes at the UOC.
2. Candidates who meet this requirement for admission must submit the documentation set forth in Article 3 and a certified photocopy of their official university doctoral degree certificate or a certified photocopy of the provisional supplementary certificate or the document in electronic format with current digital validation issued by a competent body.

Unless the academic documentation has been issued by a Member State of the European Union, it must be properly legalized through diplomatic channels or by means of an apostille under the Hague Convention of 5 October 1961 if applicable, or submitted in electronic format if the Hague Apostille includes current digital validation issued by a competent body.

Furthermore, if the original documentation is not in Catalan, Spanish or English, it must be translated as provided by law by a sworn translator, any Spanish diplomatic or consular representation abroad or the diplomatic or consular representation in Spain of the country of the student's nationality or the country of origin of the document, if applicable.

- Amended by agreement of the Governing Council on 17 June 2025.

## Article 12. Students of Health Sciences specialization programmes

1. Holders of university degrees who, after obtaining a training place through the relevant entrance exam for specialized health training places, have received a positive assessment for at least two years of training in a programme for an official qualification in any Health Sciences specialization are eligible for admission to official doctoral programmes at the UOC.
2. Students who meet this requirement for admission must submit the documentation set forth in Article 3 and a certified photocopy of their official university degree certificate or a certified photocopy of the provisional supplementary certificate, provided that it is no more than a year old; as well as a certified photocopy of a certificate proving that they have received a positive assessment for at least two years of training in a programme for an official qualification in any Health Sciences specialization.

- Amended by agreement of the Governing Council on 17 June 2025.

## Article 13. Additional doctoral programme admission requirements and/or criteria

1. Through each doctoral programme's academic committees, the university may establish additional admission requirements and criteria, which must be stated in the verification report of the corresponding doctoral degree certificate.
2. The additional admission requirements and/or criteria may consist of the need to pass specific bridging courses, have a specific level of competence in a foreign language or have a basic level of competence in the use of information and communication technologies, and they will need to be met within one academic year at most.
3. The academic committees may require a letter of endorsement from a researcher who is a potential supervisor of the doctoral thesis.

## Article 14. Scientific and academic merits

1. Apart from complying with the admission requirements and, if applicable, the additional admission criteria, doctoral students undergo a selection process based on an assessment of scientific and academic merits.
2. The scientific and academic merits may consist of the marks obtained in the studies taken prior to the doctoral degree, previous scientific output, research experience and/or interests in fields of knowledge or subject areas associated with the doctoral programme.

## Article 15. Documentation for the evaluation of merits

Apart from the documentation that accredits compliance with the access requirements and, if applicable, the additional admission criteria, the candidates must provide, at least, the following documentation for the evaluation of merits:

- a. A letter of presentation that explains the specific motivations for their application and a description of their research interests.
- b. A CV which includes the master or postgraduate programmes and courses taken that are related with the research interests expressed in the motivation letter and, if applicable, the prior scientific output.
- c. Academic transcripts corresponding to the predoctoral courses, stating the subjects taken and the mark obtained, the exam sitting, the type of subject, the number of credits, and the average grade of the academic record, if they have not been furnished to accredit compliance with the admission requirements.
- d. Any other document established as a scientific and academic merit by the academic committee for the doctoral programme that the candidate has applied for.

- e. Any other documentation that the candidate considers appropriate and which enables an assessment to be made of their academic and scientific merits.

## Article 16. Format and time limit for presentation of the documentation by candidates

1. The candidates who wish to apply for a place in a doctoral programme must provide, in digital format, the documentation that accredits compliance with the regulatory admission requirements and, if applicable, the specific admission criteria, the documentation for the evaluation of merits, within the time limit stated in the call for admission applications to the doctoral programme.
2. If the candidate does not provide this documentation, or does not provide it completely and correctly, within the time limit stated in the call, the university will send a reminder to provide this documentation, giving a further final period. If this final period should expire without the candidate having corrected the shortcomings detected in their admission documentation or, if applicable, in the specific admission criteria, or in the documentation for the evaluation of merits, the university will cancel the candidate's admission application.

## Article 17. Format and time limit for presentation of the documentation by the selected candidates

1. The candidates who have obtained and accepted the place in the doctoral programme they have applied for, must furnish, in hard copy format, the documentation that accredits compliance with the admission requirements and, if applicable, the specific admission criteria, together with the documentation for the evaluation of merits requested by the academic committee, within a maximum of 30 calendar days counting from the date of notification of awarding of the place.
2. If the candidate does not provide this documentation, or does not provide it completely and correctly, within the time limit stated in the previous paragraph, the university will send a reminder to provide this documentation, giving a further final period. If this final period should expire without the candidate having corrected the shortcomings detected in their admission documentation or, if applicable, in the specific admission criteria, or in the documentation for the evaluation of merits, the university will cancel the candidate's place, awarding it, if applicable, to another candidate.
3. If the documentation provided does not match that furnished in digital format for assessment of the candidate's application, the university will send a reminder to provide this

documentation, giving a further final period. If this final period should expire without the candidate having corrected the mismatch, the university will cancel the candidate's place, awarding it, if applicable, to another candidate.

## Article 18. Simultaneous studies and change of university and/or doctoral programme

1. Candidates being admitted to an official doctoral programme from another Spanish university.
  - a) Permanent withdrawal.
    - i) Candidates wishing to be admitted to a UOC doctoral programme who do not wish to continue with the one they are doing at another university must request permanent withdrawal from their university of origin if they finally accept the place offered.
  - b) Simultaneous studies.
    - i) Candidates wishing to be admitted to a UOC doctoral programme who wish to continue with the one they are doing at the other university must apply for simultaneous studies at their university of origin if they finally accept the place offered.
    - ii) Once admitted to the UOC programme, they must submit the simultaneous studies document together with the rest of the admission documents.
  - c) In both cases, the new doctoral student will again have the maximum time established in Article 25 of these regulations without taking into account the time elapsed in the other university's programme.
  - d) In both of these cases, the doctoral student may not request the submission of their thesis in the first semester or its defence in the first two semesters.
  - e) Failure to submit the transfer or simultaneous study documents shall be grounds for expulsion from the programme.
2. Candidates admitted from another UOC doctoral programme.
  - a) Due to the phasing-out of the programme.
    - i) The doctoral student will continue in the new programme but keeping in their academic record the semesters of supervised research already elapsed in the previous programme, which will count towards the calculation of semesters for the purpose of complying with the duration conditions established in Article 25 of

these regulations.

b) On the doctoral student's initiative.

i) The doctoral student will again have the maximum time established in Article 25 of these regulations without taking into account the time elapsed in the previous programme.

ii) The doctoral student may not request the submission of their thesis in the first semester or its defence in the first two semesters.

c) In both of these cases, the UOC will close the previous academic record.

3. In any case, the UOC will review the documentary proof for admission and reserves the right to request any documents it may deem appropriate. Failure to submit them within the indicated deadlines will result in expulsion from the programme.

- Amended by agreement of the Executive Board on 28 June 2021.
- Amended by agreement of the Executive Board on 24 July 2023.
- 1 amended by agreement of the Executive Board on 4 November 2024.

## Chapter IV. Assessment and awarding of places

### Article 19. Assessing the applications

1. Having accredited, in digital format, compliance with the regulatory admission requirements and, if applicable, the specific admission criteria, the academic committee for the doctoral programme for which that the candidate has applied will assess the documentation accrediting the candidate's scientific and academic merits, in accordance with the assessment criteria set forth in the programme.
2. During the process of evaluating the scientific and academic merits, the academic committees may ask the candidate to come for an interview, or submit additional documentation, if they consider it necessary.

### Article 20. Awarding the places

1. Once all the candidates have been evaluated, each programme's academic committee will classify them in decreasing order, awarding the places called to the candidates who obtain

the best scores in each of the research lines. The candidates who are not given a place and have successfully completed the selection process will be put on the reserve list, in case any of the places should become vacant.

2. The provisional allocation of places for each doctoral programme must be published on the Doctoral School website. Candidates wishing to do so will have 8 days to submit allegations through the channel made available by the university.
3. The places awarded in each doctoral programme are published on the university's E-Services Portal and are notified to the successful candidates.

- 2 added by agreement of the Executive Board on 28 June 2021.
- 1 and 2 amended by agreement of the Executive Board on 24 July 2023.

## Article 21. Accepting the place

1. The candidate has a period of 7 calendar days, counting from notification of the award, to accept the place in the doctoral programme for which they have applied.
2. If the candidate does not accept the place, the university will send a reminder with a further final period in which to accept the place. If this final period should expire without the candidate having accepted the place, the university will consider that the candidate waives the place awarded.

## Chapter V. Enrolment

### Article 22. Completing enrolment

1. Enrolment is completed within the periods stipulated in the UOC's academic calendar by means of the channels provided for this purpose. In the case of doctoral programmes organized jointly with other Spanish or foreign universities, the inter-university agreement will determine the manner in which this enrolment must be completed.
2. The candidates must enrol each academic year for the doctorate's academic tutorship and, if applicable, each semester for the specific bridging courses, seminars and other formative activities aimed at providing the research training stipulated in the personalized study plan approved by the academic committee, at the proposal of the thesis tutor. Enrolment must also be made in the semester during which the doctoral thesis is submitted.

3. The candidates who complete the enrolment as provided in the above paragraphs will attain the status of doctoral student at the UOC, and in the case of joint doctoral programmes, the status of doctoral student at the participating universities.
4. If the candidate does not complete enrolment in the times and using the channels established by the university, it will be considered that they have withdrawn from the doctoral programme and the academic record will be removed.

- 2 amended by agreement of the Executive Board on 4 November 2024.

## Article 23. Changing enrolment

1. Changing the enrolment in the doctoral programmes is the procedure that allows inclusion of specific bridging courses, seminars and other formative activities, or their replacement.
2. Waiving any specific bridging course, seminar or formative activity for which the doctoral student has enrolled will entail partial modification of enrolment.
3. The financial consequences of a total or partial modification of the enrolment are those set forth in the UOC's financial regulations.

## Article 24. Cancelling enrolment

1. Waiving enrolment for academic tutorship, or for all of the specific bridging courses, seminars and formative activities on which the student enrolled will entail cancellation of enrolment. Cancellation of enrolment may be voluntary or ex officio.
2. In the case of doctoral students who have been admitted in the current year to doctoral programmes, voluntary cancellation of enrolment will entail closure of the academic record. If the student wishes to re-enrol, they will have to apply for access again at the new call for admission to doctoral programmes.
3. In the case of the other doctoral students, voluntary cancellation of enrolment through waiver for the reasons set forth in paragraph 1 of this article will not entail closure of the academic record. If the doctoral student wishes to re-enrol, they will have to do it within the times established in the UOC's academic calendar.

4. The university may cancel enrolment ex officio when it detects that any of the following situations has occurred:
  - a. Non-payment of the enrolment fee within the established time.
  - b. Commission of any misrepresentation or irreparable irregularity in the admission details or in other details that the doctoral student has provided to the university, and which the latter considers to be important.
  - c. As an interim measure when a disciplinary procedure is begun, pursuant to the UOC's regulations on student rights and duties.
5. The financial consequences of cancellation of the enrolment in any of the situations defined in this article are those set forth in the UOC's financial regulations.

## Title II. Study system

### Chapter I. Duration

#### Article 25. Full-time or part-time

1. Doctoral studies must be completed within four years if studying full-time, or seven years if studying part-time, counting from the date the student enrolls in the doctoral programme, and ending on the date of submission of the doctoral thesis.
2. If no request to submit the thesis has been made, the academic committee responsible for the programme may agree, before the end of the applicable period set forth in the preceding section and at the doctoral student's request, to extend this period for one more year under the conditions established for the corresponding doctoral programme.
3. Doctoral students with a degree of disability of 33% or more must complete their doctoral studies within six years if studying full-time, or nine years if studying part-time. Doctoral students in this situation may also request a one-year extension as provided in the previous section.

- 3 added by agreement of the Executive Board on 28 June 2021.
- Amended by agreement of the Executive Board on 4 November 2024.

#### Article 26. Change in full- or part-time status

1. Doctoral students may request a change in the time assigned to their doctoral studies, from full-time to part-time, and vice-versa.

In the case of those students who go from full-time to part-time, the maximum time given to defend the thesis will be 7 years, minus any years that have passed since they were admitted on to the programme.

In the case of those students who go from part-time to full-time, the maximum time given to defend the thesis will be 3 years counting from the date on which the change in full- or part-time status was approved. In these cases, the maximum time cannot exceed 5 years from the date of entry in the programme.

2. Doctoral students receiving grants and studying full-time who do not file their doctoral thesis submission application within the maximum time stated in the previous article will be changed automatically to part-time. In this case, the doctoral student has a further period of two years to file the doctoral thesis submission application, without prejudice to the provisions of Article 25.2.

- 1 amended by agreement of the Executive Board on 4 November 2024.

## Chapter II. Temporary withdrawal and permanent withdrawal

### Article 27. Temporary withdrawal

1. Doctoral students may request voluntary leave from the programme for up to two years, which may be split into semesters but not into shorter periods. Requests for temporary leave must be submitted to the academic committee for the programme through the channel made available for this purpose, and the academic committee will issue a decision.
2. Doctoral students may request temporary leave due to unforeseen cause, temporary disability, birth or adoption of a child, custody for the purpose of adoption, fostering, risk during pregnancy or breastfeeding, and gender-based violence. They may also request it in cases of serious or prolonged illness of a family member up to the first degree, for valid reasons, particularly relevant work-related circumstances or any other situation envisaged in the current regulations. After proof of these circumstances has been duly provided through the established channels, time will stop running for the purpose of calculating the maximum

time permitted for completing the doctoral studies. In such cases, the Doctoral School must be informed and documentary evidence sent through the channel made available by the university for this purpose, and this must be done again at the start of each semester if the cause continues to apply.

3. Periods of temporary leave will not be taken into account when calculating the duration of doctoral studies, including any extensions that may have been authorized. This applies to both part-time and full-time doctoral students.

- Amended by agreement of the Executive Board on 28 June 2021.
- Amended by agreement of the Executive Board on 4 November 2024.

## Article 28. Permanent withdrawal

1. Permanent withdrawal entails non-continuity in the programme and closure of the doctoral student's academic record. However, the doctoral student may apply for access and admission to another of the university's doctoral programmes or the same programme when two years have elapsed since the cause of permanent withdrawal.
2. The following are grounds for permanent withdrawal from the doctoral programme:
  - a. Express waiver by the doctoral student notified to the programme's academic committee.
  - b. Expiry of the study periods and, if applicable, the extensions that may have been authorized.
  - c. Denial of the requested extensions, pursuant to Article 25.2.
  - d. Not completing enrolment in the time and manner stipulated by the Doctoral School without having requested temporary withdrawal.
  - e. When acceptance of the research plan has not been requested within the time stipulated by the Doctoral School.
  - f. Having received two unfavourable evaluations of the research plan and/or annual activities report, pursuant to Article 42.3 of these regulations.

- g. When the documents stipulated by the programme's academic committee in order to perform the annual assessment and monitoring of the research plan have not been submitted in the required time.
- h. Those that may arise from the corresponding disciplinary sanctions, according to the UOC's regulations on student rights and duties.

## **Title III. The doctoral thesis**

### **Chapter I. Definition and format**

#### **Article 29. Definition**

The doctoral thesis is an original research work developed by the doctoral student in one of the doctoral programme's fields of knowledge which contributes to the knowledge accumulated in the UOC's fields and lines of research and prepares the doctoral student for working independently in the field of RDI.

#### **Article 30. Language used to write and defend the doctoral thesis**

1. The doctoral thesis can be written, presented and defended in Catalan, Spanish or English.
2. Exceptionally, the doctoral programme's academic committee may authorize writing and defending the doctoral thesis in a language other than those mentioned, subject to reasoned justification by the doctoral student.
3. In the case of theses presented in languages other than Catalan, Spanish or English, the programme's academic committee must ensure that the panel members evaluating the thesis can understand the language, which means that they will have to give their agreement to such language.

#### **Article 31. Format of the doctoral thesis**

1. The doctoral thesis must include, at least, an introduction to the subject of study, the objectives it is intended to achieve, an exposition of the research performed as an essential part of the discussion of the results obtained, the conclusions and the references. It can also

include as many appendices as are considered desirable. The doctoral thesis may include research results presented at congresses or published in articles.

2. The thesis' cover page must state that it is a doctoral thesis, the title and, if applicable, the subtitle, the author, the thesis supervisor or co-supervisors, the name of the doctoral programme, the university and the date on which submission of the doctoral thesis is authorized. In the case of doctoral theses that have more than one volume, the volume number must be indicated.

## Article 32. Doctoral theses submitted as a collection of articles

1. The UOC may authorize the submission of a doctoral thesis as a collection of articles. Each doctoral programme at the UOC sets its own [requirements](#) for the admission and submission of theses in accordance with the area of knowledge and research concerned.
2. Doctoral students must strive to comply with these requirements in accordance with the conditions established by their doctoral programme, of which they will have been duly informed through the channels put in place by the Doctoral School.
3. To authorize the submission and defence of the thesis, the programme's academic committee will assess its quality, in accordance with the procedure established in Article 44.

- 1.c amended by agreement of the Executive Board on 28 June 2021.
- 1.a and 2 amended by agreement of the Executive Board on 24 July 2023.
- Amended by agreement of the Executive Board on 4 November 2024.

## Article 33. Practice-based doctoral theses

Practice-based theses come from the tradition of practice-based research originating in English-speaking countries and refers to those theses with elements that go beyond the usual written report. Thus, a practice-based thesis is a work of research based on the development of a strategy, process, creation and/or product (communication-related, technological, artistic or design-related, among others), generally intended for a social use or a wider audience than a strictly academic one, and that involves experimenting with materials, methodologies or other types of processes.

A practice-based thesis involves carrying out the research and producing the corresponding written report. The two elements together constitute the doctoral research.

Therefore, in the case of practice-based doctoral theses, the following must be submitted at the

time of depositing the thesis:

1. The product or process developed (documents, photographs, exhibition, object or service designed, interactive act, performance or experience, etc.). Ephemeral products must be reflected on a material and durable medium (video, text, photographs, etc.) that makes them subsequently accessible or adequately intelligible.

2. A written report explaining:

- a. The research question, aims and methodology.
- b. A critical assessment of the context surrounding the research or practical work, establishing an explicit relationship with existing debates and academic bibliography, and engaging in dialogue with other similar practical proposals.
- c. An explanation of the research process carried out (including any collaborations that have been necessary to do so).
- d. Bibliography and other references.
- e. Attached documents including the documentation of the development process (scripts, sketches, materials, recordings of the various phases of development, etc.).

3. If the doctoral thesis is submitted as a practice-based thesis, the doctoral student must follow the same procedures regarding submission, admission for processing, oral examination and defence as all other doctoral theses and must also, in addition to the documents specified in Article 44.3 of these regulations, submit the following documents:

a. A report signed by their thesis supervisor supporting the submission in this format. The report must consider the consistency and thematic unity of the work submitted, its originality and its contribution to knowledge.

b. If a contribution written in co-authorship is presented, the following must be provided:

- i. The written authorization of the co-authors of each of the contributions presented, allowing the doctoral student to present them as part of their doctoral thesis.
- ii. The undertaking by each of the co-authors to not present the contributions co-authored by them as part of another doctoral thesis.

In relation to the intellectual or industrial property of this type of thesis, the provisions of Article 53 shall apply.

- Article added by agreement of the Executive Board on 24 July 2023

## Chapter II. Tutoring and supervision

### Article 34. Thesis tutoring

1. Upon admission to the doctoral programme, the programme's academic committee assigns a thesis tutor to the doctoral student, who is responsible for aligning the tuition and research activity with the principles of the programme and of the Doctoral School and must comply with the requirements and functions set forth in Article 10 of the UOC Doctoral School's internal by-laws.
2. This thesis tutor must propose a study plan to the academic committee that is personalized for each doctoral student they are tutoring, taking into account the criteria established in each doctoral programme and the doctoral student's prior training and research experience.

### Article 35. Thesis supervision

1. Upon admission to the doctoral programme, the programme's academic committee must assign a thesis supervisor to each doctoral student, who may or may not also be the tutor. The thesis supervisor is the person ultimately responsible for directing the doctoral student's research tasks, and they must comply with the requirements and functions set forth in Article 11 of the UOC Doctoral School's internal by-laws.

If no thesis supervisor is assigned at the time of admission, the academic committee must assign a thesis supervisor within a maximum period of 3 months after the doctoral student has completed enrolment.

2. The thesis may be co-supervised by other doctors when this is rendered necessary due to reasons of an academic nature or thematic interdisciplinarity or in the case of programmes developed as a national or international collaboration. Co-supervision of the thesis will require prior authorization by the academic committee. This authorization may be revoked at a later date if, in the academic committee's opinion, the co-supervision does not benefit the thesis' development.
3. The programme's academic committee may assign up to three thesis supervisors to the doctoral student, as co-supervisors, in the following cases:
  - a. Due to reasons of an academic nature, such as thematic interdisciplinarity or programmes undertaken as a national or international collaboration.
  - b. As part of the junior faculty training and researcher support policies.

This assignment of more than one thesis supervisor may be revoked at a later date if, in the opinion of the programme's academic committee, the co-supervision does not contribute positively to the thesis' development. In any case, the assignment must always be justified and approved by the Academic Committee.

- 3 amended and 4 removed by agreement of the Executive Board on 24 July 2023.

## Article 36. Changes in thesis tutoring and/or supervision

1. The doctoral student may ask the doctoral programme's academic committee to change the thesis tutor and/or supervisor.
2. The request to change thesis tutor and/or supervisor can be made before submitting the doctoral thesis, using the channels created for this purpose.
3. The doctoral programme's academic committee may change appointment of the thesis tutor and/or supervisor at any time during performance of the doctoral degree, after hearing the doctoral student, the tutor, the thesis supervisor and the doctor that the doctoral student proposes as new supervisor and/or tutor, provided that there are justified reasons. If any of the parties should object, the academic committee will take the matter to the Doctoral School's Management Committee so that it may give the corresponding decision.
4. If the doctoral student is left without a supervisor, the programme's academic committee will assign them a new one.

- 4 added by agreement of the Executive Board on 4 November 2024.

## Article 37. Doctoral candidate agreement

1. The UOC must establish the functions as regards supervision of the doctoral student by means of a doctoral candidate agreement, which must be signed by the programme coordinator, the doctoral student, the tutor and the thesis supervisor.
2. The doctoral candidate agreement must be signed after the thesis supervisors have been appointed.

3. The doctoral candidate agreement must include a procedure for managing conflicts and address the industrial and intellectual property right issues that may arise in the sphere of doctoral degree programmes.
4. The changes of thesis supervisor and/or tutor, made in accordance with the provisions of the previous article, require signature of a new doctoral candidate agreement.

### Article 38. Thesis committee

1. The thesis committee is a body that collaborates in the annual monitoring and assessment of the activity defined in the doctoral student's research plan in those programmes where this is stipulated in the verification report.
2. The thesis committee's members are the thesis supervisor, who is also its chairperson, and two doctors appointed by the academic committee, at the chairperson's proposal. In the case of co-supervision of the thesis, the thesis committee's members will be the co-supervisors, one of whom will be the chairperson, and another doctor appointed by the academic committee, at the chairperson's proposal. In both cases, at least one of the members of the thesis committee must not be a member of the UOC's academic and research staff.
3. The thesis committee's members are duty-bound to observe total confidentiality with respect to the content of the research being monitored. This obligation also applies to all the doctors who take part in assessing the research plan.
4. If there are justified reasons, the thesis committee's chairperson can ask the academic committee to replace one or both committee members.
5. The thesis committee's members may ask the academic committee to be released from said committee and, if the request is accepted, the chairperson must propose a replacement.

## Chapter III. Supervision and monitoring of the doctoral student

### Article 39. The training plan

At the start of the doctoral programme after they have enrolled, each doctoral student must identify and agree, in accordance with their tutor or thesis supervisor's recommendation, on the specific training they will need in order to carry out their research plan. The training needs envisaged for each student are set out in a personalized training plan when they join the programme.

The Doctoral School offers a series of training activities that must be included in each doctoral student's training plan. This learning pathway determines which learning activities will be carried out by the doctoral student based on their needs and prior knowledge, and in accordance with the research plan they wish to carry out.

Doctoral students must have prior knowledge of research techniques and methods.

The training plan may include other training activities focusing on the relevant field of research or the development of interdisciplinary competencies. The training plan is reviewed and must be approved by the academic committee for the programme. Following its approval, each doctoral student undertakes to carry it out and must record in their activities report all the activities carried out or not carried out, justifying any changes to the original training plan.

## Article 40. The doctoral student's activities report

1. Once the student is enrolled in the doctoral programme, the personalized activities report is opened for each doctoral student. The document contains all the activities related with the doctoral student's training and research.
2. The activities report must be reviewed regularly by the tutor and the doctoral thesis supervisor and supervised annually by the academic committee responsible for the doctoral programme.
3. Keeping the activities report up-to-date will be the responsibility of the doctoral student.
4. The doctoral student, the tutor, the thesis supervisors, the programme's academic committee and the UOC Doctoral School may consult the activities report at any time.

- Article 39 amended and Article 40 added by agreement of the Executive Board on 4 November 2024.

## Article 41. The research plan

1. The research plan is the document drawn up by the doctoral student, with the approval of the thesis tutor and the thesis supervisor, that must include, at least, the methodology, objectives, resources and timeline for developing the thesis.

2. Doctoral students must, alongside the presentation of the research plan, present a request to the UOC's Research Ethics Committee to review the research to be conducted, in accordance with that established in its regulations.
3. Before the end of the first year, counting from the date of the first enrolment, and provided that they have passed the study plan for this period, the doctoral student must request acceptance of their research plan by the programme's academic committee, using the channels created for this purpose.
4. The programme's academic committee must decide with respect to acceptance of the research plan on the basis of the reports submitted by the tutor and the thesis supervisor and, if applicable, by the Ethics Committee and the members of the thesis committee and/or by the independent assessors. The decision must be notified to the doctoral student, the tutor and the thesis supervisor before the end of the semester in which the application was made.
5. The programme's academic committee must justify the unfavourable decisions made with respect to the research plan, giving the doctoral student six months to draft a new research plan that takes into account the recommendations made by the academic committee. If this second research plan leads to a negative resolution, the student may file an appeal with the Executive Board within 15 calendar days starting from the day after being notified of the negative resolution.

- 2 added, and 4 and 5 amended by agreement of the Executive Board on 28 June 2021.
- 2 amended by agreement of the Executive Board on 4 November 2024.

## Article 42. Annual monitoring and supervision of the doctoral programme

1. Starting from the academic year after that in which the research plan was accepted, the programme's academic committee must evaluate each year the progress achieved in the plan. The outcome of the assessment must be notified to the doctoral student, the tutor and the thesis supervisor.
2. During the research plan assessment process, the programme's academic committee must take into account the activities report and the reports submitted by the tutor and the thesis supervisor and, if applicable, the Ethics Committee and the members of the thesis committee.
3. A favourable assessment is an indispensable requirement for continuing in the programme. If the academic committee should detect major deficiencies, it may ask the doctoral student to present a new research plan within a period of 6 months. Should the deficiencies persist,

the academic committee shall issue a reasoned report, having given a hearing to the interested party, and the doctoral student will be removed from the programme.

- 2 amended by agreement of the Executive Board on 28 June 2021.
- 1 and 3 amended by agreement of the Executive Board on 4 November 2024.

## Article 43. Assessment of the specific bridging courses and formative activities

1. The specific bridging courses, consisting of courses included in the UOC's course offering, are evaluated in accordance with the procedures and criteria set forth in the UOC's academic regulations.
2. The other formative activities included in the doctoral students' study plan will be evaluated in accordance with the process established for each one, with the prior approval of the programme's academic committee.

- 1 amended by agreement of the Executive Board on 28 June 2021.

## Chapter IV. Submission of the doctoral thesis

### Article 44. Authorization of doctoral thesis submission

1. Upon completing the doctoral thesis, the doctoral student must request authorization from the programme's academic committee to submit it and for the format of the thesis defence.
2. Application for authorization to submit the doctoral thesis must be made using the channels created for this purpose, provided that:
  - a. The periods for completing the thesis and, if applicable, the extensions, as provided in Article 25, have not expired.
  - b. The last assessment of the research plan and the activities report has been favourable.
  - c. The student has been enrolled on a doctoral programme at the UOC for at least two semesters.
  - d. The student is enrolled on the doctoral programme in the semester when the submission is made.

3. The application must be accompanied, at least, by the following documents:
  - a. A report by the thesis supervisor and, if applicable, by the members of the thesis committee, in favour of authorizing submission of the thesis.
  - b. The activities report with the activities that the doctoral student has carried out.
  - c. An abstract of the doctoral thesis, maximum 4,000 characters, written in Catalan, Spanish and English. If the doctoral thesis is written in a language other than the above, pursuant to Article 30, an abstract must also be given in this language.
  - d. A copy of the doctoral thesis, the doctoral student's CV and the activities report, in digital format.
  - e. The complementary documents stipulated for the theses presented as a collection of contributions, theses written in languages other than Catalan, Spanish or English, under co-tutorship and with the mention of International Doctorate or other mentions.
  - f. A written request regarding the format of the defence of the doctoral thesis: in person, online or hybrid.
4. The academic committee for the programme must ask at least two external doctoral degree holders with expertise in the field of the doctoral thesis to draw up independent and anonymous reports on the thesis, which may include proposals for improvement. One of these experts – but not both – may be a member of the thesis supervisory committee, provided that they are neither the tutor nor the supervisor of the thesis and they have not published any papers arising therefrom with the doctoral student. These people may form part of the thesis examination panel. Based on the content of the reports, the academic committee will give the doctoral student a period of time to respond and, if necessary, to make any appropriate changes to the doctoral thesis before submitting it. The academic committee must also request an anti-plagiarism report from the appropriate unit. If any of the reports are still pending after 45 calendar days, the academic committee must decide whether to authorize the submission of the thesis.
5. Having requested the above reports, the academic committee will ask the thesis supervisor to propose between five and seven doctors from five different universities or institutions, who can serve on the panel that will judge the thesis. These doctors must meet the requirements of Article 55. This proposal must be accompanied by their CVs and their agreement to be members of the panel.
6. In the light of the documentation received, the programme's academic committee will proceed to authorize or not authorize submission of the doctoral thesis.
7. If it does not authorize submission, the academic committee must notify this to the doctoral student, the supervisor and the tutor, giving the reasons for the decision and granting the

doctoral student a further period to reapply for submission once the academic committee's recommendations to improve the doctoral thesis have been included.

- 2 c. added and 4 amended by agreement of the Executive Board on 28 June 2021.
- 1, 3 and 5 amended by agreement of the Executive Board on 24 July 2023.
- 2 and 4 amended by agreement of the Executive Board on 4 November 2024.

## Article 45. Submission of the doctoral thesis

If it should authorize submission, the academic committee must notify this to the doctoral student, the thesis supervisor, the tutor and the Doctoral School. Within a period of five working days after authorization, submission of the thesis is announced publicly on the website and a period of 15 calendar days is opened so that any doctor can examine it and, if applicable, send a letter to the programme's academic committee with any comments that they may consider appropriate.

## Chapter V. Oral examination and defence of the doctoral thesis

### Article 46. Authorization of oral examination and defence of the thesis

1. Upon expiry of the period for submitting the thesis and after receiving the corresponding documentation, the academic committee will proceed to authorize or reject the oral examination and defence of the thesis, taking into account the comments that, if applicable, it may have received during the period of public display of the submission.
2. Should oral examination and defence of the thesis not be authorized, the programme's academic committee must present a reasoned report giving the reasons why authorization is refused. The report must be notified to the doctoral student, the thesis supervisor and the tutor and, if applicable, the members of the thesis committee, giving the reasons for the decision. If the doctoral student wishes to submit the doctoral thesis again, they must take into account the report's content and apply again for authorization.
3. If oral examination and defence of the thesis is authorized, the academic committee will notify this to the doctoral student, the thesis supervisor and the tutor and, if applicable, the members of the thesis committee.

4. The doctoral student, within ten calendar days from the day after being authorized to defend their thesis, must pay the fees for the right to the oral examination and defence of their thesis, and they must provide the Doctoral School with, in digital format, the definitive thesis, their CV and the up-to-date activities report.
5. After oral examination and defence of the thesis has been authorized, the doctoral student has a maximum period of four months to take the oral examination and defence of the thesis. The programme's academic committee may extend this period, provided that there are sufficient reasons for this. If the four months elapse without the doctoral student having carried out the oral examination and defence of the thesis, they will have to repeat the procedures for authorization of submission or oral examination and defence of the thesis, if the academic committee so decides.

- 4 amended by agreement of the Executive Board on 4 November 2024.

## Article 47. Joint authorization of submission and oral examination and defence of the doctoral thesis

Submission and oral examination and defence of the thesis may be authorized simultaneously, while accepting that authorization of the oral examination and defence may be revoked, depending on the comments that, if applicable, may be received during the period of public display of the thesis.

## Article 48. Call of the oral examination and defence of the doctoral thesis

1. The panel chairperson sets the date for oral examination and defence of the thesis and the Doctoral School calls the public defence of the thesis.
2. At least seven calendar days before the scheduled date, the Doctoral School will notify in writing the public defence of the doctoral thesis to the other members of the panel, the doctoral student, the thesis supervisor and the thesis tutor. The Doctoral School will announce the event by publishing it on the website and other media that it considers appropriate.

## Article 49. Oral examination and defence of the doctoral thesis

1. Oral examination and defence takes place in a public event between 1 September and 31 July, Mondays to Fridays, excluding the public holidays of the place chosen for the event. In justified cases and at the request of the panel chairperson, the Doctoral School may set a date different from those indicated above.
2. As stated in Article 54.2 of these regulations, the thesis panel members will have the doctoral student's updated activities report and CV. Neither the activities report nor the doctoral student's CV generates a quantitative score, but they are qualitative assessment tools that complement assessment of the doctoral thesis.
3. The oral examination and defence may take place in person, online or in a hybrid format in one of the university's rooms or on one of its platforms. The format is requested at the time of the submission. The examination consists of a presentation and defence of the research project carried out by the doctoral student before the panel members.

Exceptionally, and at the prior request of the academic committee, the director of the Doctoral School may authorize defence of the doctoral thesis at places that do not belong to the UOC. In this case, it must be assured that these regulations and the processes established for assessment of the thesis are complied with.

4. The panel members may ask the doctoral student such questions that they consider appropriate. Furthermore, the people with a doctoral degree that are present at the public defence may ask questions at the time and in the manner indicated by the panel chairperson.
5. After the oral examination and defence of the thesis, each member of the panel gives a written assessment of the thesis and its defence. Subsequently, the panel issues a written report and the overall mark given to the thesis, using the following scale: "fail", "pass", "merit" or "excellent".
6. At the end of the event, the panel chairperson will publicly announce the mark obtained by the doctoral student. The secretary issues the corresponding certificate of the mark given, which must be signed by all the members of the panel and forwarded to the Doctoral School.
7. If the thesis has been awarded an overall mark of excellent, the panel may propose that the thesis be given the mention *cum laude*, if this is unanimously approved by secret ballot.
8. The vote will be given individually in person or online. When the defence is online or in hybrid format, voting is carried out on the Doctoral School's platform. If the defence is in person, the panel secretary must attach the votes to the rest of the documentation and send them to the Doctoral School.

9. If the doctoral student should not agree with the overall mark given, they may submit, within a period of ten calendar days counting from the day after the oral examination and defence of the thesis, a reasoned request for review addressed to the Doctoral School's management. For its part, within a period of ten days counting from the day after the date of receipt of the request, the Doctoral School's management must notify this request to the thesis panel chairperson, who must draw up a review report and send it to the Doctoral School within a maximum period of ten days. The School will notify the outcome of the review to the doctoral student within a maximum period of five calendar days after receipt of the review report.

If the doctoral student does not agree with the review, they may file an appeal to the rector of the UOC within a maximum period of one month counting from the day after receiving notification of the review. If this period elapses without any appeal being made, the Doctoral School's management will execute the panel's decision. If the review report recommends changing the mark, the Doctoral School will enter the change in the doctoral student's academic record and will notify it, together with the review report, to the doctoral student within a period of 10 working days counting from the day after receiving the above-stated modification.

10. If the doctoral student meets the corresponding requirements to opt for any other mention in the doctoral degree certificate (such as the mention of International Doctorate), the panel secretary will make a record of this in the document certifying the mark given to the thesis.

- 2, 3 and 8 amended by agreement of the Executive Board on 24 July 2023.

## Article 50. Defence of the doctoral thesis by electronic means

1. The doctoral student and the panel members must use telecommunication technologies that enable the necessary immediate interaction and simultaneous exchange of information by image, sound and, if applicable, such data that are considered relevant. The doctoral student and the members of the jury interacting online must ensure that they have the necessary technical resources.
2. The doctoral student must appear before the panel at the appointed day and time using the appropriate electronic means. The panel will verify the doctoral student's identity, either because they are known personally to the panel's members or by showing proof of identity to the institution where the defence will be carried out. If the student's identity cannot be verified before or during the thesis defence, the defence will be void. The oral examination document will be signed in accordance with the instructions given by the academic committee.

3. If technical problems should arise that prevent adequate communication between the doctoral student and the panel members, it is not possible to guarantee correct identification of the doctoral student or circumstances arise that interfere with the event, the panel chairperson may suspend it for as long as may be required to enable the thesis defence to be carried out without interruptions. The panel chairperson will decide on the continuation of the defence on the basis of their judgement, in accordance with that stipulated in Article 52.
4. Defence of the thesis by electronic means must comply with the same requirements and have the same effects as defence in person.

- 1 amended by agreement of the Executive Board on 28 June 2021.
- 2, 3 and 4 amended by agreement of the Executive Board on 24 July 2023.
- 2 amended by agreement of the Executive Board on 4 November 2024.

## Article 51. Participation of panel members by electronic means

1. In justified circumstances, the doctoral programme's academic committee may authorize a panel member, who may not be the secretary, to verify remotely and by electronic means their intervention in the thesis defence.
2. The person concerned will send their request to the chairperson, who in turn will forward it to the doctoral programme's academic committee, giving at least one month's prior notice before the date scheduled for defence of the thesis.
3. The request must be justified by professional reasons, illness or disability.
4. The academic committee will decide and proceed in accordance with paragraph 3 of Article 50. Should there be more than one request, the one that is considered most justified on the basis of the concurrent personal and professional circumstances will prevail.
5. The academic committee will take appropriate steps to ensure the identity of the person concerned and also to ensure that the signature of the oral examination of the thesis, the corresponding report and the vote, which must be given secretly, can be verified satisfactorily and be made available, if applicable, to the panel's secretary.
6. In the event of replacement of any of the panel members, the substitute replacing them can participate by electronic means, subject to prior authorization by the Doctoral School. In this case, a maximum of two panel members may take part in the thesis defence by electronic means.

## Article 52. Incidents

1. In order for the panel to be validly formed, three members must attend (chairperson, secretary and member).
2. If the oral examination and defence of the thesis cannot be carried out due to a situation of force majeure, the chairperson, in coordination with the Doctoral School, will recall the oral examination and defence, which must take place during the following three months. This announcement must be made at least 24 hours beforehand.
3. Should any of the panel members not be able to attend for a justified reason after announcement of the oral examination and defence of the thesis, the panel chairperson must replace this person with a substitute. If it is the panel chairperson who will be absent, the substitute will be appointed by the academic committee. In all cases, the limitations and conditions as regards panel membership set forth in Article 55 of these regulations will be observed.
4. If finally the thesis defence cannot be held within the required time or there are not enough substitutes to ensure the presence of three members (between incumbents and substitutes), while observing the limitations and conditions regarding thesis panel membership set forth in these regulations, the academic committee will appoint a new panel to assess the doctoral thesis, in accordance with the procedure set forth in these regulations.
5. If the doctoral student should not attend the doctoral thesis defence without a justified reason, this will be stated in the corresponding report and the doctoral student will have to reapply for authorization of oral examination and defence of the thesis.

### Article 53. Procedure for preparing, authorizing, submitting, defending and publishing doctoral theses subject to a confidentiality agreement or an intellectual or industrial property protection process

1. Upon completion of the doctoral thesis, any doctoral student wishing authorization of submission, defence and publication of the doctoral thesis to be subject to a confidentiality agreement or an intellectual or industrial property protection process must request this from the doctoral programme's academic committee.
2. The application must include:
  - a. Reports from the thesis supervisor and tutor about the confidentiality or protection procedure applicable to the doctoral thesis.

- b. A copy of the thesis signed by the doctoral student and the thesis supervisor, consisting of a public report that excludes the aspects protected by a confidentiality agreement or an intellectual or industrial property protection process and a private addendum that contains these protected aspects and which is given only to the people who will assess the thesis.
    - c. The original or a certified copy of the documents that accredit that the doctoral thesis is bound by a confidentiality agreement or an intellectual or industrial property protection process.
  3. The academic committee may ask the doctoral student to amend the content of the doctoral thesis report and also to furnish all the supplementary documentation that it considers necessary to assess the application.
  4. The academic committee will give a decision with respect to this application within a maximum period of one month, counting from the day after the date of submission of the application. The application will only be accepted when it is substantiated that secrecy is absolutely indispensable for the success of the confidentiality or protection process. Acceptance will be notified to the doctoral student and also to the thesis supervisor and tutor.
  5. The members of the programme's academic committee and the Doctoral School staff who have access to the thesis are required to keep the thesis' content in absolute confidence and must sign the corresponding confidentiality undertakings. The signed confidentiality undertakings are kept by the Doctoral School; a copy may be provided to the doctoral student, at the latter's request.
  6. If the academic committee decides in favour of the application, the procedure set forth in Chapter IV of these regulations will be followed, taking into account that the private addendum will not be published in the repositories and will only be disclosed to the people who must assess the thesis.
  7. All of the people who must assess the doctoral thesis, who must be advised expressly that the thesis is subject to a confidentiality agreement or an intellectual or industrial property protection process, must have access to the full version of the doctoral thesis and are required to maintain strict secrecy and confidentiality with respect to its contents. Before sending them the doctoral thesis, the panel members must send the duly signed confidentiality undertaking to the Doctoral School.
  8. In the case of theses subject to confidentiality or protection processes, only the public report will be published in the institutional repository or TDX repository. When the confidentiality or protection process has been completed, which the doctoral student must duly notify to the UOC, it may be replaced by the full version.

9. During preparation of the doctoral thesis, the programme's academic committee will arbitrate the confidentiality procedures in order to carry out the annual assessment and monitoring of the research plan.
10. The UOC Doctoral School will provide a confidentiality document template to those people who are required to sign one.
11. In accordance with the current legislation, doctoral students are generally the full owners of all the intellectual or industrial property rights pertaining to them in relation to their doctoral thesis, and the materials and content used to prepare it.

Each doctoral student undertakes to guarantee to the UOC that they are the original author of their thesis, and of the materials and content used to prepare it. They therefore undertake to guarantee where appropriate that they will have the necessary authorization or licence of use in relation to any third-party content or any confidential information belonging to the UOC or third parties that may be included therein.

If a student contributed to papers, publications or other documents produced by the UOC, either individually or as a research team member, and/or part of their thesis is included in any such documents, the university will respect their moral right to be named as an author.

Doctoral students are entitled to exercise intellectual or industrial property rights over any new results separate from their thesis in proportion to their contribution thereto as a result of their research.

The provisions of the Regulations on the Intellectual and Industrial Property of R&I Activities at the UOC relating to the exploitation of intellectual or industrial property rights and the distribution of profit from the exploitation of results of doctoral students studying with a grant, with own or external funding, and with or without an employment contract, must be observed.

All of the above is without prejudice to any agreements that may have been reached with third parties through contracts or arrangements, or to any alternative agreements made with the doctoral student. In such cases, the terms agreed between the parties must be adhered to in determining the ownership and regime of the intellectual or industrial property rights relating to the thesis, preparatory materials, and results.

- 11 added by agreement of the Executive Board on 24 July 2023.
- 11 amended by agreement of the Executive Board on 4 November 2024.



## Chapter VI. The thesis panel

### Article 54. Approval and appointment of the panel

1. With authorization of submission of the thesis and its oral examination and defence, the programme's academic committee approves and appoints the thesis panel members, taking into account the proposal of article 44.5. From among the panel members, it designates the chairperson, the secretary, the member, and a first and second substitute.

The panel is composed of three incumbent members and two substitutes, all of them independent experts and holders of doctoral degrees. The five members come from different institutions, so that only one at most can be a member of the UOC's academic and research staff, and the make-up of the panel must respect the principles of gender equality.

2. The Doctoral School will send each panel member a copy of the thesis, the doctoral student's duly updated CV and activities report. The copy sent to the panel members must be identical to the thesis that has been submitted.
3. If applicable, the panel members must notify their waiver of membership of the panel to the Doctoral School. In this case, the Doctoral School will appoint the first substitute or, alternatively, the second substitute as incumbent member of the panel. The waiver and appointment of the substitute must be notified to the doctoral student, the thesis supervisor, the tutor and the substitute.
4. If any panel member should be subject to any of the grounds for withdrawal set forth in these regulations, they must refrain from becoming a member of the panel and must notify this immediately to the Doctoral School by means of a reasoned letter. The School will issue a decision on this matter within a maximum period of three days.
5. During the five days following appointment of the thesis panel, the doctoral student may challenge the panel members to whom any of the causes of objection stated in this article are applicable. The document challenging the appointment, which must identify and describe the grounds on which it is based, must be addressed to the Doctoral School, who will forward it to the challenged member. The day after receiving the document, this member must state in writing whether they consider that there are sufficient grounds for the objection. After having carried out the appropriate verifications, the Doctoral School must give its decision within a maximum period of three days. The procedure is suspended for such time as the objection is considered substantive.
6. The following causes are grounds for withdrawal and/or objection:

- a. The existence of a conflict of interest with the research carried out by the doctoral student and/or with the development of the thesis.
  - b. Be related by kinship with the doctoral student up to the fourth degree or by marriage up to the second degree.
  - c. Have a close friendship or open hostility with the doctoral student, thesis supervisor or thesis tutor.
  - d. Other causes that the academic committee may justifiably consider.
7. The decisions given by the Doctoral School concerning causes for withdrawal or objection are not open to appeal. If the withdrawal of or objection to a panel member is accepted, the procedure described in paragraph 3 of this article will be followed.

- 1 amended by agreement of the Executive Board on 4 November 2024.

## Article 55. Panel members

1. All panel members must be acknowledged doctors in their field and have proven research experience. It is up to the doctoral programme's academic committee to accredit the research experience of the members proposed for the panel.
2. Under no circumstances may the thesis supervisors or the thesis tutor be members of the panel, except for theses presented within the framework of bilateral co-tutorship agreements with foreign universities, having provided for this possibility in the agreement.
3. At most, one member (who is neither the supervisor nor the tutor) of the thesis committee may be a member of the thesis panel.
4. When the doctoral thesis is presented as a collection of contributions, the co-authors of the contributions may not be members of the panel either.
5. If the doctoral thesis is written in a language other than the languages stated in Article 30.1 of these regulations, the panel members must know the language in which the thesis is written or in which it is planned to carry out all or part of the defence.
6. If the doctoral student is in a position to request the mention of International Doctorate on the doctoral degree certificate, the provisions of Article 69 must be taken into account.

- 2 amended by agreement of the Executive Board on 4 November 2024.

## Chapter VII. Archival and publication of the doctoral thesis

### Article 56. Archival of the doctoral thesis

1. After the doctoral thesis is approved, the UOC Doctoral School will file the authorized copy of the doctoral thesis submitted in electronic format.
2. The UOC Doctoral School sends an electronic copy of the thesis and all the complementary information to the appropriate bodies. In addition, the procedure is begun for including the doctoral thesis in the online catalogue of doctoral theses.

### Article 57. Publication of the doctoral thesis

1. The UOC Doctoral School will order publication of the digital version of the doctoral thesis in the UOC's institutional repository and in the TDX (Tesis Doctorals en Xarxa) service or equivalent. Before submitting the doctoral thesis in digital version, the author must sign the corresponding thesis publication authorization agreement.
2. The doctoral student may request a stay on publication of the thesis for a period of one year which can be extended for a further year, for duly justified reasons and with the prior authorization of the Doctoral School. Provision of a justifying report by the thesis supervisor(s) at the time of submitting the thesis will be an indispensable requirement for this.
3. If the thesis should contain aspects that are subject to a confidentiality agreement or an intellectual or industrial property protection process, only the public report will be published in the repositories.

- Amended by agreement of the Executive Board on 21 November 2016.

## Chapter VIII. Co-tutored doctoral theses

### Article 58. Co-tutored doctoral theses

With the goal of developing scientific cooperation between different research teams and facilitating the doctoral students' mobility, agreements may be signed with other universities, higher education centres that can grant doctoral degrees or other bodies that organize foreign doctoral programmes (hereinafter, institutions) to undertake jointly co-tutored doctoral theses. In this case, the doctoral student will perform their research work under the control and responsibility of a thesis supervisor in each of agreement's signatory institutions, which will award their respective doctoral degrees on the basis of a single defence of the doctoral thesis.

## Article 59. Application, authorization and implementation of the co-tutorship agreement

1. Doctoral students enrolled on a doctoral programme at the UOC may apply for co-tutorship of the thesis before that programme's academic committee. In this case, the doctoral student must have obtained acceptance of the research plan at the UOC.
2. However, it will not be possible to apply for co-tutorship when more than one year has elapsed since approval of the research plan.
3. Doctoral students from another institution who apply for co-tutorship in one of the UOC's doctoral programmes must accredit compliance with the corresponding access and admission requirements.
4. The academic committee will decide on the applications, either authorizing or not authorizing co-tutorship of the thesis.
5. If it is authorized by the academic committee, the agreement will be prepared as stated in Article 60 of these regulations.
6. Once the agreement has been validated and signed by all the participating institutions, a copy is sent to the doctoral student, the coordinator of the doctoral programme, the thesis supervisor, the tutor and the Doctoral School.

## Article 60. The co-tutorship agreement

1. In order to formalize a co-tutored doctoral thesis, the participating institutions must sign a specific agreement.
2. If the oral examination and defence of the thesis takes place at the UOC, the co-tutorship agreement must comply with the regulations applicable to the UOC's doctoral studies.
3. Applying the principle of coordination and reciprocity, the signatory institutions acknowledge the validity of the doctoral thesis defended within their respective academic frameworks and award the doctoral degree by virtue of the legislation applicable to each case.
4. The agreement must be written in one of the languages indicated in Article 30.1 of these regulations and must specify, at least:
  - a. The thesis co-supervisors.
  - b. The periods during which the doctoral student must carry out research in each of the institutions.
  - c. Whether the doctoral student will work full-time or part-time on the thesis.
  - d. The number and requirements of the thesis panel members.
  - e. The institution where the oral examination and defence of the thesis will take place.
  - f. The fact that both institutions undertake to award their respective doctoral degrees on the basis of a single defence of the doctoral thesis, subject to prior payment, if applicable, of the corresponding fee for issuing the certificate.
  - g. The language in which the thesis is written.
  - h. The procedure for submitting the doctoral thesis.
  - i. The language of the oral examination and defence.
  - j. The latest possible date of defence of the thesis, according to the doctoral programme's study system.

## Article 61. Monitoring and duration of the co-tutored thesis

1. The doctoral student will enrol each year for supervision, tutorship and assessment of the doctoral thesis at the UOC, including the academic year in which the thesis is submitted. The financial effects of this enrolment will be as specified in the corresponding agreement.
2. Pursuant to these regulations, the doctoral student must present each year to the academic committee a progress report on their doctoral thesis.
3. The doctoral student prepares the doctoral thesis under the control and responsibility of a thesis supervisor from each of the signatory institutions.
4. The time spent preparing the doctoral thesis is divided between the agreement's signatory institutions. The minimum period of enrolment at the UOC is two semesters.

## Article 62. Defence of the co-tutored doctoral thesis and doctoral degree certificate

1. The panel assesses the doctoral thesis in accordance with the regulations of the institution where the oral examination and defence is carried out.
2. The thesis will be defended once in one of the institutions. Payment of the fee for oral examination and defence of the thesis is made as provided by the institution where the thesis is defended. This aspect will be specified in the agreement.
3. Funding the panel's expenses is the responsibility of the institution where oral examination and defence of the thesis is carried out.
4. If the oral examination and defence of the thesis is carried out at the UOC, in addition to the documentation listed in these regulations, the doctoral student must provide the other institution's reports on the evaluations, annual monitoring and formative activities or equivalent documentation.
5. By virtue of the agreement and on the basis of a single defence of the doctoral thesis, each university undertakes to issue its own doctoral degree certificate, subject to payment of the fees for issuing the certificate.

## Article 63. Use and protection of the results of the co-tutored doctoral thesis

The signatory institutions must guarantee publication, exploitation and protection of the results of the co-tutored doctoral thesis, in accordance with the regulations applicable to each institution and expressly mentioning the participating institutions.

# Title IV. Issuing the doctoral degree certificate, academic certifications and special awards

## Chapter I. Doctoral degree certificate

### Article 64. General provisions

1. The doctoral degree certificate is official and valid for all of Spain.
2. The UOC abides by the rules of organization and procedure governing the university registries of official degrees that may be established in this respect, taking into account the principle of coordination with the National Register of Official University Graduates of the ministry responsible for education.
3. The format and content of the doctoral degree certificate is that established in current legislation. The doctoral degree certificate may include on its obverse the mention *cum laude*, “International Doctorate”, “Industrial Doctorate” or other permitted mentions and the text “thesis co-tutored with the University U”, provided that the circumstances defined in current legislation are met.
4. The doctoral degree certificates corresponding to university courses in Catalan are issued in Catalan and Spanish, and the official certificates corresponding to university courses in Spanish are only issued in Spanish.
5. In the case of programmes of studies given jointly by the UOC and foreign universities that lead to issue of a single certificate, when issue of the certificate corresponds to the UOC under the corresponding agreement, the certificate may include other languages, in addition to Spanish, as provided in the agreement.

### Article 65. Applying for the certificate

1. Once the doctoral degree has been successfully completed, the university closes the doctoral student's academic record and sends a notification so that the doctoral student can apply for the certificate.
2. The doctoral student must apply for the certificate through the Virtual Campus and provide the documentation set forth in paragraph 3 of this article. If the doctoral student does not provide the required documentation in the stipulated time, the application will not be processed. The financial consequences of reapplying for the certificate are set forth in the UOC's financial regulations.
3. To apply for the certificate, the person concerned must provide proof of their identity by means of the photocopy of the national ID card (DNI) or passport, which must be valid on the date of making the application.
4. After the application for obtaining the official certificate has been accepted and it has been verified that payment of the public price for issuing the certificate has been made, the UOC will issue ex officio a provisional supplementary certificate that temporarily takes the place of the certificate and has the same value. This certificate, which as a validity of one year from the date of issue, includes the basic data that must appear on the corresponding official certificate, and is signed by the rector or, if applicable, by the person to whom this function has been delegated and whose signature is recognized by the ministry responsible for universities. The validity of this provisional supplementary certificate may be extended when, for technical reasons, the university has not been able to issue the certificate.
5. The provisional supplementary certificate is sent by ordinary post to the usual address that the doctoral student has given in the Virtual Campus. The certificate is issued in two languages: Catalan and Spanish.

- Amended by agreement of the Executive Board on 21 November 2016.
- 4 by agreement of the Executive Board on 28 June 2021.

## Article 66. Issuing the certificate

1. Once the appropriate ministry has validated the certificate, the doctoral student will receive a notification inviting them to choose, within the time stipulated in the UOC's academic calendar, the place of delivery of their official university certificate from among the following:
  - a. Any of the centres belonging to the UOC's Regional Network.
  - b. Any of the branches of the appropriate ministry.

- c. Consular office or consular section of a Spanish embassy abroad. If the doctoral student should choose as place of delivery a Spanish consular office abroad, they must indicate to the university the exact address of the consular office chosen.
2. During the period given for notifying the place where it is wished to collect the certificate, the doctoral student may change the place of delivery initially chosen. The doctoral degree certificate will be delivered to the place indicated upon expiry of the above period.
3. By default, the doctoral degree certificate is delivered to the UOC's safekeeping centre.
4. When the certificate is available at the place of delivery chosen, a notification is sent to the doctoral student informing them that the certificate is ready for collection.
5. If the place of delivery chosen is one of the centres belonging to the UOC's Regional Network, the doctoral student has a period of one year, counting from the date of the notification, to collect their doctoral degree certificate. Once this period has expired, the doctoral degree certificate is deposited in the university's safekeeping centre.
6. If the place of delivery chosen is a branch of the appropriate ministry, a consular office or a consular section of a Spanish embassy abroad, this place will be responsible for safekeeping the certificate until it is delivered to the doctoral student.
7. The doctoral degree certificate will be kept for a period of five years, counting from the date of issue, by the centre that the doctoral student has chosen as place of delivery. If at the end of this period the student has not collected their doctoral degree certificate, the procedure set forth in current legislation on the matter will be followed.
8. At the time of collecting the doctoral degree certificate, the doctoral student must identify themselves with the same type of currently valid document with which it was issued, and sign both the official certificate and the receipt of delivery. If the doctoral degree certificate is collected by an authorized person, this person must identify themselves with a currently valid national ID card (DNI) or passport, furnish a certified photocopy of the notarized power of attorney that authorizes them to collect the certificate on behalf of its holder, and sign the receipt of delivery.
9. If the doctoral student should die before delivery of the doctoral degree certificate, the certificate may be collected by their closest relatives. In this case, the closest relatives must furnish a certified photocopy of the doctoral student's death certificate, provide proof of their kinship and furnish the provisional supplementary certificate.

## Article 67. Issuing duplicates

1. In the event of loss, theft, total or partial destruction or rectification of the certificate's contents, the doctoral student must request, through the Virtual Campus, issue of a duplicate of the certificate and pay the corresponding public price.
2. The amount of the public price for issuing a duplicate of the official certificate and, if applicable, the fee for publishing the announcement in the Official State Gazette (BOE) of the Government of Spain indicated in paragraph 3 of this article, must be paid by the doctoral student, unless the reason for the loss, theft, destruction or rectification of the official certificate is attributable to the UOC. In this case, the procedure for issuing a duplicate will be started without the doctoral student having to pay any amount.
3. In the case of loss or theft of the certificate, it is a necessary requirement that an announcement be published in the Official State Gazette (BOE) of the Government of Spain with the intention of facilitating, if applicable, the corresponding claims. If such claims are not received within a period of 30 days, counting from the date of publication of the announcement, the procedure for issuing the duplicate will be started. The initiative for publishing the announcement in the Official State Gazette (BOE) of the Government of Spain corresponds to the UOC, after having paid the cost of publishing the announcement.
4. If data are rectified that concern the certificate's content (data that are printed on the certificate, such as a change of the holder's name or nationality), the doctoral student must furnish the document that provides irrefutable proof of the necessity for this rectification. If the original certificate is rectified as a result of the data provided by the doctoral student to the UOC, it is considered that the reason for the rectification is attributable to the student. Change of name due to rectification of gender in the Civil Registry is not considered a cause attributable to the doctoral student.
5. Awarding of an extraordinary prize also gives rise to issue of a duplicate. In this case, the doctoral student must request issue of a duplicate through the Virtual Campus, although they will not be required to pay any public prices for issue of the certificate.
6. The UOC will not issue any duplicate of the official certificate due to rectification, partial destruction or awarding of an extraordinary prize without having received first the original certificate or the part of the original that enables identification of the certificate prior to rectification.

- 2 and 5 amended by agreement of the Executive Board on 28 June 2021.

## Article 68. International doctoral certification

1. The doctoral students can request the international doctoral certification. This means that the doctoral certification will be included on the back of the certificate, provided that the following conditions are met:
  - a. During the period of tuition required to obtain the doctoral degree, the doctoral student has spent a minimum period of three months outside of Spain at a renowned higher education institution or research centre, and has followed a course of study or performed research work that has been recognized by the university. The stay abroad can be split into a maximum of two periods. The period abroad and the activities must have been endorsed by the thesis supervisor and authorized by the doctoral programme's academic committee; they must be included in the doctoral student's activities report.
  - b. Part of the doctoral thesis, at least the abstract and the conclusions, must be written and presented in one of the languages routinely used for scientific communication in his/her field of knowledge. This language must necessarily be different from any of the official or co-official languages of Spain, except when the candidate's period abroad takes place in countries where one of these languages is also official there.
  - c. A report on the thesis has been issued by at least two experts belonging to a higher education institution or research centre in a state other than Spain.
  - d. At least one expert from a non-Spanish higher education institution or research centre, with the title of doctor, and different from the person responsible for the period abroad mentioned in paragraph a. of this article, was a member of the panel that assessed the thesis.
2. The thesis has been defended at the UOC or, in the case of joint doctoral degree programmes, in any of the participating universities, or in the terms set forth in the corresponding cooperation agreement.
3. Before requesting the doctoral degree certificate, and within a maximum period of three months counting from the day after the date of defence of the thesis, the doctoral students may apply to the programme's academic committee for inclusion of the international doctoral certification. With their application, the doctoral student will have to accredit that the circumstances indicated in point 1 are fulfilled, attaching the following documentation:

- a. Certificate issued by the person responsible for the research work or studies indicated in paragraph 1.a, which accredits the period spent outside of Spain, stating the starting and ending dates.
  - b. Certificate issued by the thesis panel secretary which accredits the circumstances corresponding to paragraphs 1.b and 1.d.
  - c. The expert reports indicated in paragraph 1.c together with an abridged CV of the experts issuing them.
4. On the basis of the documentation provided, the programme's academic committee will decide whether the doctoral student is eligible for the international doctoral certification. If the decision is favourable, the academic committee will issue a certificate granting this certification, which the doctoral student must attach to the certificate application so that it is included in the above-stated certificate.

## Article 69. International co-tutorship

The doctoral degree certificate will include on the back the certification of “thesis co-tutored with the University U”, provided that the following conditions are met:

1. The doctoral thesis is supervised by two or more doctors from two universities, one Spanish and another foreign, who will have to sign a co-tutorship agreement.
2. During the period of tuition required to obtain the doctoral degree, the doctoral student has spent at least six months at the institution with which the co-tutorship agreement is concluded, performing research work, either as a single period or divided into several periods. The periods and activities will be set forth in the co-tutorship agreement.
3. The doctoral student must have obtained two or more certificates for their doctoral thesis, one for each of the higher education institutions responsible for the development of the thesis.
4. The academic committee for the programme will decide, based on the documentation provided, whether the doctoral student is eligible for international doctoral certification, in accordance with the procedure and terms set forth in Article 68 herein.

- 3 and 4 added by agreement of the Executive Board on 4 November 2024.

## Article 70. Industrial doctorate certification

The industrial doctoral certification may be granted when the following conditions are met:

1. Existence of an employment or commercial contract with the doctoral student. The contract may be concluded by a company from the private or public sector or with a public administration.
2. Doctoral students must be involved in an industrial research or experimental development project carried out at the company or government body where they render their services. Universities, public research bodies and university hospitals are excluded. This specialization may, in exceptional circumstances, be carried out at one of the types of institutions mentioned above, except universities, provided the content of the thesis is, predominantly, applied research. The research project in which the doctoral student is involved must be directly related to their thesis. Proof of this direct relationship must be provided in the form of a report, which must be approved by the UOC.
3. The thesis is developed within the framework of a cooperation agreement between the university and the company or public administration in which the doctoral student renders their services. Among other things, the agreement will regulate the obligations of the university and the company or public administration, and the ownership and protection of the results deriving from the doctoral thesis.
4. The doctoral student has a thesis tutor designated by the UOC and a supervisor designated by the company or public administration who, if necessary, may be the thesis supervisor, as provided in the doctoral programme regulations. The UOC and the company or public administration will select the candidate jointly.
5. The doctoral student must have been hired by the organization, company or public body in which they are carrying out the research project for at least one year while working on their thesis, and a significant part of the work on the thesis must be carried out at that organization, company or public body.

- 2 and 3 amended and 5 added by agreement of the Executive Board on 4 November 2024.

## Chapter II. European Diploma Supplement to the doctoral degree certificate

### Article 71. General provisions

1. The European Diploma Supplement (DS) is the document that accompanies the doctoral degree certificate. The Diploma Supplement contains unified information, personalized for each doctor, about the courses taken, the results obtained, the professional skills acquired and the qualification's level in the national higher education system.
2. The UOC keeps a record of the supplements issued by it in its University Register of Official Certificates.
3. The Diploma Supplement can only be issued when all the courses leading to an official university degree have been completed. In the case of uncompleted university studies, only a certificate of studies is issued with the content of the applicable supplement template.
4. In the case of joint programmes of studies between Spanish universities leading to obtainment of a single official university degree that is valid in all of Spain, a single supplement is issued. In the case of joint programmes of studies between Spanish and foreign universities that lead to a double degree, the Spanish university only issues one supplement which gives the details of the double degree.

### Article 72. Applying for the Diploma Supplement

1. Accepted applications for official certificates include simultaneously the issue of the Diploma Supplement.
2. Applications for the Diploma Supplement made separately from the official certificate are only processed if the application for the official certificate has been accepted and payment of the fee for issuing the Diploma Supplement has been made. Application for issue of the Diploma Supplement must be made through the Virtual Campus.

### Article 73. Issuing the Diploma Supplement

The Diploma Supplement is sent by registered post to the usual address given previously by the doctoral student in the Virtual Campus.

## Chapter III. Special doctoral awards

### Article 74. Purpose

This chapter sets out the conditions and requirements that must be fulfilled in order to grant a special award to the best doctoral thesis submitted at the UOC.

### Article 75. Awarding of special awards

1. Winners will be issued a diploma certifying that they have received a special award.
2. The grant of the special award must be noted in the student's academic transcript and in any academic certificates that may be requested by the student.
3. Students who have received an award are entitled to reimbursement of the public price paid for the issuance of the university degree certificate.

### Article 76. Special awards ceremony

The special awards are handed out once a year at a ceremony that may be held in person or online and may be part of the graduation ceremony or the academic year opening ceremony.

### Article 77. General criteria

Each academic year, special doctoral awards may be granted to the best theses defended in each of the doctoral programmes at the UOC.

No more than one special award may be granted for every ten theses (or fraction thereof) successfully defended in each doctoral programme.

The panel may decide to declare the awards void. In any case, the number of awards granted may not exceed the stated maximum, awards for one programme may not be used for a different programme, and awards declared void in previous years may not be carried forward. In addition, awards may not be granted *ex aequo*.

Jointly supervised theses will only be eligible for a special award if they have been defended at the UOC.

### Article 78. Requirements for granting a special award

Each academic year, special doctoral awards may be granted to theses that meet the following requirements:

- a) They must have been successfully defended at the UOC during the academic year immediately before the one in which the award is granted.
- b) They must have obtained the highest grade with a cum laude mention, without the doctoral degree holders who wrote them having to request it.

## Article 79. Procedure

Theses are assessed by a panel established each year specifically for each doctoral programme. The panel has three members, all of whom are professors or researchers employed by the UOC, are doctoral degree holders and have proven research experience involved in the doctoral programme.

The panel may request the collaboration of expert doctoral degree holders whenever necessary due to the specific nature of the subject of a thesis or to the number of theses submitted. Thesis supervisors, joint supervisors and tutors may not be members of the panel if the thesis supervised or tutored by them is a candidate for a special award.

The members of the panel will be proposed by the doctoral programme coordinator and confirmed by the director of the UOC Doctoral School. The coordinator will propose a president and a secretary from among the members of the panel. The secretary must draw up minutes of meetings, which must be approved by the president.

Once the theses have been assessed, the panel will send a list of winners to the director of the UOC Doctoral School. The director of the Doctoral School will send this list to the office of the vice rector with responsibility for research so that the Governing Council (or any body to which this task may be delegated) can confirm the grant of the awards if appropriate.

- Chapter III added by agreement of the Governing Council on 17 June 2025.

# Title V. Academic equivalence to doctorate level

## Chapter I. General provisions

## Article 80. Recognition of academic equivalence to doctorate level

1. The university's rector may officially recognize the academic training completed to obtain a foreign higher education qualification as being equivalent to that required to obtain an academic level of doctor from the UOC.
2. With recognition of equivalence, the foreign degree is granted the effects corresponding to the academic level of doctor in all of Spain, valid from the date on which the corresponding certificate is issued.
3. Recognition of equivalence does not imply, under any circumstances, validation, declaration of equivalence or recognition of any other foreign degree held by the student, nor recognition at a level different from that of doctor.

## Article 81. Requirements to be met by foreign university degrees

The foreign higher education qualifications eligible for a declaration of academic equivalence to doctorate level must meet the following requirements:

- a. Not have been part of a validation process.
- b. Have official academic validity in the country of origin.
- c. Have been issued by the appropriate authority in the country of origin, pursuant to this State's legislation.
- d. Accredited that the holder fulfils the requirements as regards the level of studies required in Spain to gain access to doctoral training.
- e. Accredited that the formative skills corresponding to the academic level of doctor have been attained.

## Article 82. Criteria for recognition of academic equivalence to doctorate level

Recognition of academic equivalence to doctorate level is carried out in accordance with the following criteria:

- a. Alignment between the academic level required for access to the courses of study leading to obtainment of the foreign degree and for access to the Spanish doctorate.
- b. Alignment between the duration and class load of the period of tuition required to obtain the foreign degree and the skills acquired as a consequence of this tuition and those of the Spanish doctorate.
- c. Alignment between the academic level of the foreign degree and the Spanish doctorate.

## Chapter II. Procedure for recognition of academic equivalence to doctorate level

### Article 83. Applying for recognition of equivalence

1. The application for academic equivalence to doctorate level is made through the channels and the periods established by the university, and must be accompanied by the documentation listed in Article 85.
2. The equivalence application has a public price. The amount of this public price, in the official university courses in Catalan, is that established by the Decree fixing the price of academic services provided by the public universities of Catalonia and by the UOC, and in the official university courses in Spanish and such other languages as may be established, it is the amount determined by the UOC's Board of Trustees.
3. Application for academic equivalence to doctorate level can be made simultaneously to more than one university. Any foreign degree that has been officially validated or declared academically equivalent to doctor at another university cannot undergo the equivalence procedure at the UOC. However, when the equivalence has been rejected, the holder can apply for it at the UOC.

- 2 amended by agreement of the Executive Board on 28 June 2021.

## Article 84. Documentation associated with the application for recognition of equivalence

1. The application for academic equivalence to doctorate level must be accompanied by the following documentation:
  - a. Photocopy of your ID card (DNI), foreigner ID (NIE) or passport.
  - b. Certified photocopy of the doctoral degree certificate.
  - c. Certified photocopy of the academic transcript, stating the courses, the marks obtained, the credits, the course's assignment type, the exam sitting and year in which the degree was passed. When the marking system is different from that established in Royal Decree 99/2011, of 28 January, it will be necessary to include the explanation of marking system of the university of origin.
  - d. Explanatory memorandum of the doctoral thesis, written in Catalan, Spanish or English, identifying the panel members and stating the mark obtained.
  - e. A copy of the doctoral thesis.
  - f. Sworn statement to the effect that the degree has not been validated or declared academically equivalent to doctor at another university.
2. Unless the documentation has been issued by a Member State of the European Union (EU), it must be submitted with the corresponding legalization by diplomatic channels or, if applicable, with the Apostille of the Hague Convention of 5 October 1961. If the original documentation is not written in Catalan, Spanish or English, a translation is required from a sworn translator or from the diplomatic or consular representation in Spain for the country of which the student is a citizen or, where applicable, for the country issuing the documentation.

## Article 85. Decision concerning the application for equivalence

1. The doctoral students have a period of 15 calendar days from submitting the application for recognition of academic equivalence to doctorate level to pay the public price and furnish the required documentation.
2. Once this period has elapsed without having paid the public price or without having furnished the documentation, the application for recognition of equivalence will be considered invalid, and, to obtain recognition of equivalence, a new application will have to be made during the next scheduled period.
3. The financial consequences of an application for recognition of academic equivalence to doctorate level considered invalid because the documentation has not been furnished in the

required time, in spite of having paid the corresponding public price, are set forth in the UOC's financial regulations.

4. The applications for recognition of academic equivalence to doctorate level that are considered valid are assessed and decided by the academic committee of the programme that is considered most qualified to assess the formative skills acquired by the student, in accordance with the criteria set forth in Article 82.
5. The decision on the application for recognition of equivalence is notified to the student by email at the address they have given to the university.

- 1, 2 and 3 amended by agreement of the Executive Board on 28 June 2021.

## Article 86. Appeal against the decision concerning the application for recognition of equivalence

1. After notifying the decision on the application for recognition of academic equivalence to doctorate level, the student has a period of seven calendar days to file an appeal.
2. The decision on the appeal made by the student is considered final and no further appeal may be made against it.

## Article 87. Issuing the certificate of equivalence

1. The recognition of academic equivalence to doctorate level will be accredited by means of the corresponding certificate of equivalence issued by the UOC's rector.
2. Prior to issuing the certificate of equivalence, the university will notify this to the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport's Subdirector General for Degrees and Recognition of Qualifications so that it may be entered in the special section of the National Register of Official University Graduates.

## First additional provision. Calculation of time limits

Unless stated otherwise, when the time limits are given in days, it is understood that they are calendar days. The time limits given in days are counted from the day after that on which the corresponding procedure is notified or published. August will not be included for the purpose of calculating time limits.

The time limits given in months or years are counted from the day after that on which the corresponding procedure is notified or published.

Any doubts that may arise with respect to the interpretation of calculations of time limits will be decided by the Doctoral School.

## Second additional provision. Honorary doctorate

The UOC may grant the distinction of honorary doctorate to those people who are considered to be worthy of this distinction on the basis of their exceptional academic, scientific or personal merits. The distinction of honorary doctorate is regulated in the UOC's regulations on honours and distinctions.

## Third additional provision

If there are any changes to the admission requirements and, where applicable, the criteria for assessing admission to the corresponding doctoral programme for students who hold an official university qualification from a country outside the EHEA, then:

- a. The Doctoral School may request a revision of the admission requirements and, if applicable, specific admission criteria.
- b. The body responsible for deciding the request is the vice rector responsible for academic organization.
- c. In the decision, it will be determined whether the academic level accredited by the student matches that required for admission to the corresponding doctoral programme.
- d. In the decision, the technical-legal report issued jointly by the Academic Secretary's Office and the Legal Office and the academic report issued by the corresponding doctoral programme's academic committee will be taken into account.
- e. The time given to make the decision will be 30 days from the day after requesting revision of admission requirements and, if applicable, specific admission criteria.

- Added by agreement of the Executive Board on 2 May 2016.
- Amended by agreement of the Executive Board on 4 November 2024.

## Fourth additional provision. Certification

In those cases in which the university considers it necessary and justified, certification of copies may be replaced by a sworn statement by the applicant in which they declare that the copy is an exact reproduction of the original.

- Added by agreement of the Executive Board on 21 November 2016.

### Fifth additional provision. Authorization of the verification of data

The doctoral student may authorize the university to verify their data and/or documentation by comparing them with the data held by a public administration. In these cases, the student will not have to furnish the corresponding supporting documentation.

- Added by agreement of the Executive Board on 21 November 2016.

### Sixth additional provision. Complaints within the framework of the doctoral studies

The complaints that may arise within the framework of the doctoral studies will be submitted, in the first instance, to the Doctoral School. If the doctoral student does not agree to the decision made by the Doctoral School, they may appeal, in the second and last instance, to the Research and Innovation Committee. This being without prejudice to such other remedies to which the doctoral student may be entitled.

- Added by agreement of the Executive Board on 21 November 2016.

## First transitional provision. Regulations applicable to students who started their doctoral studies before academic year 2024/2025

Students who started their doctoral studies before academic year 2024/2025 are subject to the regulations in force before the amendments of Spanish Royal Decree 576/2023, of 4 July. This does not apply to the provisions on the thesis examination panel or on the defence and assessment of the thesis.

- Amended by agreement of the Executive Board on 4 November 2024.

## Second transitional provision. Programmes started previously and submitted as a collection of publications

If the doctoral student started the doctoral programme prior to approval of these regulations, they can use the article referring to the submission of publications or contributions that is most favourable to them, that is, that of the regulations published in November 2016 or this document.

Those doctoral students who enter the doctoral programme after publication of these regulations will be governed solely by Article 32, which regulates the doctoral theses presented as a collection of contributions.

- Amended by agreement of the Executive Board on 4 November 2024.

## Repealing provision

These regulations repeal the Academic Regulations for the UOC's doctoral Studies approved by the UOC's Executive Board on 1 February 2016 and amended by the Executive Board on 2 May and 21 November 2016, 28 June 2021, 24 July 2023 and 4 November 2024.

These regulations repeal the Regulations concerning the special awards given in the UOC's official and doctoral studies approved by the Executive Management Committee on 4 November 2013 and amended by the Executive Board on 1 February 2016 and 8 November 2021.

## First final provision. Interpretation of the regulations

The UOC Doctoral School will be responsible for interpreting these regulations and proposing the provisions required for their deployment.

## Second final provision. Entry into force

These regulations will come into force on the day of their publication on the UOC's E-Services Portal and following their approval by the UOC's Executive Board.

## Appendix I

Assessment of contributions		
Type of contribution	Comments	Points
Indexed article ISI JCR	1st or 2nd ISI quartile Position in the index in the year of publication or in the current year if publication is too recent	5
International patent	Maximum 2 patents/utility models/transfer products in total	5
Book	Renowned academic publisher, with peer review It will be necessary to indicate the publisher's and/or book's position in SPI-Scholarly Publishers Indicators and/or ISI Master Book List	4
Indexed article	3rd or 4th ISI quartile A CARHUS+ rating SCOPUS SJR 1st or 2nd quartile Position in the index in the year of publication or in the current year if publication is too recent	3
Spanish patent (or national patent of any State, but not international)	Maximum 2 patents/utility models/transfer products in total	3
Book chapter (excluding congress proceedings)	Renowned academic publisher, with peer review It will be necessary to indicate the publisher's and/or book's position in SPI-Scholarly Publishers Indicators and/or ISI Master Book List	3
Utility model or another research transfer product	Maximum 2 patents/utility models/transfer products in total With the endorsement of the doctoral programme's academic committee	2
Indexed articles	CNEAI/MIAR (with peer review) SCOPUS SJR 3rd or 4th quartile	2
Articles with an international reach, published in congress proceedings or journals, with ISBN or ISSN	With peer review and indexed (in SCOPUS or ISI proceedings)	2
Other articles from congress proceedings or journals, with ISBN or ISSN	With peer review	1