

**Doctoral regulations of  
the Université catholique de Louvain**

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**Transitional regime for doctoral candidates enrolling (definitively)  
for the first time at the latest in 2013-2014**

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*Approved by the UCL Doctoral Committee on 15 September 2014*

## 1. General framework

Art. 71 of the Decree of 31 March 2004 imposes on the university institutions of the French Community of Belgium, grouped into Academies (*Académies*), the requirement to draw up their own individual doctoral regulation<sup>1</sup>.

Further to the disappearance of Academies from the academic year 2014-2015, the transitional doctoral regulations are defined at the level of the university institutions which established her.

The doctoral regulation of the Université catholique de Louvain (hereafter named UCL) sets down the general framework for doctoral programmes taken by students wishing to obtain the academic title of Doctor of UCL.

The principles of these regulations, apply to all the doctoral programmes and are as follows:

- a) a doctoral degree can be obtained on completion of a doctoral programme with two compulsory components: the first, consisting of advanced academic training, worth 60 credits, referred to as "doctoral training" under the terms of the Decree; and the second, a research assignment relating to the preparation of a doctoral thesis, worth at least 120 credits;
- b) the doctoral programme includes four compulsory stages – admission, mid-term evaluation, private defence and public defence – possibly preceded by a provisional admission stage.

As doctoral programmes are organized by UCL, the Rector constitutes the "academic authorities" as defined by the Decree, in particular Articles 55 and 56. He/she delegates this authority to three bodies:

- The UCL Doctoral Committee, whose role is to ensure the development, application and monitoring of these regulations; consensus on specific additional provisions; possible appeals made by candidates against the decisions of the subject-specific doctoral committee ; arbitration between the various doctoral committees involving theses covering several fields; links between the doctoral programmes and the roles related to doctoral training assigned to the Fund for Scientific Research (FNRS); and any other role entrusted to it by the Rector;
- The subject-specific doctoral committees responsible for various fields of study, as laid down by the Decree, , whose specific role is to validate the various stages of students' doctoral programmes; to arbitrate in conflicts arising between supervisors and doctoral students; and any other role entrusted to them by the Rector (henceforth in these regulations, the term "subject-specific doctoral committee" refers to the relevant committee involved);
- The faculty deans, a generic term designating the local, academic authorities competent in each field of study

Within UCL, only one subject-specific doctoral committee is established for each field of studies specified in the Decree. These committees are constituted in such a way as to ensure representation from the disciplines covered by the field. The subject-specific doctoral committees should also include representatives from the research and teaching staff selected in ways they deem appropriate. The PhD Programme Manager, who is invited to sit on the committee, acts as secretariat. A particular subject-

specific doctoral committee can draw up special regulatory provisions for its own field of study and also delegate its tasks to appropriate bodies while retaining ultimate responsibility.

Accordingly, those involved in the doctoral programmes are responsible to two authorities, the relevant subject-specific doctoral committees and the faculty deans.

## 2. Stages in the doctoral programme

The doctoral programme includes four compulsory stages – admission, mid-term evaluation, private defence and public defence – possibly preceded by a provisional admission stage.

### 2.1. Provisional admission

Provisional admission is an optional stage of the doctoral programme. It is intended to enable candidates to complete the administrative formalities which might require prior enrolment on a doctoral programme. This might, for example, involve the award of a tax-exempt doctoral grant or obtaining a foreign student residence permit. Provisional -admission also makes it possible to mark the official start of a doctoral programme, even though the precise subject or supervisory panel may not yet have been fully defined. It also enables candidates to fulfil all the conditions necessary for their admission to the doctorate (cf. 2.2.2).

Provisional admission is obtained on the basis of a favourable decision from the relevant subject-specific doctoral committee; this committee checks that the candidate meets the conditions for admission requirements listed below.

If the opinion of the relevant subject-specific doctoral committee is favourable, the relevant UCL administrative services may, on this basis, register a candidate who has gone through the stage of provisional admission to the doctorate, subject to payment of the matriculation fees.

Provisional admission is possible for any candidate

- 1° who meets the entry requirements for third-cycle studies as laid down in Articles 55, 56, 60, 60bis and 182 of the Decree of 31 March 2004<sup>2</sup>;
- 2° who has identified a representative from the UCL staff who is accredited to oversee a doctoral thesis (annex 4); in agreeing to this, the member of staff undertakes to monitor and assist with the different stages in the candidate's application procedure;
- 3° who meets the special conditions laid down by the subject-specific doctoral committee(s) in the relevant field(s).

Provisional admission is valid for a maximum period of 12 months. Making use of a provisional admission period must be justified, with a planned set of objectives and the duration of the provisional admission period fixed accordingly. Unless otherwise decided by the subject-specific doctoral committee, candidates awarded a grant from FRIA or the Fund for Scientific Research - FNRS and, more generally, candidates engaged on a well-defined research project will not be authorized to go through a provisional admission stage.

A student may request to be registered only on a doctoral training programme independently of any project for a doctorate in order to gain the research qualification. Admission to a doctoral training programme is open to any candidate who fulfils the criteria for admission to third-cycle studies. The decision to allow admission to doctoral training is taken by the relevant subject-specific doctoral committee. A representative (not a supervisor) is nominated by the doctoral committee. The number of credits which can be gained is 60; a spreading of between 12 and 24 months is possible.

## **2.2. Admission to the doctorate**

### **2.2.1. Admission is the first compulsory step of the doctoral programme.**

Admission applications are submitted to the relevant subject-specific doctoral committee, which delivers its opinion after checking that the candidate has met the requirements cited below in 2.2.2.

When a thesis proposal cuts across several fields of study, the various subject-specific doctoral committees involved have to decide the case; by mutual agreement they designate a principal doctoral committee to whom supervision of the candidate's doctoral programme is then delegated. In the absence of agreement, the UCL Doctoral Committee adjudicates.

If the opinion of the subject-specific doctoral committees favourable, the relevant administrative services of UCL may, on this basis, register the candidate on the doctoral programme, once the tuition fees have been paid and all administrative formalities completed. Students are required to pay the full registration fee (which will be reduced if the student receives a grant (a Universities Committee for Development (CUD) grant in particular) or receives support from social services) when they first register for their doctorate. Registration is then renewed annually, including the year when the student defends his/her thesis, for payment of the annual registration fee, except in the situation given in 2.2.6. and subject to successful completion of the mid-term evaluation within the time periods mentioned in 2.3.1.

### **2.2.2. To be admitted onto a doctoral programme, candidates must**

- 1° meet the entry requirements for doctoral studies as defined in particular by Articles 55, 56, 60, 60bis and 182 of the Decree of 31 March 2004<sup>2</sup> or have been provisionally admitted to a doctoral programme for less than 12 months;
- 2° have as their supervisor a member of UCL staff who is accredited to oversee a thesis (annex 4). The supervisor undertakes to oversee, effectively and in person, the work relating to the preparation of the thesis; if the research topic justifies it, the candidate may have several supervisors;
- 3° have written a research proposal likely to lead to a doctoral thesis: this proposal must include a provisional title, a statement of the objectives of the project, highlighting its innovative aspects in relation to the state of the art, a work plan and an inventory of the human, material and financial resources required for its implementation;
- 4° have had the research proposal referred to in 3° above approved by their supervisor(s), who is/are required to specify the extent of the resources that he/she/they is/are able to put at the candidate's disposal for the purposes of the project;
- 5° have put forward to the subject-specific doctoral committee, by mutual agreement with their supervisor, a supervisory panel in compliance with these regulations; the composition and role of the supervisory panel are specified in 2.2.3. below;
- 6° have put forward to the subject-specific doctoral committee, by mutual agreement with the prospective members of the supervisory panel, a proposal for a doctoral training programme, worth 60 credits, which is appropriate for the candidate's academic profile and the proposed research project;
- 7° meet the special conditions laid down by the subject-specific doctoral committee(s) in the relevant field(s).

In addition, candidates may be required by the relevant subject-specific doctoral committee to take additional training courses (second-cycle level), the number and nature of which depend on their previous academic record and/or thesis project. As long as the additional programme does not exceed 15 credits, it may take place in parallel with the main doctoral training. When the additional programme includes from 16 to 60 credits, the candidate is required to successfully complete one additional year of study before being admitted to the doctoral programme. This affects mainly applicants with a graduate degree and/or a research qualification in an discipline completely different from that in which he/she wishes to do his/her doctorate.

**2.2.3.** The supervisory panel referred to in 5° above is made up of the supervisor(s) and at least two other members, at least one of whom must not be part of the research team of the supervisor(s). The members of the supervisory panel must hold a doctorate, obtained after public defence of a thesis, or provide evidence of an equivalent level of expert knowledge.

Supervisory panels guide and advise students, both to reinforce the role of the supervisor(s) in shaping the direction of research and to expand the network of academic contacts available to students. Supervisory panel members must be accessible to students and give constructive help with their research; they are thus committed to providing students with regular support throughout their doctoral studies. To this end, supervisory panels and students must meet at least once a year.

Supervisory panels advise students on drawing up their doctoral training programme.

Lastly, supervisory panels assess the quality of doctoral students' academic work.

**2.2.4.** The 60-credit doctoral training programme mentioned in 2.2.2. 6°, comprises

- a number of advanced courses, attendance at high-level schools/colleges, conferences and scientific congresses, or any other training deemed equivalent by the subject-specific doctoral committee ;
- developing and using scientific communication skills by drafting and presenting scientific proposals, articles and papers;
- possibly providing teaching support, worth a maximum of 6 credits.

In terms of doctoral training in scientific communication skills, successful completion of mid-term evaluation, private defence and public defence may be awarded 5, 10 and 5 credits respectively.

Doctoral training is provided at one or more Fund for Scientific Research - FNRS graduate colleges or graduate schools approved by the FNRS. This leads to the research qualification referred to in Art.17 of the Decree of 31 March 2004.

With the agreement of the subject-specific doctoral committee, all or part of this training can also be acquired outside an FNRS-approved graduate college or school. Scientific experience gained after completing a second-cycle degree and any professional activities undertaken in relation to the research topic may be validated by the subject-specific doctoral committee as a component of doctoral training.

The doctoral training programme may be spread out over the entire duration of doctoral studies.

**2.2.5.** Doctoral students can use their admission to the doctoral programme to benefit from effective and personal support from their supervisor(s) as well as the resources for an appropriate scientific environment.

**2.2.6.** The subject-specific doctoral committee has the authority to withdraw the student's right to undertake the doctoral programme, at the request of the supervisory panel. Each subject-specific doctoral committee establishes the special rules that it will apply in these regard.

**2.2.7.** Any conflicts arising between doctoral students and their supervisor(s) or supervisory panel fall within the competence of the relevant subject-specific doctoral committee, or, when there are several Doctoral Committees involved, of the one which has been designated as the main Committee. It is possible to appeal to the UCL Doctoral Committee against decisions made by the relevant subject-specific doctoral committee.

### **2.3. Mid-term evaluation**

**2.3.1.** Within a maximum of 24 months of being admitted to the doctoral programme by the subject-specific doctoral committee, students must undergo amid-term evaluation. If circumstances justify it, the deadline can be extended by the supervisory panel, with the consent of the subject-specific doctoral committee.

This time period may be shortened where restrictions are imposed by the funding provider, such as, for example, where a fellowship or doctoral grant is renewed (e.g. renewal of Fund for Scientific Research - FNRS research fellowships).

The purpose of the mid-term evaluation is to determine whether students' research has progressed sufficiently well enough to enable them to complete their doctoral thesis.

**2.3.2.** In order for the supervisory panel to be able to ascertain whether students' research has progressed sufficiently well enough to enable them to complete their doctoral thesis, doctoral students are required to

1° submit to the supervisory panel a written report, an article which they have written, or any other piece of written evidence which shows how the research is progressing,

2° give an oral presentation, in the presence of their supervisory panel, of the work completed and plans for the next stages of the doctorate.

**2.3.3.** On the basis of this, the supervisory panel reports to the subject-specific doctoral committee, either stating that the mid-term evaluation has been successfully completed and that the doctoral student may continue, or that the mid-term evaluation has been failed.

In the event of failure, the subject-specific doctoral committee can set a maximum period of 12 months within which the student may retake the mid-term evaluation. When appropriate, it will validate the doctoral training that has been acquired.

In the event of disagreement with the decision of the supervisory panel or the subject-specific doctoral committee, doctoral students may lodge an appeal with the UCL Doctoral Committee.

### **2.4. Formation of specific PhD examination board**

**2.4.1.** When the supervisory panel considers that the student's research work and doctoral training programme have been satisfactorily completed, it draws up a proposal for the composition of the PhD examination board, including the name of the Secretary. After this proposal has been agreed by the subject-specific doctoral committee, it is sent for approval to the Dean of the relevant faculty.

**2.4.2.** Since the private defence and the public defence can be organised according to one of two different methods described below, it is also for the supervisory panel to decide how the defence of the thesis should proceed. This information should be included on the form outlining the suggested composition of the board.

The subject-specific doctoral committee may decide to make special arrangements for all theses in their field of study to be defended exclusively in one way or the other.

**2.4.3.** The members of the board are nominated by the Rector or his/her representative.

The board includes the thesis supervisor(s) and at least three other members, at least one of whom must be external to UCL and chosen because of their scientific expertise. All members of the board must have obtained the title of Doctor through public defence of a thesis or provide evidence of an equivalent level of expert knowledge.

The board is chaired by the faculty Dean or his/her representative, who is not counted as one of its members in the sense of the paragraph above.

The appointment of the board is subject to verification that the candidate is enrolled as a doctoral student and that the tuition fees have been paid.

## ***2.5. First method for organising private defence and public defence***

### ***2.5.1. Private defence***

**2.5.1.1.** The examination board comes to a joint decision on the date of the private defence, in agreement with the doctoral student. No later than one month before the date chosen, the candidate submits the provisional manuscript of his/her thesis to the board members; this may be an original dissertation, or an essay accompanied by a coherent set of publications and other work of which the doctoral student is either the author or the co-author. These documents can be in French or in English or, if the subject matter of the thesis justifies it, in another language agreed by the board.

**2.5.1.2.** The entire board should be present for the private defence (in person or virtually through videoconferencing, for example). If a member is unable to attend due to unforeseeable circumstances, he/she must send the Chair a written report before the session, giving his/her reasoned opinion on the value of the thesis and a list of the questions that he/she wishes to put to the candidate.

During the private defence, the board examines the manuscript submitted by the candidate and discusses the research results with him/her.

**2.5.1.3.** At the end of the private defence, the board deliberates and decides on the admissibility of the thesis. The result of this meeting is communicated immediately to the candidate and sent to the subject-specific doctoral committee.

- If the thesis is deemed admissible, the board agrees with the candidate on a date and time for the public defence, which will take place no earlier than one month after the private defence, and notifies the subject-specific doctoral committee accordingly.
- If the thesis is deemed admissible subject to amendments being made to the manuscript, the supervisor(s) is/are instructed to check and approve these amendments before the date of the public defence. It should not take more than three months' full-time work to make these amendments. Otherwise, a new private defence must be organized.
- If the thesis is deemed inadmissible, the board sets a time limit for a new private defence.

The board also validates the candidate's doctoral training. Doctoral training is considered acquired when the doctoral student is able to show the board that he/she has obtained 60 credits as cited in 2.2.4 above (including the 5 credits potentially granted for the forthcoming public defence), and, where appropriate, the credits for additional training cited in the last sub-paragraph of 2.2.2.

## **2.5.2. Public defence**

**2.5.2.1.** The public defence consists of an oral presentation given by the candidate of the results of the research work which have led to the thesis; this will be an opportunity for the candidate to emphasize the qualities and originality of the work and demonstrate his/her ability to make complex subjects accessible to non-specialists. This presentation is followed by a discussion between the candidate and the board and then with anyone else present at the defence. At least two thirds of the members of board should be present at the public defence, which may not last longer than three hours. Any member unable to attend the public defence must send the Chair of the board a written report before the session, giving his/her reasoned opinion on the value of the thesis and a list of the questions that he/she wishes to put to the candidate.

**2.5.2.2.** At least two weeks before the public defence, the candidate gives the board members a bound copy of his/her thesis approved by his/her supervisor(s) and one copy to the relevant subject-specific doctoral committee. An electronic copy must also be sent to the office responsible for electronic theses.

**2.5.2.3.** Immediately after the public defence, the board members withdraw to decide on the outcome of the doctoral programme and to certify that the candidate has obtained the minimum 180 credits required for the granting of the academic title of Doctor.

The board members then sign the degree certificate and any related documents; an official report of the deliberation is drafted. These additional documents include a report co-signed by the board members present during the defence, confirming the training and work undertaken by the student whilst preparing his/her thesis and the conclusions of the board's discussions. The Chair of the board then announces the result publicly. The certificate is then signed by the new doctor, and later by the Rector. The examination board meeting report is kept by the faculty dean.

## ***2.6. Second method for organising private defence and public defence***

**2.6.1.** In the second method, both the private and the public defence are organised in the same time-frame. In this case, the thesis must be deemed admissible in advance of the private and the public defence.

**2.6.2.** To enable the timetable to be as close as possible in both methods, the time the decision is made to allow a public defence (which is at the time of the private defence in the first method) is deemed to be the reference time in the second method.

**2.6.3.** The date on which this decision is made is chosen by the board as a whole, with the agreement of the doctoral candidate.

**2.6.4.** The candidate must send the provisional manuscript of his/her thesis to the different members of the examination board one month before the expected date of the decision that the thesis is admissible. All the members of the board are then required to select one of the following three options:

- The thesis is deemed to be admissible, in which case the private defence and the public defence should take place no earlier than one month after the decision that it is admissible.
- The thesis requires minor amendments, in which case the maximum period allowed for this is three months, at the end of which the private defence and the public defence should take place. Board members are requested to give a clear indication of what they expect in terms of the changes deemed necessary, whilst at the same time bearing in mind that in this situation, the thesis may no longer be refused. The supervisor should check the amendments before allowing the private defence to go ahead.
- The thesis is deemed not to be admissible, in which case the procedure is halted and a new timetable considered. Board members who contest the admissibility of the thesis are required

to explain the reasons for their decision and to clearly highlight the problems they have identified while reading the document. It is only necessary for one of the board members to indicate that the thesis is not admissible for a decision of non-admissibility to apply.

To enable them to communicate their decision on admissibility in accordance with the required procedure, members of the board are clearly informed of the constraints of the timetable and also of the consequences arising from their decision.

The Chair of the board, who organises the examination board meeting, is responsible for conveying the result to the candidate, the different members of the board and the relevant subject-specific doctoral committee, within the relevant timescale. He/she should also set the date(s) for the private and public defences with the rest of the board and the candidate.

**2.6.5.** As in the first method, the private defence always takes place before the public defence. The major difference is that, in the second method, the private defence is always based on a final manuscript (where appropriate, after amendments have been made).

The possibility of requiring the manuscript to be amended is therefore a proper prerogative of the members of the board in both methods. However, whereas the first method enables board members to require amendments to be made to the manuscript at the time of the private defence, the second method asks them to voice their opinion on this subject ahead of the private defence.

In all cases, the final manuscript (where appropriate, after amendments have been made) should be sent to members of the board at least one month before the date of the private defence.

**2.6.6.** The public defence should be held according to the procedures set out in 2.5.2.

### **3. Special and transitional provisions**

**3.1.** Doctoral degree certificates issued by UCL must be accompanied by a diploma supplement, in accordance with Art.82 of the Decree of 31 March 2004<sup>3</sup>.

**3.2.** If justified for academic reasons, a doctorate may be achieved within the framework of joint thesis supervision between UCL and another university institution within French Community of Belgium or outside this one.

In such cases, an agreement should be signed between the two institutions. The supervisors, on behalf of UCL must ensure that this is in accordance with the standard agreement drawn up by UCL and, therefore complies with the regulatory provisions. They should submit an account of why they support a joint programme and the draft agreement to the subject-specific doctoral committee and to the Dean of their faculty for their approval before presenting the agreement to the Rector.

This agreement must stipulate, in particular, that the doctoral student will spend a minimum of 25% of his/her research time in each of the two institutions and that he/she will abide by the rules in force at each of the two institutions, especially relating to doctoral training and ethics as specified in Articles 9 and 11 of the standard agreement which can be found in Annex 1.

**3.3.** A “European doctorate” may be awarded by UCL when the following three conditions are fulfilled :

- At least two members of the examination board must belong to a higher education institution in two European Union member states other than Belgium. The report of the examination board meeting at the end of the private defence serves as the report authorizing the public defence;

- Part of the public defence must be held in an official language of the European Union other than French;
- The doctorate must have been prepared, in part, during a research stay of at least four months in a member state of the European Union other than Belgium.

Applications for a European doctorate must be submitted by the doctoral student to the subject-specific doctoral committee after the private defence. The committee requires enough information to enable it to reach a decision on whether the criteria for the award of a European doctorate have been fulfilled, namely:

- An official certificate from the host institution certifying that the doctoral student has stayed for research purposes in another member state of the European Union and the duration of that stay (specifying the name of the local supervisor, the host laboratory/unit and the start and end dates of the research stay(s));
- A copy of the examination board meeting report of the private defence;
- After the public defence, the examination board meeting report should specify that part of the defence was held in a language of the European Union other than French and state which language was used.

The award of a European doctorate is confirmed by the issue of a certificate from UCL. This certificate must be appended to the doctoral degree but distinct from it. A standard certificate can be found in Annex 3 to these regulations.

**3.4. These regulations apply** to students enrolling (definitively) for the first time at the latest in 2013-2014. These regulations will stay in application for these until the academic year on 2019-2020.

**3.5.** The special conditions laid down by the relevant subject-specific doctoral committees enter into force after they have been approved by the Rector of UCL, following a procedure established by him/her. These provisions apply according to the same timetable as the present regulation.

**3.6.** During the procedure described under 3.5, the Rector must seek the opinion of the UCL Doctoral Committee and also confirms the Committee's composition and role.

**3.7.** At the request of the Rector, the UCL Doctoral Committee will evaluate the implementation of these regulations. Where appropriate, it will submit proposals to amend the regulations to the competent authorities of UCL.

## **Annexes:**

**Annex 1:** Standard agreement for a joint doctoral programme

**Annex 2:** Equivalence of foreign degrees to 3<sup>rd</sup>-cycle degrees (doctorate)

**Annex 3:** Modèle d'attestation pour la délivrance du « Label de doctorat européen » (*only in French*)

**Annex 4:** Eligibility criteria for supervising a doctoral thesis

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## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Article 71. - (...) Pour les jurys chargés de conférer le grade de docteur, un règlement unique est fixé pour l'académie universitaire.

<sup>2</sup> Article 55. - Aux conditions générales fixées par les autorités académiques, ont accès aux études de troisième cycle en vue de l'obtention du grade qui les sanctionne, les étudiants qui portent :

1° soit un grade académique de master à finalité approfondie - visée à l'article 16, § 4, 2° - du même domaine;

2° soit un autre grade académique de master conféré après des études de deuxième cycle de 120 crédits au moins ou de master complémentaire, en vertu d'une décision des autorités académiques, aux conditions complémentaires qu'elles fixent et après avis motivé du jury;

3° soit un grade académique similaire à ceux mentionnés aux littéras précédents délivré en Communauté flamande, en Communauté germanophone ou par l'Ecole royale militaire, aux mêmes conditions;

4° soit un grade académique étranger reconnu équivalent à ceux mentionnés aux littéras précédents en application de ce décret, d'une directive européenne ou d'une convention internationale, aux mêmes conditions;

5° soit, aux mêmes conditions, un ou plusieurs titres ou grades étrangers ou délivrés en Communauté flamande, en communauté germanophone, par l'Etat fédéral ou l'Ecole royale militaire et sanctionnant des études de deuxième cycle valorisées pour au moins 300 crédits par le jury ou sanctionnant des études de deuxième cycle de 240 crédits complétées par 60 crédits, le tout devant être valorisé par le jury. Dans ce dernier cas, les 60 crédits doivent correspondre :

- soit à d'autres études, parties d'études ou formations spécialisées ou approfondies accessibles exclusivement aux porteurs d'un titre ou grade sanctionnant des études de deuxième cycle au moins;

- soit à une année supplémentaire au 2e cycle organisée en Communauté française conformément aux dispositions du 2e alinéa et comprenant 60 crédits de formation fixés par le jury.

Les crédits ainsi valorisés par le jury pour permettre l'accès aux études ne peuvent donner lieu à dispenses ni à réduction de la durée de ces mêmes études.

Lorsque les conditions d'accès consistent en un ou plusieurs enseignements complémentaires dont la charge dépasse 15 crédits, le programme d'études de l'étudiant comprend, selon la répartition déterminée par le jury, une année d'études supplémentaire. Toutefois, les étudiants inscrits à cette première année supplémentaire ne sont pas pris en compte pour le financement.

Article 56. - Aux conditions que fixent les autorités académiques, ont également accès aux études et travaux relatifs à la préparation d'une thèse de doctorat en vue de l'obtention du grade qui les sanctionne, les étudiants qui ont suivi avec fruit l'année de formation à la recherche visée à l'article 17, § 2.

Article 60. - Aux conditions générales que fixent les autorités académiques, en vue de l'admission aux études, les jurys valorisent les crédits acquis par les étudiants au cours d'études supérieures ou parties d'études supérieures qu'ils auraient déjà suivies avec fruit. Les étudiants qui bénéficient de ces crédits sont dispensés des parties correspondantes du programme d'études.

Aux conditions générales que fixent les autorités académiques, les jurys peuvent également valoriser dans ce contexte, les savoirs et compétences d'étudiants acquis par leur expérience personnelle ou professionnelle.

Article 60bis. - Par dérogation aux conditions générales fixées aux articles 54 et 55, aux conditions complémentaires qu'elles fixent, les autorités académiques peuvent également admettre aux études visées les porteurs d'un titre ou grade étranger qui, dans ce système d'origine, donne directement accès aux formations doctorales ou études et travaux relatifs à la préparation d'une thèse de doctorat, même si les études sanctionnées par ces titres ou grades n'y sont pas organisées en cycles distincts ou en cinq années au moins.

Cette admission doit être exceptionnelle et dûment motivée sur base, notamment, de la preuve formelle et authentique de cette capacité de poursuite d'études doctorales dans le système d'origine.

Les étudiants admis dans ce contexte sont assimilés à ceux admis en vertu de l'article 54, alinéa 1er, 5°, ou de l'article 55, alinéa 1er, 5°.

Article 182. - Les porteurs d'un grade académique de deuxième cycle délivré en vertu des dispositions antérieures à ce décret jouissent des mêmes capacités de poursuite d'études et d'accès professionnels que les porteurs d'un grade de master introduit par ce décret sanctionnant des études de deuxième cycle de 120 crédits au moins.

<sup>3</sup> Article 82. - Les diplômes sont délivrés accompagnés d'un supplément au diplôme reprenant notamment la liste des enseignements du programme d'études suivi par l'étudiant, les conditions d'accès aux études et les évaluations sanctionnées par le grade académique conféré.

Le supplément au diplôme est signé par le secrétaire du jury.

Les éléments personnels de ce supplément liés à chaque étudiant peuvent être regroupés en une annexe au supplément. Dans ce cas, seule cette annexe doit être signée par le secrétaire du jury, la partie commune du supplément étant certifiée par l'établissement.

Le supplément au diplôme respecte la forme et le contenu fixés par le Gouvernement.

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**Agreement for a joint doctoral programme**

BETWEEN

**[Name of the partner university]** [address], represented by its Rector/President, Prof. [name of the Rector/President of the university], (*select as appropriate*)

AND

**Université catholique de Louvain** Place de l'Université, 1, 1348 Louvain-la-Neuve (Belgium), represented by its Rector, Prof. [name of the Rector],

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*For [name of the partner university]*

**HAVING REGARD TO**

- [the legal texts relating to organizing university education in [name of the country/community] and, more specifically, the courses of study that are awarded the rank of Doctor];
- [the statutes and/or internal regulations of [name of the university] University relating to the organization of courses of study that are awarded the rank of Doctor];

*For the Université catholique de Louvain*

**HAVING REGARD TO**

- the Decree of 31 March 2004 defining higher education, promoting its integration into the European Higher Education Area and refinancing universities);
- the doctoral regulations of UCL (transitional regime), approved by the UCL Doctoral Committee on 15 September 2014);

**the following provisions are agreed.**

**PREAMBLE**

**General provisions**

The procedure for a joint doctoral programme between [name of the partner university] and the Université catholique de Louvain is designed to establish and develop academic and scientific cooperation by promoting the mobility of PhD candidates.

The general provisions of the agreement, particularly those relating to the protection of thesis topics as well as the publication, use and protection of the results of research common to the two host [Faculties/Departments/Institutes/Schools, etc. (*select as appropriate*)] of the PhD candidate are required to be in conformity both with the specific procedures in each of the two countries/communities and with the relevant internal regulations of each institution. Any cases of potential conflict in the provisions will form the subject of arbitration between [name of the partner university] and the Université catholique de Louvain.

**TITLE 1**

**Administrative procedures**

**Article 1**

Having obtained the agreement of the relevant authorities and in conformity with the regulations in force relating to doctoral studies in each country/community, the PhD candidate may gain admission to pursue the preparation of his/her thesis in the two institutions by observance of the following procedures for enrolment on the doctoral programme:

***At the Université catholique de Louvain:***

In order to gain the degree awarded by the French Community of Belgium, the PhD candidate is required, upon first enrolling on the doctoral programme after the date cited in Article 2 when this agreement comes into force, to pay his/her tuition fees in full to the Université catholique de Louvain.

In all subsequent years, including the year of the doctoral defence, he/she is required to pay his/her matriculation fees to the Université catholique de Louvain.

***At [name of the partner university]:***

The PhD candidate is required, when he/she first enrolls at [name of the partner university], to pay .....  
*(to be filled in).*

In subsequent years, he/she is required to pay ..... *(to be filled in)* to [name of the partner university].

and

***At the Université catholique de Louvain:***

The PhD candidate is enrolled on the doctoral programme in [field of research] (option: [name of the Doctoral School]).

***At [name of the partner university]:***

The PhD candidate is enrolled on the doctoral programme in ..... *(to be filled in).*

Thesis topic registered by the PhD candidate:

.....  
.....  
.....

A description of the thesis is appended to this agreement (Annex 1) *(append Annex 1)*.

## **Article 2**

Enrolment of the PhD candidate on a joint programme takes effect on [the date of entry into force]. The projected length of research is fixed at [to be filled in] years. The defence of the thesis is planned during the [year y]-[year y+1] academic year.

This period may only be extended as a special exception with the agreement of the two institutions and at the recommendation of the thesis supervisors (named in Article 5). Such a request must be made six months before the date by which the thesis is scheduled to end.

## **Article 3**

The period during which the thesis is being prepared should be divided alternately between the two signatory institutions. Research work should therefore be conducted in both institutions according to a timetable jointly drawn up by the two thesis supervisors named in Article 5. This timetable is also set out in Annex 2 (*append Annex 2*).

Any amendment to this timetable should be requested from both signatory institutions by the thesis supervisors at least one month in advance.

## **Article 4** (*select as appropriate*)

### **(If the partner institution is outside Belgium)**

A PhD candidate is covered by social security insurance in line with the legislation in force in each country, providing that he/she has fulfilled the enrolment requirements in the institution of the relevant country.

However, he/she must provide evidence of a main insurance policy in [one of the two countries, either Belgium or XXX (*to be filled in as appropriate*)]. Moreover, he/she must be able to provide evidence of an additional insurance policy to cover illness and civil risk for the duration of the periods of time he/she spends in [one of the two countries – XXX/Belgium] and abroad.

### **(If the partner institution is in the Flemish Community of Belgium)**

A PhD candidate is covered by social security insurance in line with the legislation in force in Belgium, providing that he/she has fulfilled the enrolment requirements. In addition, he/she must provide evidence of an additional insurance policy to cover illness and civil risk for the duration of any periods of time he/she may spend outside Belgium.

## **TITLE II**

### **Academic procedures**

#### **Article 5**

PhD candidates who are undertaking a joint doctoral programme must conduct their work under the supervision and responsibility of a thesis supervisor in each of the two institutions:

**At [name of the partner university]:**

name of thesis supervisor [name]

**At the Université catholique de Louvain:**

name of thesis supervisor [name]

They undertake to exercise to the full the role of supervisor of the PhD candidate and to do so according to the conditions in force within each signatory institution. They will hold regular meetings on the progress of the PhD candidate's research.

## **Article 6**

Approval for defence of a thesis is granted jointly by the two institutions, according to the legal and regulatory provisions in force in both places.

The members of the PhD examination board are jointly nominated by the two partner institutions. The composition of the board must be in conformity with the legal and regulatory provisions in force in the two institutions. The board must include the thesis supervisors (see Article 5) and an external examiner from outside the two institutions. The board must be formed of at least five members, all of whom are required to have gained the academic rank of Doctor after having defended a thesis, or who can provide evidence of expert knowledge of an equivalent level.

## **Article 7**

The thesis of Mr/Ms [surname and first name of the PhD candidate], prepared as part of the joint doctoral programme, shall be written in ..... [*select language as appropriate*: French or English, or a language approved by the PhD examination board where the thesis justifies an alternative].

The thesis of Mr/Ms [surname and first name of the PhD candidate] shall be defended in ..... [*select language as appropriate*: French or English, or a language approved by the board where the thesis justifies an alternative].

## **Article 8**

In conformity with the doctoral regulations of the Université catholique de Louvain and subject to the relevant provisions of these regulations, there shall be a private defence of the thesis, held in one of the two institutions, in the presence of all the members of the board.

There shall then be a single public defence, recognized by both institutions, to be held at ..... [*fill in place name*: [name of the partner university] OR the Université catholique de Louvain].

In advance of the public defence, the PhD candidate shall present the results of his/her research at a seminar held at the partner institution where the public defence is not being held.

The date and place of the public defence are jointly agreed and notified in writing by the thesis supervisors in the two partner institutions to the Deans of the relevant faculties.

## **Article 9**

The PhD candidate undertakes to abide by the regulations on doctoral studies in force in the institutions bound by this agreement. In particular, he/she shall follow the rules on the submission, description and reproduction of theses.

Mr/Ms [surname and first name of the PhD candidate] will have to fulfil the doctoral training programme requirements applicable in both institutions. Nevertheless, he/she is authorized to take into account the same activity in both programmes if it is recognized as part of a doctoral training programme in both institutions.

## **Article 10**

In conformity with the regulations in force in each country/community and on the basis of the report on the public defence, the rank of Doctor in [(to be filled in)] from [name of the partner university] and that of Doctor in [(to be filled in)] from the Université catholique de Louvain shall be conferred, on the basis of joint deliberation, on Mr/Ms [surname and first name of the PhD candidate] as a .... [*select as appropriate*: single joint degree or degree from each institution]

[*select as appropriate*]

[*In the case of a single joint degree*: This degree certificate shall make explicit reference to the joint doctoral programme agreement.]

or

*[In the case of a degree from each institution: The degree certificates shall make explicit reference to the joint doctoral programme agreement and to the other degree awarded.]*

There shall be a single supplement to the degree certificate, composed of two parts containing respectively the texts usually appended to degree certificates in the two institutions, in the relevant languages. This single supplement must be signed by the board secretary.

**Article 11**

The partner institutions undertake to abide by the strictest ethical rules in force.

**TITLE III**

**Final provisions**

**Article 12**

This agreement is valid for a period of [to be filled in – see Article 2] years from [the date in Article 2 of this agreement]. Any amendments to this joint doctoral programme agreement must be confirmed by both institutions.

This agreement is made in five copies, one copy for each signatory.

*For [name of the partner university]*

*For the Université catholique de Louvain*

Thesis Supervisor

Thesis Supervisor

Prof. ....

Prof. ....

Date: ....

Date: ....

Signature

Signature

President/Rector (*select as appropriate*)

Rector

Prof. ....

Prof. ....

Date: ....

Date: ....

Signature

Signature

PhD candidate

Surname: .....

First name: .....

E-mail: .....

Date: .....

Signature

## **EQUIVALENCE OF FOREIGN DEGREES TO 3RD CYCLE DEGREE (DOCTORATE)**

### ***A2-1. Equivalence committees***

An equivalence committee is formed for each area of study:

- It is competent to grant equivalence for foreign academic third cycle (doctorate) degree relating to the relevant area in the French Community of Belgium ;
- It is made up of a President, an Academic Secretary and a third member of the relevant doctoral committee ;
- It rules on the basis of a **file** provided by the applicant, in conformity with the provisions cited in point A2-2 of the current annex and with the **opinion given** by the body formed for this purpose, in conformity with the provisions cited in point A2-3 of the current Annex.

In the case of a favourable decision, an equivalence certification, on the required model, is issued by the Equivalence Committee. The original is then sent to the Rector's office of UCL.

### ***A2-2. Submission of equivalence applications***

Requests for equivalence for a third cycle (doctorate) degree must be submitted to the Rector's office.

The applicant must produce the following documents to ensure that his or her request is admissible:

- A **certified copy of the doctoral degree certificate** together with a translation achieved by a sworn translator (translation is not required for certificates in English, French, Dutch, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese or German) ;
- A **copy of the second cycle degree certificate, as well as copy of certificate(s) for post-graduate degrees** if relevant;
- A **paper copy of the doctoral thesis** (which will be returned to the applicant) together with an abstract in English or French if the thesis is written in another language ;
- A **curriculum vitae** including the applicant's full contact details as well as the titles (and any special results) of the years of study he or she has pursued, a list of publications (particularly those relating to the thesis) and contributions to international conferences together with any other details which he or she considers relevant to the application ;
- If needed, **the name of a contact person** from UCL (compulsory for requests relating to applications for an F.R.S.- FNRS post).
- If it is available, the **doctoral regulation of the university** which has awarded the doctorate for which recognition of equivalence has been requested or any other document which enables verification of the entry criteria for doctoral studies as well as the accreditation or the recognition by the competent foreign authorities of the institution which has awarded the degree and the status of the degree as recognized by the competent foreign authorities.

### ***A2-3. Advisory body***

An advisory body shall be formed to consider all requests for equivalence and to submit a reasoned opinion to the relevant Equivalence Committee.

The advisory body shall be made up of **three members** nominated by the Equivalence Committee.

## LABEL DE DOCTORAT EUROPÉEN

Année académique ..../....

Attestation de label de « doctorat européen » conféré à [Nom et Prénom du récipiendaire], né(e) à [Ville/Pays], le [date de naissance] et titulaire du diplôme de docteur en [domaine d'études] délivré par l'Université catholique de Louvain.

Le jury certifie que [Nom et prénom du récipiendaire] a satisfait aux conditions prévues à l'article 3.3 du règlement doctoral de l'Université catholique de Louvain (régime transitoire) en vue de l'obtention du label de doctorat européen.

▪ Titre de la thèse : .....

▪ Promoteur(s) de la thèse : .....

[nom(s), prénom(s), institution(s) d'appartenance du(des) promoteur(s) avec mention du pays]

▪ L'autorisation de soutenance publique a été accordée au vu du rapport de délibération de la défense privée auquel ont contribué :

- .....
- .....
- .....
- .....
- .....
- .....

[Noms, pré noms, institutions d'appartenance des membres du jury avec mention du pays]

▪ La thèse a été soutenue en [préciser une langue de l'UE y compris le français] et, partiellement, en [préciser une langue de l'UE y compris le français].

▪ Le(s) séjour(s) de recherche à l'étranger s'est (se sont) déroulé(s) du [date de début du séjour] au [date de fin du séjour] dans l'équipe du Prof./Dr. : [nom de l'encadrant dans l'entité d'accueil] de/du [Nom du laboratoire ou unité d'accueil] de [Nom de l'établissement d'accueil, adresse avec mention du pays].

En foi de quoi le jury décerne à [Nom et Prénom du récipiendaire], le label de « doctorat européen ».

Fait à ....., le [date de la soutenance publique]

(Nom, prénom et signature)  
Président du jury

(Nom, prénom et signature)  
Secrétaire du jury

## ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR SUPERVISING A DOCTORAL THESIS IN THE UNIVERSITE CATHOLIQUE DE LOUVAIN

### Preamble

To be admitted to the doctorate, the Doctoral Regulation of UCL stipulates, among other conditions, that the candidate must “*have a thesis supervisor who is a member of staff of UCL who is accredited to supervise a doctoral thesis. The supervisor undertakes to oversee, effectively and in person, the work relating to the preparation of the thesis; if the research subject justifies it, the candidate may have several supervisors.*” (Article 2.2.2. 2°)

In addition to the requirement that the supervisor should be a member of staff of UCL, it is important that he or she is available to undertake supervision of work on the thesis until the end of the doctorate.

Furthermore, in view of the fact that the nomination of a thesis supervisor is an integral part of the doctorate admission process, the relevant Doctoral Committee remains the decision-making body for the approval of the candidate’s application and, consequently, may also refuse proposals which it deems to be unsuitable where supervision of the thesis is concerned, even where the suggested supervisor meets the eligibility criteria for supervising a thesis.

\*\*\*\*\*

### Eligibility criteria for supervising a doctoral thesis:

#### **1. Criteria relating to the status of the supervisor: accredited supervisors and authorised supervisors:**

1.1. The following are considered as **accredited supervisors** to oversee a doctoral thesis:

- members of the tenured academic staff of UCL;
- doctors with clinical academic status, members of the academic staff of UCL;
- permanent F.R.S.-FNRS representatives attached to UCL;
- members of the tenured research and teaching staff of UCL.

1.2. The following are considered as **authorised supervisors** to oversee a doctoral thesis (*providing that an ‘accredited’ supervisor is also nominated – cf. 1, above*):

- non-tenured lecturers from UCL ;
- tenured lecturers or research and teaching staff not from UCL;
- any other person who holds the title of Doctor obtained after defence of a thesis or of ‘Agrégé de l'Enseignement Supérieur’
- The relevant Doctoral Committee may dispense with this requirement if it considers the academic background of the person concerned to be equivalent.

#### **2. Criteria relating to the availability of the accredited supervisor until the end of the doctorate:**

2.1. The supervisor should be available during the period necessary for supervision of the whole thesis.

2.2. At the time of admission to the doctorate, if the supervisor is within 3 years or less of being awarded emeritus status or of retirement, the relevant Doctoral Committee should forthwith nominate an additional member to the supervisory committee, who fulfils the criteria of an accredited supervisor. This is to enable him or her officially to become the second supervisor when the first supervisor is awarded emeritus status or retires.