

REGULATIONS FOR DOCTORAL STUDIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF VIC - CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF CATALONIA (UVIC-UCC)

Regulations approved by the Governing Council of UVic-UCC on 7 June 2016,
amended by the Governing Council of UVic-UCC on 21 February 2017,
5 December 2017 and 7 May 2019

UVIC
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Chapter I. Doctoral studies

1. Glossary

Code of good practice: regulations to ensure that researchers' attitudes, the procedures they follow and the way they communicate information about scientific activities are in line with the principles of integrity and social commitment.

Thesis co-supervisor: a person who jointly oversees a doctoral thesis. The co-supervisors are responsible for guiding and supervising a doctoral student in all his/her research tasks, and for the content and quality of the doctoral thesis.

Academic Committee for the Doctoral Programme (CAPD): the body responsible for the definition, updating, quality and coordination of a doctoral programme; for supervising the progress of research and education; and for authorising the submission of each student's doctoral thesis.

Supervisory board: the body responsible for annually assessing a doctoral student's oral presentation on his/her research progress. The supervisory board is comprised of three specialists who hold doctorates in the field of the doctoral thesis.

Management Board: the Doctoral College's governing body.

Core or specific competencies: the minimum skills that a doctoral student must have gained on completion of their doctoral studies, according to Spanish Royal Decree 99/2011, as well as the skills set out in Spanish Royal Decrees 1027/2011 and 96/2014 in the Spanish Qualifications Framework for Higher Education (MECES).

Coordinator of the doctoral programme: the person with overall responsibility for managing and coordinating the doctoral programme, for ensuring continuity and compliance with objectives, and for overseeing the programme's development. The Coordinator also chairs the Academic Committee for the Doctoral Programme.

Thesis supervisor: the person with overall responsibility for the coherence and suitability of training activities, for the impact and originality of the subject of the doctoral thesis, for guidance in planning, and for adaptation, if necessary, to other projects and activities for which the doctoral student is registered.

Doctoral student: a person who has been accepted and enrolled on a doctoral programme, after meeting the requirements established in these regulations.

Doctorate: the third cycle of official university studies, leading to the acquisition of the skills and competencies required for quality scientific research. The studies are organised as doctoral programmes that culminate with the writing, public presentation and defence of a doctoral thesis.

Commitment agreement: a document that regulates the functions, rights and responsibilities of the doctoral student, the thesis supervisor(s), and the thesis tutor, signed by all the parties involved, and approved by the Head of the Doctoral College.

Doctoral Student Activity Report (DAD): an individual record, in an appropriate format, of the training activities carried out by the doctoral student. The DAD is reviewed regularly by the thesis supervisor(s) and by the thesis tutor, if applicable, and is assessed every year by the Academic Committee for the Doctoral Programme.

Doctoral College: a unit created by one or more universities – potentially in collaboration with other Spanish or international organisations, centres, institutions and entities that carry out research, development and innovation activities – whose main aim is to organise doctoral studies within its management area, in one or more knowledge areas or across disciplines.

Doctoral student assessment report (IAD): a document issued by the Academic Committee for the Doctoral Programme that includes all the assessments of a doctoral student's training activities.

Research proposal (PI): a document drawn up by the doctoral student with the approval of his/her thesis supervisor(s) that describes the original contribution of the research that the student will carry out to obtain the doctorate.

Doctoral programme: the set of activities leading to the acquisition of the skills and competencies required for quality scientific research. The programme covers the different aspects of doctoral training and must establish the procedures and research lines for the preparation of doctoral theses.

Doctoral thesis: a piece of original research work, which is prepared by the student in any of the fields of knowledge covered by the doctoral programmes. The research work must be related to a line of research developed in the student's doctoral programme.

Thesis tutor: a researcher at the University of Vic - Central University of Catalonia (UVic-UCC) who is responsible for ensuring that the training and research activity meet the criteria and regulations of the Doctoral College and the corresponding doctoral programme when the thesis supervisor(s) is a researcher at another university, research centre, company or institution involved in research.

2. Organisation of doctoral studies

Doctoral studies are organised in doctoral programmes offered by UVic-UCC, which culminate with the writing, public presentation and defence of a doctoral thesis.

The University's Doctoral College organises administrative and academic activities related to UVic-UCC doctoral studies. It assures academic quality, promotes excellence in research, and fosters collaboration with external research centres to increase the national and international scope of its doctoral studies.

The internal regulations of the Doctoral College govern the functions and composition of the governing bodies, as well as the rights and responsibilities of the doctoral students, thesis supervisor(s) and thesis tutors.

3. Access to doctoral studies

Access to doctoral studies is regulated by Article 6 of Spanish Royal Decree 99/2011, Article 2 of Spanish Royal Decree 43/2015, and the third final provision, Article 1 of Royal Decree 195/2016 which state the following:

- In general, to be eligible for admission to an official doctoral programme, candidates must hold an official Spanish bachelor's degree (or equivalent) and a university master's degree (or equivalent). They must have obtained at least 300 ECTS credits for these two degrees together.
- However, candidates in any of the following circumstances are also eligible:
 - a) Individuals who hold an official university degree from Spain or any other country in the European Higher Education Area that, in accordance with the provisions of Article 16 of Spanish Royal Decree 1393/2007 of 29 October, qualifies them for master's degree courses, provided they have also completed a minimum of 300 ECTS credits of official university coursework overall, of which at least 60 must be at the master's degree level.
 - b) Individuals who hold an official degree from Spain consisting of at least 300 ECTS credits, as required by European Union regulations. Individuals in this category are required to complete bridging courses unless the curriculum of the degree course in question included the same number of research training credits as would be required in a master's degree course. For qualifications obtained prior to the introduction of the EHEA, the credits will be converted to ECTS using the equivalency tables approved annually by the University's Executive Council.
 - c) University graduates who, having passed the entrance examination for specialised medical training, have successfully completed at least two years of a training course leading to an official degree in a health sciences specialisation.
 - d) Individuals who hold a degree from a foreign education system. In these cases, homologation is not required provided UVic-UCC finds that the university in question offers a level of training equivalent to that of the official Spanish university master's degree and that, in the issuing country, holders of the degree are eligible for doctoral studies. Admission via this channel does not in any circumstances imply the homologation of the previous degree held by the candidate, or confer recognition of this qualification for any purpose other than eligibility for doctoral studies. In all cases, on completion of the programme, the doctoral degree that is obtained shall have full official validity in Spain.
 - e) Individuals holding another Spanish doctoral degree obtained under previous university regulations.
 - f) Individuals who hold an official university qualification who have obtained equivalence to level 3 in the Spanish Framework of Higher Education Qualifications (MECES), in accordance with the procedure in Royal Decree 967/2014, of 21 November, which stipulates the requirements and procedures for the official recognition and declaration of equivalence for qualifications, and at official university academic level for the validation of foreign higher education studies, and the procedure for determining the correspondence with the Spanish Framework of Higher Education levels for the official qualifications of architect, engineer, pre-EHEA degree, technical architect, technical engineer and diploma.

- g) Individuals holding the Diploma of Advanced Studies (RD778/1998) or Research Proficiency (RD 185/1985) from a related doctoral programme.

4. Admission to doctoral studies

The Academic Committee for the Doctoral Programme (CAPD) is responsible for establishing access and admission procedures for doctoral students.

To apply for admission, candidates must send the corresponding form to Academic Administration.

4.1. Bridging courses

Taking into account the profile required for doctoral students, the CAPD may establish additional specific requirements for admission to doctoral studies. For example, the CAPD may require students to complete certain bridging courses.

Bridging courses may focus on either research or cross-disciplinary training. However, no doctoral student shall be required to enrol for 60 or more ECTS credits of bridging courses.

Candidates must take bridging courses in research training if they access the doctoral programme with a bachelor's degree of 300 ECTS or more, whose curriculum did not include research credits.

4.2. Admission requirements

Candidates can apply for admission to a UVic-UCC doctoral programme if they meet the access requirements stipulated in Point 3 of these regulations, as well as the following admission requirements:

- Candidates must hold an official university master's degree in the academic area covered by the chosen doctoral programme.
- Candidates must hold a bachelor's degree, a pre-EHEA degree, an advanced technical engineering degree, a diploma or a technical engineering degree whose contents are in areas that are similar or related to the doctoral programme.
- If candidates have gained access to the doctoral programme through their admission to specialised health training, they must prove that the two years of specialised training have been completed in an area equivalent to that covered by the doctoral programme.

- Information on admission criteria shall be posted on each doctoral programme's website, and will include a description of the profile required of doctoral students, taking into account the type of qualifications, languages, specific knowledge, previous experience, and their personal, academic and research skills and abilities.
- If the number of applications to a doctoral programme is greater than the number of places that are offered each year, the CAPD shall take into account the following additional admission requirements in the selection of candidates for the programme:
 - Average grade in the academic transcript for subjects related to the area covered by the doctoral programme.
 - Publications and other academic output (master's degree final project, papers, etc.) associated with one of the lines of research covered by the chosen doctoral programme.
 - Professional experience related with one of the lines of research covered by the doctoral programme.
 - Recognised language skills, provided that these were not accredited in the admission requirements.
 - Research interests stated in the documents submitted by the candidate, with an emphasis on whether these fit in with the lines of research covered by the doctoral programme.

If a candidate is accepted by the CAPD, he/she can then enrol on the doctoral programme.

If candidates have special educational needs due to disability, the CAPD shall be supported by the Disability Advisory Service to assess the need for adapting curriculum, pathways or alternative studies.

In the case of joint doctoral programmes taught with other universities, the admission process shall be determined in the collaboration agreement.

Candidates may appeal against access and admission decisions.

5. Enrolment for doctoral studies

5.1. General information

Students admitted to a doctoral programme – including those participating in bridging courses – must enrol for thesis tutorials every year until they

have presented and defended their thesis. Enrolment entitles students to academic tutoring and to use the resources needed to carry out their research work.

Individuals who have been accepted on a UVic-UCC doctoral programme and have enrolled shall be regarded as doctoral students.

If a doctoral student fails to enrol for a particular year and does not formally withdraw from the doctoral programme, he/she must pay the corresponding amount retroactively.

Each student is responsible for his/her enrolment process. As members of UVic-UCC Doctoral College, students must be aware of their rights and responsibilities set out in the College's internal regulations as well as regulations on doctoral studies at UVic-UCC.

The enrolment period is announced at the beginning of each academic year on the Doctoral College's website.

Any submission of enrolment past the deadlines must be duly justified by the student.

5.2. Enrolment periods

Newly admitted students at UVic-UCC	First enrolment period: November* Second enrolment period: February*
Second year students, and students from subsequent years at UVic-UCC	Single enrolment period: October-November*

* See the calendar on the website

5.3. Financial information

5.3.1. Payment of enrolment fees

Before the start of the enrolment period, UVic-UCC will announce the fees and the payment methods on the University's Doctoral College website.

Enrolment covers the following concepts:

- Supervision and tutoring of the thesis
- Monitoring and supervision of the doctoral student throughout the process of writing the thesis
- Administrative fees
- Insurance
- Rights acquired as a member of the University and voluntary services, where applicable

For newly admitted doctoral students who enrol during the February enrolment period, the cost of thesis supervision and tutoring will be 50% of the total amount.

The following forms of payment are available:

- Single payment. Full payment of the enrolment fee in one sum. Students who are newly admitted during the February enrolment period can only choose the single payment option.
- Payment by direct debit instalments. Payment in two instalments. Half of the fee, plus taxes and compulsory insurance, is paid at the time of enrolment, and the rest on 20 January.

Doctoral students must pay the full enrolment fee each academic year. If they withdraw from the doctoral programme, they shall not be entitled to a refund of the payments made nor shall they be exempt from payment of any outstanding amounts, except in the cases described in Point 6.3.

The enrolment fee must be paid in full for the doctoral studies to be valid. If a student chooses to pay the fee in instalments, it shall be considered that his/her obligation has been met when both instalments have been paid.

Doctoral students have up to one month to enrol from the date of receiving notice of admission from the Academic Committee for the Doctoral Programme. If they do not enrol during this one-month period, admission to the programme or renewal of thesis tutorials shall be withdrawn.

If students do not meet the payment terms for the enrolment fee, they shall be notified, and their student rights shall then be suspended automatically and temporarily (their access to the Virtual Campus shall be restricted and they shall not be able to carry out any administrative procedures).

If a student defaults on payment of an instalment, the costs that are incurred will be added to the outstanding amount.

Students must be up to date with payment of any amount related to enrolment fees for courses taken at UVic-UCC before they can enrol, be issued certificates or qualifications, and carry out any other administrative procedure at the University.

If a thesis is deposited before the 31 October in an academic year, the student does not need to enrol for thesis tutorials for the corresponding year.

5.3.2. Discounts

The following discounts are applicable to doctoral students at the UVic Campus:

- Second qualification at UVic-UCC: 8% discount on the fee for doctoral thesis tutoring if you are a graduate of the University of Vic - Central University of Catalonia who wishes to study for a second official qualification. To apply for this discount, you must be a member of UVic Alumni.
- Same family unit: 5% discount on the fee for doctoral thesis tutoring for each member of the family at UVic-UCC.
- Large family, special category: 5% discount on the fee for doctoral thesis tutoring for members of large families in this special category at the start of the academic year.
- People with disabilities: 10% discount on the fee for doctoral thesis tutoring for students with a 33% degree of disability or higher.
- Victims of terrorist attacks: 10% discount on the fee for doctoral thesis tutoring for people who have been victims of terrorist attacks, their spouses and their children.
- Victims of gender violence: 10% discount on the fee for doctoral thesis tutoring for victims of gender violence and their dependent children.
- Over 60 years old: 50% discount on the fee for doctoral thesis tutoring.

5.4. Grants and financial aid

Predocctoral grants are processed by the Doctoral College Office.

Grants that are available to UVic-UCC doctoral students are described on the Doctoral College website.

Doctoral students who have been awarded a grant that specifically covers the enrolment fee for thesis tutoring, will only have to pay at the time of enrolment the difference between the public enrolment fee for thesis tutoring determined in the Government of Catalonia's current decree on rates, and the enrolment fee for thesis tutoring established annually by the UVic-UCC.

The enrolment fee for thesis tutoring for a doctoral student who is part of the Industrial Doctorates Programme, in the co-funding mode, will be fully covered by the budget for the project.

5.5. Insurance

UVic-UCC offers doctoral students obligatory and specific insurance policies according to the qualification, as well as insurance for research periods abroad.

Information about insurance policies can be found on the UVic-UCC website.

5.6. Enrolment on doctoral programmes taught with other universities

Students who enrol on joint UVic-UCC doctoral programmes taught with other universities shall follow the enrolment process established by the University.

6. Academic progress and length of studies

6.1. Academic progress

All aspects of academic progress are described in the academic progress regulations for doctoral programmes at UVic-UCC, which can be found on the Doctoral College website.

6.2. Length of doctoral studies

The length of doctoral studies is determined by the doctoral student's time commitment to preparing the doctoral thesis.

For full-time students, the doctorate should be completed in three years, from the date of admission to the programme to the defence of the doctoral thesis. However, if a student has not applied to submit the thesis during the three-year period, the Academic Committee for the Doctoral Programme (CAPD) may approve a one-year extension.

Students who have obtained a grant or financial aid must work full-time on their doctoral thesis.

For part-time students, the doctoral studies should be completed in five years from the date of admission to the doctoral programme to the defence of the doctoral thesis. The CAPD may grant a two-year extension, if the doctoral student sends an official request to the CAPD coordinator at least one month before the start of the enrolment period for thesis tutorials.

In exceptional circumstances, both full-time and part-time doctoral students may be granted a further one-year extension, through an official request sent to the CAPD, if it is demonstrated that the the-

sis is in the final phase, and the extension is approved by the thesis supervisor, the tutor, if applicable, and the Doctoral College Management Board.

When doctoral students enrol on a programme for the first time, they must state whether they will study full- or part-time. However, they may change from full- to part-time or vice versa no more than twice during their doctoral studies, for justifiable reasons. To change their time commitment, doctoral students must send an official request to the CAPD coordinator at least one month before the start of the first enrolment period for thesis tutorials.

If students are off sick, on pregnancy leave or on leave for any other reason stated in the current regulations, the period of leave shall not count towards the time limits for completing theses that are established above.

6.3. Temporary and permanent withdrawal from a doctoral programme

Doctoral students may request temporary withdrawal from the doctoral programme for a maximum period of one year. Temporary withdrawal may be extended for a further year if duly justified. Reasons for temporary withdrawal are sick leave; leave for adoption, pre-adoptive or permanent foster care of children under six years; maternity or paternity leave; serious or prolonged illness of first-degree relatives; financial reasons or employment situations of particular relevance; or any other reason specified in the current regulations. Doctoral students must provide evidence of their situation by duly submitting the corresponding documents so that the CAPD can resolve the request. If approved by the CAPD, students will not have to enrol for thesis tutorials during this period.

If students wish to leave a doctoral programme permanently, they will be refunded the enrolment fee for thesis tutorials if they officially withdraw before 15 December for one of the following reasons:

- Serious illness
- Serious situation that prevents a student from continuing to study

The administration fees will not be refunded under any circumstances.

If a doctoral student fails to enrol for thesis tutorials in two consecutive academic years, he/she will be permanently withdrawn from the doctoral programme.

Students who do not attend the annual evaluation sessions and do not justify their absence will be permanently withdrawn from the doctoral programme.

6.4. Appeals

Appeals can be lodged with the Rector of UVic-UCC against any decisions made in accordance with these regulations.

The decision of the rector represents the final resolution of the administrative process, and can be challenged before the contentious administrative jurisdiction.

7. Monitoring and assessment of the doctoral thesis

7.1. Supervision of the doctoral thesis

On admission to the doctoral programme, the Academic Committee for the Doctoral Programme (CAPD) shall assign each student a thesis supervisor, who may be any doctoral degree holder, from within the University or outside it, with proven research experience.

The thesis supervisor is responsible for the doctoral student's overall research training.

The doctoral student shall also be assigned a tutor, who will be a doctoral degree holder with proven research experience. The tutor will be associated with the doctoral programme in which the student is enrolled, and may or may not be the same person as the thesis supervisor.

If the thesis supervisor is not from the UVic-UCC, the tutor must ensure that the interaction between the doctoral student and the CAPD is appropriate.

In the appointment of thesis supervisors, the CAPD takes into account the availability of doctoral degree holders associated with the knowledge area and line of research addressed in the thesis proposal.

Thesis supervisors must hold a Spanish or foreign doctoral degree certificate, have proven experience in research, and meet at least one of the following conditions:

- Have a research premium
- Have demonstrated research experience
- Have supervised a doctoral thesis previously
- Participate in a competitively funded project

- Have a research-intensification contract.

In exceptional circumstances, the CAPD may accept another form of recognition of research experience.

The doctoral thesis may be co-supervised by other doctoral degree holders when there are justifiable academic reasons for doing so, which may include the fact that the thesis covers an interdisciplinary topic or is part of a joint doctoral programme. A thesis can only be co-supervised if this is authorised by the CAPD and it is shown that at least one of the two thesis supervisors meets one of the criteria given above. Authorisation could be revoked subsequently if, according to CAPD criteria, the co-supervision does not benefit the development of the thesis.

Although thesis co-supervision is usually considered to mean guidance by two supervisors, in exceptional cases the Doctoral College Management Board may approve the appointment of a maximum of three supervisors.

A supervisor may oversee a maximum of five doctoral theses at the same time. Co-supervision will count as half of sole thesis supervision.

If a doctoral student is not assigned a thesis supervisor at the time of admission, the CAPD shall have a period of three months after the student's enrolment to appoint a supervisor.

7.2. Commitment agreement

The tasks of supervision, tutoring and monitoring a doctoral student are described in the commitment agreement, which is signed by the doctoral student, the thesis supervisor(s), the tutor, if applicable, and the coordinator of the doctoral programme, and has the approval of the director of the Doctoral College.

The commitment agreement also sets out the conflict resolution procedure, aspects of intellectual and industrial property rights, confidentiality issues, and other applicable regulations.

The commitment agreement is signed as soon as possible after admission of the doctoral student to the doctoral programme and is submitted to the Academic Administration.

7.3. Research proposal

Within six months from the date of appointment of a thesis supervisor, the student must draw up a research proposal (PI), which shall describe the

methodology, the objectives, the means, and the time planning.

The PI must be assessed by the thesis supervisor(s) and, if applicable, by the tutor. It will then be evaluated by the CAPD. A PI that has a positive evaluation is an essential requirement for continuance on the doctoral programme. If the CAPD identifies major shortcomings in the PI, the doctoral student shall have six months to prepare and submit a new proposal. If the shortcomings are not resolved, the CAPD must issue a detailed report and the student shall be permanently withdrawn from the programme.

The proposal may be modified and described at any time during the period of thesis preparation, as long as the changes are justified and duly approved by the CAPD through the module for monitoring doctoral theses.

7.4. Doctoral student activity report

The Doctoral Student Activity Report (DAD) is a register of all the training and research activities carried out during the period of doctoral studies.

The DAD is designed for and regularly reviewed by the thesis supervisor(s) or, if applicable, the tutor, and is checked once a year by the CAPD.

The doctoral student must keep the DAD up to date and submit all academic certificates to the supervisor as proof of the activities that he/she has carried out, using the module for doctoral thesis monitoring.

7.5. Assessment

7.5.1. Bridging courses

In bridging courses that form part of the curricula of master's degree courses at UVic-UCC, assessment is carried out in accordance with the procedures and criteria established in the academic regulations that govern these courses.

In other activities planned by the CAPD or by the Doctoral College, the assessment criteria established for each activity shall apply.

7.5.2. Annual monitoring of the doctoral student

The CAPD is responsible for the annual assessment of doctoral students. This assessment is designed to ensure that, on completion of their studies, doctoral students have gained the core and specific competencies defined in the doctoral programme,

in accordance with the current regulations governing doctoral studies, and to verify the quality and progress of doctoral theses.

Every year, the doctoral student shall orally present the development of their research work. The presentation shall be assessed by a supervisory board appointed by the CAPD and comprised of three doctoral degree holders who are experts in the field of the thesis and may or may not be teaching staff involved in the doctoral programme.

At the end of each academic year, the CAPD will establish the composition of the supervisory board, the dates of the oral presentations, and any other requirements that the doctoral students must meet.

In exceptional cases, when the period for a doctoral student's oral presentation coincides with a short period of research training abroad, field work, etc. the CAPD may allow another format instead of the oral presentation.

The CAPD will evaluate the following documents every year:

- Research proposal
- Doctoral Student Activity Report
- Reports by the thesis supervisor(s) and the tutor, if applicable
- Report on the assessment of the doctoral student's oral presentation

The results of all the evaluations shall be entered in the module for monitoring doctoral theses, with an indication of whether the result was positive or negative. To complete the assessment of the doctoral student, the CAPD may request more proof of activities or information from members of the student's research group.

For a student to remain on the doctoral programme, they must receive a positive assessment. If the CAPD identifies major shortcomings, the doctoral student may be asked to present a new research plan within six months. If the shortcomings are not resolved and the assessment is again negative, the CAPD shall issue a detailed report and the doctoral student will be permanently withdrawn from the doctoral programme.

The doctoral student has the right to consult and review the assessment reports.

7.6. Changing a thesis supervisor

The CAPD, the doctoral student and the thesis supervisor(s) may request a change in thesis supervisor at any time during the doctoral studies prior to depositing the thesis, provided that justifiable reasons are given.

A proposal to change thesis supervisor must be duly justified and approved by the CAPD for the change to take effect.

If the thesis supervisor is changed, a new commitment agreement must be signed.

7.7. Changing a doctoral programme

The doctoral student may apply to move to a different doctoral programme by submitting an application form explaining his/her reasons for the change to the CAPD of the chosen programme. This CAPD shall then hold an extraordinary meeting and, if considered necessary, consult the CAPD of the student's original doctoral programme to request any relevant information. The CAPD's decision shall then be announced.

If a doctoral student changes programme, they may need to take additional bridging courses. This will be determined by the CAPD of the chosen doctoral programme. The doctoral student may also need to change thesis supervisor(s).

Chapter II. The doctoral thesis

1. The doctoral thesis

A doctoral thesis is an original piece of research carried out by a doctoral student in any field that is intended to prepare the student for independent work in research, development and innovation. The thesis must be on one of the lines of research covered by the student's doctoral programme.

The thesis must be written and subsequently defended in public in either of the official languages of Catalonia (Spanish or Catalan) or in English, in accordance with the regulations for each doctoral programme. In exceptional and duly justified cases, the Academic Committee for the Doctoral Programme (CAPD) may allow a student to write and defend their thesis in another language.

The doctoral thesis must include: an introduction to the topic of study, the objectives, the research methodology used, a discussion of the results and the conclusions. In addition, it may include any appendices that are deemed appropriate.

2. Depositing the doctoral thesis

When the preparation of a doctoral thesis has been completed and in a period of two months prior to the possible date of the thesis defence, the doctoral student shall submit an application to Academic Administration (AGA) for authorisation to deposit the thesis. The application shall be accompanied by the documents described in appendices I, II, III, IV and V of these regulations.

To deposit a thesis, doctoral students must prove that they have at least one positive assessment from the supervisory board for their doctoral programme. In exceptional circumstances, the Doctoral College Management Board may agree to shorten this period on request by the doctoral student and the thesis supervisor, provided there are justifiable reasons for doing so.

In addition, to ensure the quality of research in the doctoral thesis, the CAPD will require the doctoral student to have published a paper associated with the thesis in an indexed journal at the time of the thesis deposit.

If the CAPD gives its authorisation, the thesis shall be deposited in the University library.

In no more than five working days after the thesis deposit, the Doctoral College Office shall announce the deposit on the Doctoral College website, and to the departments, research and knowledge transfer centres, chairs, research groups and schools and faculties of UVic-UCC. The thesis shall be on deposit for ten working days, excluding Saturdays, the month of August, and the Christmas and Easter holidays. Whilst the doctoral thesis is on deposit, any doctoral degree holder can read it and, if necessary, send a report to the Doctoral College Management Board with any comments on the contents that he/she deems relevant. During this period, the thesis shall be analysed using anti-plagiarism software.

Taking into account the comments received, the results of the analysis of the thesis, and the advice of the corresponding department and any specialists who are considered relevant, the Doctoral College Management Board shall decide whether to authorise the public defence of the thesis. If the Board does not approve the thesis defence, the doctoral student, thesis supervisor(s) and tutor, if applicable, shall be informed of the reasons in writing.

3. Authorisation to defend the doctoral thesis

3.1. Composition of the doctoral panel

In the meeting to authorise the defence of the thesis, the Doctoral College Management Board shall also evaluate the proposal for the doctoral panel. The Board will then appoint a panel comprised of three members and two substitutes. Only one member of the panel can be from UVic-UCC or from an institute that collaborates with the Doctoral College or with the doctoral programme. If substitutes have to take their places on the panel, the same proportion of UVic-UCC and external members shall be maintained.

All panel members must hold a doctoral degree certificate and have recognised research experience. The research experience must be demonstrated by publications in a similar field to the subject of the thesis. Panel members must also meet one of the following conditions:

- Hold a research premium
- Have received research accreditation
- Be member of a team working on a competitively funded research project

In exceptional cases, other forms of recognition of research experience may be considered.

If a student has opted for the International Doctorate Mention, the composition of the doctoral panel must meet the requirements established in Point 5 of this chapter.

Students who have opted for the Industrial Doctorate Mention must meet the requirements and submit the documents described in Point 6 of this chapter.

If the thesis is presented under co-supervision, the requirements established in Point 7 of this chapter must be met.

When a thesis is submitted as a collection of published articles, the doctoral student must meet the requirements and submit the documents specified in Point 8 of this chapter.

The thesis supervisor, co-supervisor or tutor cannot form part of the doctoral panel under any circumstances. Co-authors of published papers related to the thesis research cannot be members of the panel either.

Among the members of the doctoral panel, the Doctoral College Management Board shall appoint a chairperson and a secretary. The chairperson shall

be the member of the panel who has the most demonstrated experience in research and/or in their academic career.

The Doctoral College Management Board shall send a copy of the agreements to authorise the thesis defence to the doctoral student, via the Doctoral College Office.

From the day after reception of the agreement to authorise the thesis defence, the doctoral student has five days to submit to each member of the doctoral panel a copy of the doctoral thesis. He/she must also enrol for the thesis defence in this period.

In the case of joint doctoral programmes taught by several universities and co-supervised doctoral theses, the doctoral panel will be formed according to the provisions in the collaboration agreement between the participating universities.

3.2. Notification of the date and place of the thesis defence

Once the thesis defence has been authorised and the doctoral student has paid in full the corresponding enrolment fee, all annual enrolment fees for thesis tutorials, and the annual fees for the period of thesis preparation, the Doctoral College shall announce the date and place of the thesis defence.

The Doctoral College Office shall submit to the secretary of the doctoral panel all the documents required for the thesis defence, before the public event.

There must be a period of 15 to 60 days between the approval of the thesis by the Academic Committee for the Doctoral Programme and its defence.

The public defence must be held on a teaching day during the academic year. It cannot be held in August, as this month is considered a holiday.

3.3. Incidents involving the doctoral panel

For its actions to be valid, the doctoral panel must have all three members present, including the chairperson and secretary.

If, for a justifiable reason, according to the doctoral panel's chairperson, the public defence cannot take place on the date announced, the chairperson may set a new date for the thesis defence that must be in the following fifteen days. In this case, the same individuals who were informed of the first date of the thesis defence must be given the new date with at least 24 hours' notice.

If the thesis defence has been convened and one of the members of the panel cannot attend for a justifiable reason, the chairperson must replace him/her with a substitute. If the chairperson is unable to attend, the Doctoral College Management Board will be responsible for appointing a substitute. In all cases, the appointment of substitutes is subject to the restrictions and conditions on the composition of the doctoral panel described in Point 3.1 of this chapter.

If the thesis defence cannot be held in the established period or there are not enough substitutes to ensure the presence of three members (including original members and substitutes), in accordance with the limitations and conditions on the composition of doctoral panels established in these regulations, the Doctoral College Management Board must appoint a new doctoral panel. To do so, the Board must follow the procedure established in these regulations.

If a doctoral student does not attend the thesis defence and his/her absence is not justified, this fact will be recorded during the corresponding event and a fail grade will be awarded.

3.4. Suspension of the thesis defence

The CAPD may suspend the thesis defence procedure for duly justified, serious reasons up to the moment immediately prior to the public presentation and defence.

4. Defence of the doctoral thesis

4.1. Public thesis defence

The thesis defence shall be held in a public session at UVic-UCC before the members of the doctoral panel. In the case of joint doctoral programmes and co-supervised theses, the thesis defence will take place at the location specified in the collaboration agreement.

The thesis defence could take place at affiliated centres or at the Hospital Universitari de Vic as specified in these regulations, provided that a formal request is made by the thesis supervisor to the Doctoral College Management Board when the thesis is deposited. In these cases, the affiliated centres or the Hospital Universitari de Vic shall be responsible for the logistic organisation of the event.

The defence will consist of a 35-50 minute presentation of the research that was undertaken, covering the methodology, the contents and the

conclusions, with special emphasis on the original contributions.

In exceptional circumstances determined by the Academic Committee for the Doctoral Programme, which include, among others, the involvement of companies or institutions in the programme, the existence of confidentiality agreements with companies or the possibility of obtaining patents related to the thesis content, appropriate measures shall be taken to ensure that confidential aspects of the work are not made public. However, the measures shall not impede the public presentation of the doctoral thesis' contribution to knowledge. The members of the doctoral panel and the Doctoral College Management Board shall be informed of these measures, in accordance with the industrial property regulations and other current University regulations.

The members of the panel may ask the doctoral student any questions they consider appropriate. Moreover, any doctoral degree holders in attendance may pose questions at the time and in the manner indicated by the chairperson of the panel.

The doctoral panel shall have access to the Doctoral Student Activity Report. This document shall not be used to generate a quantitative score, but rather as a qualitative assessment instrument that complements the evaluation of the doctoral thesis and reflects the skills gained by the student during the doctoral studies.

4.2. Assessment and mark

Once the thesis defence has been completed, the doctoral panel will issue a report and award an overall mark on the following scale:

- Fail
- Pass
- Merit
- Excellent

Before closing the session, the chairperson of the doctoral panel shall verbally communicate the mark awarded to the doctoral student and anyone else present.

4.3. *Cum laude* distinction

Members of the doctoral panel may suggest that the thesis merits the *cum laude* distinction, if it has been unanimously awarded an overall mark of excellent. The distinction shall only be granted if panel members vote unanimously for this option by secret ballot. On the ballot paper, panel members

must indicate their reasons for either granting or withholding the *cum laude* distinction.

On completion of the event, the secretary will issue a certificate of the doctoral thesis defence, which must be signed by all members of the doctoral panel. Once signed, the certificate shall be sent to the Doctoral College Office, along with all the other documents related to the thesis defence.

If the thesis defence is held at a location other than the UVic-UCC (affiliated centres or the Hospital Universitari de Vic), the secretary of the doctoral panel shall also be responsible for submitting to the Doctoral College Office the certificate of the doctoral thesis defence and all the other documents related to the thesis defence. If the secretary is not a member of the UVic-UCC, the thesis supervisor and/or tutor must undertake this task.

Within five working days from the date of the thesis defence, the management of the Doctoral College will open the envelopes containing the vote on the *cum laude* distinction. If there is a unanimous vote in favour of granting the distinction, the management will notify the doctoral student, the thesis supervisor, the Doctoral College Management Board and the corresponding CAPD.

If, based on comments made by the doctoral degree holders at the public thesis defence, the doctoral panel considers that the deposited copies of the thesis should be replaced, the secretary of the panel shall issue a report on this matter and the process of replacing the thesis shall begin.

The doctoral panel's decision cannot be appealed, and the content of the reports cannot subsequently be modified, amended or rectified.

The doctoral student can request a long-form certificate of the doctoral thesis assessment reports.

5. International Doctorate Mention

The doctoral student may be awarded an International Doctorate Mention if the following requirements are met:

1. During the training period required to obtain the doctoral degree certificate, the doctoral student must have spent at least three months at a renowned higher education institution or research centre in another country, taking courses or conducting research. The period abroad and the activities must be assessed by the thesis supervisor and approved by the CAPD, and must be included in the DAD.

2. Part of the thesis (at least the abstract and conclusions) must be written and submitted in one of the languages commonly used for scientific communication in the area of knowledge in question. This language may not be any of the joint official languages of Spain. This regulation shall not be applied when the research visit, reports and experts are in or from a Spanish-speaking country.
3. At least two doctoral-level experts from a higher education institution or research centre in another country and a doctoral-level expert from UVic-UCC must issue reports on the thesis.
4. The thesis doctoral panel must include at least one doctoral-level expert from a higher education institution or research centre in a different country. This expert cannot be the person responsible for the student's research visit at a host institution, as mentioned in Section 1.

The thesis defence must take place on the premises of UVic-UCC or, in the case of joint doctoral programmes and co-supervised theses, at the location specified in the collaboration agreement.

6. Industrial Doctorate Mention

The doctoral student can obtain an Industrial Doctorate Mention if the following conditions are met:

1. The doctoral student has an employment or commercial contract. The contract could be with a company in the private or public sector, or with a government body.
2. The doctoral student must participate in an industrial research or experimental project undertaken in the company or government body in which the student is working, which cannot be a university in any case. The industrial research project or experimental development in which the doctoral student participates must be directly related with their thesis. Evidence of this direct relationship shall be provided in a report that must be approved by the Academic Committee for the Doctoral Programme (CAPD) to which the doctoral student is attached.

If the industrial research project or experimental development is undertaken with collaboration between the University and the company or government body in which the student is working, a framework agreement for collaboration between the parties shall be drawn up, which will establish the obligations of the University and those of the company or government body.

The doctoral student has a thesis tutor appointed by the University and a head assigned by the company or government body, who may also be the thesis supervisor, in accordance with Point 7, Chapter I of these regulations.

In general, the Industrial Doctorate Mention shall be awarded to all doctoral students who have obtained an Industrial Doctorate Grant awarded by the Agency for the Management of University and Research Grants (AGAUR) of the Government of Catalonia's Ministry of Business and Knowledge.

7. Joint supervision of the doctoral thesis

Doctoral students may apply for joint thesis supervision if they meet the following requirements:

- There is an agreement between UVic-UCC and the foreign university or higher education institution that can award doctoral degree certificates during the first year of preparation of a doctoral thesis.
- The doctoral student has been admitted to a doctoral programme at UVic-UCC and at the foreign university with which the agreement has been signed, and is supervised by one or more PhD holders at the two universities.
- The doctoral student has the approval of the Academic Committee for the Doctoral Programme (CAPD) to prepare the doctoral thesis under joint supervision.
- The time dedicated to preparing the doctoral thesis is divided between the two institutions. The doctoral student must spend at least six months at the university or higher education centre outside of Spain with which the co-supervision agreement has been established, although this period does not have to be consecutive. The placements and activities must be described in the co-supervision agreement.

Doctoral students who prepare a doctoral thesis under joint supervision must pay the UVic-UCC enrolment fee for the doctoral programme every academic year, as established in the provisions of the agreement.

Procedures for annual supervision, the doctoral panel, thesis defence, assessment and issue of the doctoral certificate shall also be determined by the provisions established in the agreement. The back of the doctoral certificate shall contain the statement: "Thesis undertaken under co-supervision with the foreign university or higher education centre with which an agreement has been signed".

8. Thesis submission as a collection of published articles

A doctoral thesis can be submitted as a collection of published articles.

In this case, the following requirements must be met:

- The doctoral student must have at least three publications, on the same research line, two of which must be indexed in the Journal Citation Reports (JCR), which includes the Science Citation Index (SCI), the Social Science Citation Index (SSCI) and the Arts Humanities Citation Index (AHCI), and/or Scimago Journal Rank (SJR), or have published at least five papers, three of which are indexed in Carhus+, Band A. If articles have been published in non-indexed journals, the scientific recognition of the journal, as well as the rigour and objectiveness of the article selection process, shall be considered. The journal must have an editorial board comprised of recognised experts and follow an external, independent review process prior to publication.
- At least the two papers in the thesis that have the best journal ranking were published or accepted for publication within four years prior to the submission of the thesis.
- The co-authors of papers in the thesis cannot form part of the doctoral panel that assesses the thesis, or be considered as external thesis evaluators.
- Whenever possible, the association of the doctoral student with UVic-UCC is stated in the published papers, either through the affiliation of the thesis supervisor or the doctoral student with the university, in the acknowledgements, or in a footnote, using the expression: "This work was carried out as part of the doctoral programme in ... at the University of Vic - Central University of Catalonia", or a similar phrase.
- In addition to a copy of the published articles, the thesis must include a general introduction to present the papers and justify the thematic unity of the thesis and the coherence of the collection of articles included in this format of doctoral thesis. It must also include a general summary of the results, the discussion of the results, and the final conclusions.
- Any other requirements that might be established by the CAPD for this purpose.

9. Publication and archiving of the doctoral thesis

If the doctoral thesis is satisfactory, UVic-UCC library shall archive both an electronic copy in an open repository and a printed copy (see Appendix IV). A copy of the thesis in electronic format shall also be sent to the Ministry of Education, along with all the additional information required for the identification and consultation of the thesis.

Copyright is protected by the publication agreement, in which the author reserves the right to publish the thesis with other publishing companies and/or in other media.

Before the library includes the thesis in UVic-UCC repository, it will obtain a legal deposit number.

Chapter III. The doctoral degree certificate

1. Issue of the doctoral degree certificate

After successful completion of the thesis defence, the new doctoral degree holder can apply for issue of a doctoral degree certificate in accordance with current legislation. In line with regulations on the issuance of certificates, the title of the qualification shall be: Doctor of the University of Vic - Central University of Catalonia, and the certificate shall include information on the corresponding doctoral programme and any doctoral mentions.

1.1. Payment of fees

To be issued an official doctoral degree certificate, the doctoral degree holder must pay the fee that is set every year by the University of Vic - Central University of Catalonia, and must be up to date with payment of their annual enrolment fees for thesis tutorials and annual fees for the thesis preparation period.

The new doctoral degree holder can apply for a provisional doctoral degree certificate whilst the original is being prepared, so that they can join associations, submit the certificate to government departments in other countries, etc.

1.2. Collection of the doctoral degree certificate

The doctoral degree certificate shall be collected by the doctoral degree holder in person, who must provide proof of identification with the corresponding valid official document. Doctoral degree holders may grant another person permission to collect the certificate, through power of attorney.

New doctoral degree holders can ask the Doctoral College to send their degree certificate to the closest official offices to their place of residence if they do not live in the Province of Barcelona, or to the closest Spanish ambassador or consulate if they live outside of Spain.

1.3. Signing of the degree certificate

Once the new doctoral degree holder has confirmed that the information displayed on the degree certificate is correct, he/she must sign it.

1.4. Duplicate certificates

The new doctoral degree holder can request the issue of a duplicate degree certificate when the initial information in the document needs to be modified or rectified. Supporting documents must be provided.

The main reasons for requesting a duplicate degree certificate are:

- A change of name, surname or personal details
- A change in nationality
- Loss of the original certificate

The new doctoral degree holder must pay the fee established for issuing a duplicate certificate in the following cases:

- When the initial information needs to be modified for a reason attributable to the degree holder.
- When the certificate has already been collected by the student and subsequently needs to be rectified.
- In the case of loss of a doctoral degree certificate, graduates must pay the duplicate fee and the fee for officially recording the loss in the Official Gazette of the Spanish Government (BOE).

2. Special awards

UVic-UCC may give honourable mentions or special awards to doctoral theses that deserve recognition for their high quality. These awards will be noted in the corresponding academic certificate.

3. Honorary doctorate

UVic-UCC may award an honorary doctorate to individuals whose exceptional academic, scientific or personal merits deserve this distinction.

3.1. Awarding and procedure

The University may award an honorary doctorate to people in recognition of their relevance and excellence in the academic, scientific, literary, cultural, social, political or economic spheres.

The following bodies may propose the award of an honorary doctorate from UVic-UCC: departments, governing bodies of the faculties or schools, the Doctoral College Management Board and the rector. The proposal must be submitted during the academic year, must be approved by the Doctoral College's Management Board and by the Governing Council of UVic-UCC.

Once approved by the Governing Council, the proposal must be submitted to the Board of the FUB, which shall approve, when appropriate, the award of the honorary doctorate in question.

Final provision

These regulations shall come into effect at the time of their approval.

Repeal

These regulations replace and abrogate previous doctoral studies regulations of UVic-UCC and repeal any other contradictory previous regulations.

Appendix I. Documents that must be submitted to deposit a doctoral thesis

The doctoral student must submit the following documents in order to deposit a doctoral thesis:

- Thesis deposit authorisation form.
- Report and curriculum vitae of two assessors who are not from UVic-UCC or involved in the doctoral programme, who are experts in the subject(s) addressed in the doctoral thesis. The thesis supervisor and/or tutor, if applicable, must have contacted the external assessors to request the reports.
- Doctoral Student Activity Report, using the corresponding application form.
- Authorisation given by the supervisor(s) to deposit the doctoral thesis, confirmed by the thesis tutor, if applicable.
- Two bound copies of the thesis signed by the doctoral student, in the format established.

- A digital copy of the doctoral thesis and of the student's curriculum in PDF format or similar.
- If the thesis is written in a language other than Catalan, a summary must be submitted in Catalan that is at least five pages long.
- The thesis supervisor must submit a proposal of six experts who could form part of the doctoral panel and a proposal for the date of the thesis reading and defence, using the corresponding application form.

The following must be attached to this proposal:

- A copy of the curriculum vitae of the proposed members of the doctoral panel, using the standard template. Curriculum vitae must include at least specific details of the members' accreditations, six-year evaluations, publications and research projects from the last five years.
- Acceptance document.
- Copy of a paper associated with the doctoral thesis that has been published in an indexed journal or a copy of an official document indicating that a paper has been accepted by an indexed journal. The journals must be related to the knowledge area addressed in the thesis.
- For theses on art that include interventions, exhibitions, use of objects, etc., a proposal for the public presentation of the project must be attached, including the technical conditions and the design of the thesis defence.

All these documents must be drawn up and reviewed by the thesis supervisor(s) and the doctoral student together.

Appendix II. Documents required for submission of the thesis as a collection of published articles

If a doctoral thesis is submitted as a collection of published articles, the doctoral student must attach the documents described in Point 2, Chapter II of these regulations to the thesis deposit authorisation form, as well as the following:

- A report by the thesis supervisor on the impact factor or ranking of the journal in which the papers included in the doctoral thesis have been published. The report must explain why the collection of articles is coherent and thus has the character of a doctoral thesis.
- A list of the publications that form part of the collection of published articles.
- Doctoral students must provide a copy of the published papers, according to UVic-UCC's regulations on authorship of scientific publications

by teaching staff, and the full reference of the journal in which they have been published. If a paper has been accepted for publication, proof of acceptance must be provided as well as the full reference of the journal. In all cases, the impact factor, the quartile and the knowledge area must be provided for each journal in which a paper has been published, or data must be included on the objective impact of the results.

- If any of the publications were written with a co-author, the thesis supervisor must provide a report that describes the doctoral student's participation in each article in detail.
- A consent form signed by the rest of the non-doctoral degree holding co-authors of the paper presented in the doctoral thesis.

The Academic Committee for the Doctoral Programme shall study the submitted documents and decide whether it is appropriate to present the doctoral thesis in this format.

Appendix III. Documents required to apply for an International Doctorate Mention

Together with the thesis deposit authorisation form, doctoral students who wish to apply for an International Doctorate Mention on their doctoral degree certificate must submit the following documents:

- A certificate of the research period abroad issued by the head or director of the host institution, which certifies that the requirements established in Point 5, Chapter II of these regulations have been met.
- Reports by two experts in non-Spanish higher education institutions or research centres and by one doctoral degree holder at the UVic-UCC. The curriculum vitae of the experts must be attached.

Appendix IV. Documents to apply for the Industrial Doctorate Mention

Together with the thesis deposit authorisation form, doctoral students who wish to apply for an Industrial Doctorate Mention on their doctoral degree certificate must submit the following documents:

- Approval of the industrial doctorate project report, if applicable.
- A copy of the collaboration agreement between the relevant parties, if applicable.

Appendix V. Application and authorisation of co-supervision

During the first year of preparation of the doctoral thesis, doctoral students who wish to apply for the co-supervision system must present the following:

- An application to the CAPD, explaining the reasons for applying for co-supervision.
- A proposed agreement, using the standard model.

Appendix VI. Documents required to apply for publication and archiving of the doctoral thesis

If the thesis is satisfactory, UVic-UCC library shall archive a copy in electronic format in the University's open repository and file a printed copy. For this purpose, the doctoral student must submit the following documents to the library:

- The full text of the thesis in digital media (CD, DVD) and in PDF format. If the thesis contains some sections that are subject to a copyright transfer agreement, that is, publishing policies determine that part of the thesis content cannot be published in open access format, then a copy of the text should be submitted in PDF format, in which the affected chapters are replaced by a reference to the paper in question.
- A Word file containing a summary of the thesis in Catalan and/or Spanish, and another in English (maximum length: 150 words in each language).
- A list of keywords on the content of the thesis in Catalan and/or Spanish and another in English.

In addition, the doctoral student must sign a publication agreement between himself/herself and the University. Once the document has been signed, the library will add the thesis to the open repository and notify the author.