



## **UNIERSITETI I PRISHTINËS UNIVERSITY OF PRISHTINA**

St. George Bush, No. 31, 10000 Prishtina, Republic of Kosovo  
Tel: +383 38 244 183 / 244 186 | Email: [rektorati@uni-pr.edu](mailto:rektorati@uni-pr.edu)  
Web: [www.uni-pr.edu](http://www.uni-pr.edu)

---

Protocol No: 650  
Date: 27/ 3/ 2025

Based on Articles 20 (2.1, 2.2, 2.4) and 91 of the Statute of the University of Prishtina, the Senate, in its meeting held on February 21, 2025, approved:

### **GENERAL REGULATION ON DOCTORAL STUDIES**

#### **Article 1 General Provisions**

1. This regulation defines the organization and development of doctoral studies at the University of Prishtina (UP), regulating the structure, duration, admission criteria, academic process, rights and obligations of doctoral candidates and mentors, as well as the quality assurance of the studies.
2. This regulation also establishes the mandatory criteria for the activities mentioned in paragraph 1 of this article.

#### **Article 2 Definition of Terms and Composition of the Doctoral Studies Council of the Academic Unit and the Central Doctoral Studies Council**

For the purposes of this regulation, the following terms are defined as follows:

1. The Doctoral Studies Council at the level of an academic unit (faculty) is referred to as the Doctoral Studies Council of the Academic Unit, while at the university level it is referred to as the Central Doctoral Studies Council (CDSC).
2. The Doctoral Studies Council of the academic unit consists of 5 or 7 members from among professors holding at least the title of Associate Professor, who represent the respective departments<sup>1</sup> of the academic unit. In cases where there is a lack of associate

---

<sup>1</sup> According to this regulation, depending on the structure of the academic unit, the role of the department may be exercised by branches or, respectively, by chairs.

professors, members of the Doctoral Studies Council may also be appointed from among assistant professors who meet the conditions to supervise doctoral candidates (Article 9, point 1.2). The first (constitutive) meeting is convened and chaired by the Dean of the academic unit. After its constitution, the Doctoral Studies Council elects the Chair from among its members.

3. The Central Doctoral Studies Council (CDSC) shall be composed of:
  - The Rector;
  - The Vice-Rector for Scientific Research;
  - One representative from the Academy of Sciences and Arts of Kosovo;
  - One Full Professor or one Associate Professor from the field of Philosophical Sciences (Faculty of Philosophy);
  - One Full Professor or one Associate Professor from the field of Philological Sciences;
  - One Full Professor or one Associate Professor from the field of Mechanical or Electrical and Computer Engineering;
  - One Full Professor or one Associate Professor from the field of Civil Engineering or Architecture;
  - One Full Professor or one Associate Professor from the field of Arts;
  - One Full Professor or one Associate Professor from the field of Mathematical and Natural Sciences;
  - One Full Professor or one Associate Professor from the field of Medicine;
  - One Full Professor or one Associate Professor from the field of Agricultural and Veterinary Sciences;
  - One Full Professor or one Associate Professor from the field of Law;
  - One Full Professor or one Associate Professor from the field of Economics;
  - One Full Professor or one Associate Professor from the field of Physical Education and Sports;
  - One Full Professor or one Associate Professor from the field of Education Sciences;
  - The Director of the Office for Academic Affairs (OAA), without voting rights
4. The members of the Central Doctoral Studies Council are proposed by the Rector, in consultation with the Deans of the respective academic units, and are appointed by the Senate.
5. The Central Doctoral Studies Council is chaired by the Rector. In his/her absence, it is chaired by the Vice-Rector for Scientific Research. In case of a tie vote, the Chair's vote shall be decisive.
6. Doctoral studies may be organized by one or more academic units, or by one or more universities, within or outside the country.
7. The mentor is a person appointed with an academic-teaching or artistic-teaching title, who supervises the doctoral candidate during the preparation of the doctoral dissertation.

8. The doctoral candidate's file contains all essential records of the candidate from the moment of admission until promotion. The respective academic unit is responsible for collecting and maintaining the data in the file.

### **Article 3**

#### **Organization of Doctoral Studies**

1. Doctoral studies may be organized by academic units (faculties) and/or by the university/universities in one or more scientific fields, provided that at least half of the academic staff involved in the program are in regular employment at the University of Prishtina (UP).
2. Doctoral studies may be offered and conducted only in those scientific fields in which the responsible institution has internationally recognized achievements in scientific research or, respectively, in artistic creativity, demonstrated through publications in international scientific journals indexed in credible international databases, or through presentations in verified cultural/artistic institutions abroad, in accordance with the current standards of the Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA).
3. Doctoral studies in a specific field may be organized only after accreditation by the Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA).
4. Doctoral studies are managed by the Doctoral Studies Council of the respective academic unit, while the doctoral programs are led by the program coordinator, who is the primary holder of the program.
5. The fundamental characteristics of doctoral studies at the university include deepening specific theoretical knowledge in which the research question of the doctoral research project is placed, conducting original and innovative research through advanced research methods, internationalization through presentations and mobility in academic forums, gaining teaching experience, international evaluation of quality, and international competitiveness.
6. In order to ensure quality in doctoral studies and to promote the mobility of doctoral candidates and academic staff, the University of Prishtina (UP) is open to all forms of cooperation with similar institutions within and outside the country.

### **Article 4**

#### **Objectives of Doctoral Studies**

The objectives of doctoral studies are:

1. To advance knowledge and research in a specific scientific or artistic field;
2. To encourage interdisciplinary research approaches and cooperation between academic units;

3. To enable doctoral candidates to carry out independent scientific or artistic research, and to critically evaluate theories, research methodologies, and the findings of others;
4. To develop the knowledge, experience, and skills of doctoral candidates so they can creatively and research-based contribute original and meaningful scientific results in their respective fields of knowledge;
5. To create new theoretical and practical knowledge in science, industry, technological development, or policymaking, by helping to develop solutions to complex societal problems;
6. To promote the internationalization of scientific or artistic work by creating opportunities for collaboration and academic exchange with well-known universities and institutions abroad.

## **Article 5**

### **Teaching and Research in Doctoral Studies**

1. The essential component of university doctoral studies is scientific or artistic research and creation.
2. The mandatory forms of work in doctoral studies, aimed at developing research skills, critical thinking, methodology acquisition, and general competencies, include seminars, research work, experimental work, workshops, and discussion steerups.
3. Lectures may not exceed 20 percent of the total workload foreseen in the study program and calculated according to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS).
4. Depending on available opportunities and under pre-established conditions, participation in teaching within doctoral studies is open to all doctoral candidates of the university. Some parts of research and teaching in doctoral studies may also be attended by doctoral candidates from other universities, according to the conditions set in a previously signed agreement between the respective universities.
5. In order to achieve interdisciplinarity, and with the justification and consent of the mentor as well as the approval of the Doctoral Studies Council, doctoral candidates may carry out parts of their research and artistic creation in other academic units of the university or in other relevant institutions, within or outside the country.
6. The Doctoral Studies Council may assign doctoral candidates supplementary courses from the pool of subjects within the accredited program, for the purpose of acquiring fundamental knowledge and skills necessary for the continuation and completion of

studies, but not for the purpose of replacing the ECTS credits that are meant to be achieved through other types of activities.

## **Article 6**

### **Forms of Doctoral Studies**

1. Doctoral studies may be organized in one of the following forms:
  - 1.1. Doctoral studies organized and managed solely by a single academic unit or university;
  - 1.2. Double doctorate, in which the doctoral candidate is awarded two diplomas and is jointly supervised by two mentors (model: cotutelle de thèse). This applies in cases where, under a specific agreement, the doctoral candidate is enrolled in doctoral studies at two partner universities, and both universities appoint a corresponding mentor for the candidate. The procedures for the enrollment of doctoral candidates and the implementation of doctoral studies shall be defined in the specific agreement concluded between the two universities (Articles 76, 77, and 78);
  - 1.3. Joint doctoral studies as an accredited program of two or more universities, of which at least one shall be outside the Republic of Kosovo. Each university participates in the enrollment of doctoral candidates, while the candidate may obtain either a single joint diploma issued by two or more universities, or a diploma from the university where they are officially enrolled, which states that the studies were conducted jointly with an international partner.
2. The transfer of doctoral students from one program to another within the academic units of the University of Prishtina, or from other universities to the University of Prishtina, shall not be permitted. Students may be admitted only through an open competition announced in the official call for applications.

## **Article 7**

### **Number of Students, Public Call, and Conditions for Enrollment in Doctoral Studies**

1. Academic units shall propose the number of students for enrollment in accordance with the conditions set by the Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA), while the Senate shall make the final decision regarding the number of students and the announcement of the public call, taking into consideration the research, teaching, and mentoring capacities of the respective academic unit.
2. The conditions for enrollment shall be determined by the University Senate, upon the proposal of the Central Council for Doctoral Studies (CCDS), and in accordance with the provisions of this regulation.
3. The public call for enrollment in doctoral studies shall be announced by the University Senate. Eligible to apply for admission to doctoral studies are candidates with an average grade of both levels of studies (BSc + MSc) / 2  $\geq$  8.00 (not lower than 8.00), who have graduated at one of the following levels:

- 3.1. Graduates prior to the implementation of the Bologna Declaration, who must hold a Master of Science degree in the relevant field;
  - 3.2. Graduates after the implementation of studies under the Bologna Declaration, holding a Master's degree in science;
  - 3.3. Graduates who have earned at least 300 European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) credits. The equivalence of grades for students from outside Kosovo shall be determined by the Admission Committee.
4. The University Senate, upon the proposal of the academic unit and after review by the Central Council for Doctoral Studies, shall make the final decision on the admission of students to doctoral studies. The list of accepted candidates, along with all relevant selection criteria, shall be publicly announced on the official website of the respective academic unit and the university.
  5. A prerequisite for the evaluation of candidates is the submission of the required documentation, which must include, among other things: a motivation letter explaining the candidate's interest in scientific or artistic research in the respective field; the conceptual research proposal; evidence of academic achievements at all previous levels of study; proof of English language proficiency issued by a recognized and internationally accepted institution; evidence of relevant publications (scientific or artistic), if any; a letter of commitment or confirmation from a professor in the relevant field stating their willingness to mentor the candidate on the proposed topic. The complete list of documentation required for candidate evaluation shall be specified in the public call for applications.
  6. The conceptual research proposal must be presented before the committee for the evaluation of applicants. This committee is appointed by the faculty council for each program and consists of members who meet the criteria for mentoring. The committee evaluates the conceptual proposal, which must include at least the following components:
    - Title;
    - Abstract;
    - Introduction;
    - Research problem, research question(s), and hypothesis(es);
    - Theoretical framework, relevant literature;
    - Innovation, relevance, and intended scientific contribution;
    - Proposed data and methodology;
    - Methods of data analysis;
    - Work plan;
    - References.
  7. The conceptual research proposal is evaluated up to 40 points, and the detailed criteria for its evaluation are determined for each program and published in the public call.

8. Academic units, together with the request for the public call, must also submit the list of mentors who meet the requirements for mentoring.
9. The criteria for determining the priority ranking of candidates are:
  - 9.1. Candidates must have completed prior studies in the same or a closely related field to the doctoral program. Closely related fields are determined by the respective academic unit, are valid for the entire accreditation period of the respective program, and are published in the public call as part of the specific conditions for the respective academic unit. The evaluation of fields of study for candidates who completed their studies at other faculties or universities is carried out by the Doctoral Studies Council before they undergo the public presentation.
  - 9.2. The average grade during Bachelor's and Master's studies, or the average grade of integrated studies, is evaluated up to a maximum of 40 points, calculated by multiplying the arithmetic average grade by 4.
  - 9.3. Research-scientific/professional activity, evidenced by publications and presentations as outlined below, is evaluated with a maximum value of 20 points:
  - 9.4. For each article published in the last five years and indexed in Web of Science (SCIE, SSCI, and AHCI) and/or SCOPUS (Q1, Q2): first/corresponding author 5 points, co-author 2 points;
  - 9.5. For each article published in the last five years and indexed in SCOPUS (Q3, Q4): first/corresponding author 3 points, co-author 1 point;
  - 9.6. In the field of medicine, completion of specialization is evaluated with 5 points.
  - 9.7. For each article published in the last five years in other internationally indexed journals: first author 3 points, second author 2 points, other authors 1 point.
  - 9.8. For each article published in the last five years in local academic journals published by the University of Prishtina or its centers and institutes, by the Academy of Sciences and Arts of Kosovo, the Albanological Institute, and the Institute of History, which are subject to scientific peer review: first author 2 points, other authors 1 point.
  - 9.9. For each oral presentation of the work in the last five years at international scientific gatherings (conferences, congresses, symposia) indexed and published in the proceedings: first author 2 points, other authors 1 point.
  - 9.10. For each poster presentation of the work in the last five years at international scientific gatherings (conferences, congresses, symposia), indexed and published in the proceedings: first author 1 point, other authors 0.5 points.

- 9.11. For each oral presentation in the last five years at scientific gatherings of local character (conferences, congresses, symposia): first author 1 point, other authors 0.5 points.
10. Publications in journals and by publishers of questionable quality, as defined in the current regulation on selection procedures for the appointment of academic staff, are not considered. In this regulation, this limitation is also applicable in other cases concerning journals and their publishers.
11. In the case of equal points, priority is given to the candidate who is a regular staff member of the University of Prishtina.
12. Candidates can earn a maximum of 40 points from grades, 20 points from scientific/creative contributions, and up to 40 points from the presentation of the conceptual research proposal.
13. Each candidate must demonstrate knowledge of the English language at least at level B2, with proof from recognized international tests, TOEFL iBT (minimum 72 points) or IELTS (minimum 5.5), administered by accredited institutions according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). TOEFL iBT and IELTS certificates are valid for two years from the date of issuance.
14. Academic units may set additional requirements if they do not conflict with the Statute of the University of Prishtina and this regulation. Additional requirements are specified in the relevant public call, published after the accreditation of the doctoral program, and remain valid for the entire accreditation period.
15. The admission process is organized and administered by the academic units, respecting the highest academic standards. In cases of a conflict of interest, the involvement of the relevant personnel in all stages of the admission process must be entirely avoided. In such cases, the university senate may request the faculty to take additional measures to prevent the discrediting of the admission process.

## **Article 8**

### **Duration and Stages of Doctoral Studies**

1. Doctoral studies are full-time programs and last no less than three years, organized into six semesters. Doctoral studies must be completed with the public defense of the dissertation topic no later than six (6) years from the date of enrollment. Upon a justified proposal from the Doctoral Studies Council, the Faculty Council, and the Central Doctoral Studies Council, and after approval by the Senate, doctoral studies may be extended for up to two additional years. If the doctoral candidate does not complete the doctoral studies through the public defense of the dissertation within this period, they lose their doctoral student status.

2. In case of loss of doctoral student status, the university issues a certificate confirming this as well as proof of the completed courses. The issued certificate is signed by the dean of the respective academic unit.
1. Upon a specific request and justification submitted by the doctoral candidate, with the approval of the mentor, the candidate may switch to part-time studies for a period of no more than two consecutive academic years (i.e., one full-time academic year) and no more than three years in total over the entire doctoral program. In such cases, the doctoral candidate's request must receive prior approval from the Doctoral Studies Council of the academic unit, the Faculty Council, and the Central Doctoral Studies Council.
2. For accredited programs, the accumulation of ECTS credits is done in accordance with the respective programs.
3. The organization and implementation of the curriculum for semesters 1 and 2 are led by the program coordinator appointed by the academic unit. At the beginning of the second semester, the doctoral candidate, in consultation with a potential mentor, proposes the narrow research field and the potential dissertation topic (Form F1). The candidate's proposal for the topic and potential mentor (Form F1) is reviewed by the Faculty Council, based on the evaluation of the Doctoral Studies Council and the relevant department. The Faculty Council, based on the criteria specified in this regulation, may recommend that the doctoral candidate revise the proposal for the mentor and topic before the candidate deepens into the research field.
4. To register for the third semester, the doctoral candidate must have accumulated at least 45 ECTS from the first two semesters. Of the total 60 ECTS possible for semesters one and two, the doctoral candidate earns 36 ECTS from lectures and exams, and 24 ECTS upon positive evaluation of the doctoral project proposal, at which point the official mentor is also appointed (ratified by the Senate). To register for the fourth semester, the doctoral candidate must have accumulated at least 60 ECTS, while registration for subsequent semesters may be done gradually by accumulating additional ECTS.
5. The remaining portion of the 120 ECTS required for the doctorate is earned through research work on the implementation of the doctoral project, specifically:
  - 5.1. Publication as the first author of at least one paper presenting part of the doctoral results in international journals, indexed in accordance with the regulation in force on selection procedures related to academic staff appointment (30 ECTS), with the mentor being a co-author of the paper;
  - 5.2. Publication as the first author of at least one paper presenting part of the doctoral results in local academic journals, published by the University of Prishtina or its centers or institutes, by the Academy of Sciences and Arts of Kosovo, the Albanological Institute, or the Institute of History, which are subject to scientific peer review (5 ECTS);

- 5.3. At least one presentation abroad, as the first author, at conferences, congresses, etc., with an international character (10 ECTS);
- 5.4. Doctoral candidates who have not published at least one paper in local journals must have at least one presentation as the first author at scientific meetings (conferences, congresses, etc.) of an international character, or at least two presentations as the first author at scientific meetings (conferences, congresses, etc.) of a national character;
- 5.5. Completion and public defense of the doctoral dissertation is evaluated at 75 ECTS;
- 5.6. All publications and presentations of the doctoral candidate must have prior approval from the mentor and must be affiliated with the University of Prishtina.

### **Article 9 Supervision**

1. From the moment this regulation comes into force, the right to supervise a doctoral candidate is granted to:
  - 1.1. An academic staff member with the title of full professor (Prof.) or associate professor (Assoc. Prof.), who is in a regular employment relationship at the University of Prishtina and who has at least three (3) publications in the relevant field (as first author, corresponding author, or co-author) published in the last five years in journals indexed in accordance with the Regulation on selection procedures related to the appointment, reappointment, and promotion of academic staff at UP.
  - 1.2. Exceptionally, upon request of the faculty council, a mentor may also be an academic staff member with the title of assistant professor (Asst. Prof.), who has at least three (3) years of research experience and who has published at least three (3) papers as first/corresponding author in the relevant field in the last three years, in accordance with the Regulation on selection procedures related to the appointment, reappointment, and promotion of academic staff at UP.
  - 1.3. Proof of the publications of the candidate's supervisor must be submitted to the Central Council for Doctoral Studies;
  - 1.4. Publications in questionable journals or by questionable publishers, as defined in the regulation in force regarding selection procedures for academic staff, are not taken into account;
  - 1.5. Co-supervision, in special cases, may be undertaken by a professor emeritus, with the decision made by the Senate, upon the proposal of the Doctoral Council of the

academic unit in which the studies are organized, or the relevant academic council.

2. For previously accredited programs, the criteria for supervising doctoral candidates remain as regulated in the accreditation decisions or relevant regulations. For specific criteria not described in this regulation, the Senate will decide upon the proposal of the Central Council for Doctoral Studies.
3. The mentor, without exception, must belong to the academic unit and the relevant scientific field from which the doctoral dissertation is prepared. In this regard, the mentor's field of scientific publications is also considered.
4. To ensure the quality of the doctoral dissertation, if necessary (e.g., in interdisciplinary research, or when scientific or artistic creation is conducted across multiple institutions), the appointment of a co-mentor from another department of the academic unit, another academic unit of UP, or another university may be proposed, who must be ranked at least higher than the University of Prishtina in the "Times Higher Education Ranking (THE)." The role of each co-mentor must be clearly specified in Form F1.
5. A mentor may supervise a maximum of two doctoral candidates registered within one academic year, but no more than three (3) doctoral candidates simultaneously. Exceptionally, a professor may supervise up to two (2) additional candidates if the existing candidates have exceeded twice the prescribed duration for completing their studies, and if the candidates are employed full-time on a scientific project carried out at UP.
6. The co-mentor must possess the same or equivalent qualifications as the mentor.
7. The co-mentor jointly supervises the doctoral candidate on matters agreed upon in advance with the mentor.
8. A co-mentor may not be involved in supervising more than three doctoral candidates simultaneously.
9. No more than one co-mentor may be appointed for a single doctoral dissertation.
10. Before assuming the role of mentor for the first time, each mentor must complete the mentoring workshop (training), organized by the University of Prishtina or by recognized international institutions.
11. An academic staff member of a unit of the University of Prishtina (UP) may serve as a mentor at another university if written approval is obtained from the council of the UP academic unit.

12. Mentors/co-mentors and members of evaluation committees who were appointed to these roles before retirement have the right to continue mentoring until the age of 70, but not beyond.
13. No person in a family relationship (spouse, partner, or close family member) may be proposed as a mentor/co-mentor or as a member of an evaluation committee.

### **Article 10** **Obligations of the Mentor**

1. The mentor is obliged to guide the doctoral candidate throughout the preparation of the doctoral dissertation, to monitor the quality of the candidate's work, and to support the publication of their research as well as participation in scientific and artistic projects.
2. In cases where the doctoral candidate is supervised by more than one mentor, each mentor is responsible for their respective part of the research, which has been predetermined, and for the procedures related to the work on the doctoral dissertation.
3. The mentor is also obliged to submit an annual report on the doctoral candidate's progress to the Doctoral Studies Council of the respective academic unit, using the university's form (F11).

### **Article 11** **Obligations and Rights of the Doctoral Candidate**

1. The doctoral candidate is obliged to submit an annual report on their work to the Doctoral Studies Council using the university form (F10), with the possibility of presenting their research.
2. The doctoral candidate has the right, once during their studies, to submit a written request for a change of mentor and/or dissertation topic, but not after the Senate has approved the project proposal and topic. Exceptionally, in the case of the mentor's inability to continue supervision (verified by a specialist medical certificate), in the event of the mentor's death, or if violations by the mentor are determined by the relevant legal authorities within or outside the University of Prishtina, the doctoral candidate may request Senate approval for a change of mentor (and topic if necessary), even at later stages. In such cases, the approval procedure for the mentor and topic is repeated.
3. The doctoral candidate is obliged to accumulate the required number of credits (ECTS) for each stage of the studies, as specified in Article 8 of this regulation.

### **Article 12**

## **Procedure for Submitting the Doctoral Thesis Topic, Supervisor, and Research Proposal**

1. During the first year of doctoral studies, specifically in the second semester, the doctoral candidate proposes a supervisor (and, if applicable, a co-supervisor) and the topic of the doctoral thesis. This proposal (Form F1) is made in consultation with the potential supervisor and must also include the specific research area.
2. As part of the form for submitting the topic and supervisor (F1), the doctoral candidate signs a declaration stating that they have not submitted a doctoral thesis on the same topic at any other university.
3. The doctoral candidate initiates the procedure for submitting the research proposal of the doctoral thesis by submitting the request, and the academic unit council, upon the proposal of the Doctoral Studies Council, appoints a commission to evaluate the topic and the proposed supervisor within one (1) month from the date of registration of the submitted request.
4. The request for the evaluation of the research proposal (Form F1), in addition to formal information about the doctoral candidate, must also include the following:
  - Title;
  - Abstract in Albanian and English;
  - Introduction;
  - Research problem, research question(s), and hypothesis(es);
  - Theoretical framework, relevant literature;
  - Innovation, relevance, and intended scientific contribution;
  - Proposed data and methodology;
  - Method(s) of data analysis;
  - Work plan;
  - References.
5. The academic unit council, upon the proposal of the Doctoral Studies Council, appoints the commission to evaluate the topic and approves the proposed supervisor within one month from the date of registration of the request. This commission consists of three (3) members, of whom at least one member must not be a lecturer of the respective studies nor employed in the academic unit (faculty) responsible for the program. The proposed supervisor cannot be a member of this commission.
6. The commission for evaluating the topic provides an assessment of the original scientific contribution or original artistic contribution and the feasibility of the research from financial and organizational perspectives, and makes a proposal for the supervisor, no later than one (1) month after the submission of the request (Form F2).
7. The research proposal of the doctoral thesis is defended before the Doctoral Studies Council of the academic unit, in front of the evaluation commission and the proposed

supervisor, no later than 15 days after the submission of the commission's evaluation report.

8. The academic unit council, upon the proposal of the Doctoral Studies Council, submits the topic and proposed supervisor for approval to the university senate (Form F3). The senate must decide on the dissertation proposal within two (2) months after the request. The decision may:
  - Accept the original proposal;
  - Request that the doctoral candidate expand or modify the topic;
  - Request that the academic unit council propose a different topic and/or supervisor.
9. In case of a positive recommendation from the Doctoral Studies Council (KQSD), the senate must decide on the proposed topic and supervisor within two (2) months of the recommendation. Based on the positive evaluation from the senate, the doctoral candidate is issued the official decision approving the doctoral thesis topic.
10. All scientific research involving humans (human subjects) or animals must comply with the provisions of the Research Ethics Committee regulations, have the approval of the Ethics Committee of the faculty or university, as well as the institution where the research is conducted; and must obtain consent from all participants individually (patients or volunteers), if capable, or from their guardians or legal representatives.
11. If the doctoral candidate requests a change of supervisor and topic, the request must be submitted in written and justified form along with a written declaration from the previous supervisor (Form F4). The Doctoral Studies Council (KQSD) proposes the relevant decision to the senate regarding such a request from the doctoral candidate.

### **Article 13**

#### **The Doctoral Thesis**

1. The doctoral dissertation is a scientific work written by the doctoral candidate, which elaborates in an original and unique way one or more relevant scientific issues and is subject to public scientific or artistic evaluation.

### **Article 14**

#### **Formats of the Doctoral Thesis**

The formats of the doctoral thesis are:

1. The doctoral thesis may be in the form of:
  - 1.1.A monograph, which represents a complete and independent scientific study, addressing in detail the chosen topic, the research problem, and the original contribution of the research. The monograph must include all fundamental sections, including: abstract, introduction, literature review/theoretical framework, methodology, results, discussion, conclusions, and the list of references (Form F5).

- 1.2.A compilation of at least three (3) scientific articles published in internationally peer-reviewed journals indexed in WoS (SCIE, AHCI, and SSCI) and/or Scopus (Q1 or Q2). In the scientific articles, the doctoral candidate must be the first author, and the content of the articles must clearly derive from the results obtained within the doctoral research directly related to the doctoral thesis topic. Upon requesting the defense of the doctoral thesis, the doctoral candidate submits the published articles along with a special form of summary containing the introduction, methodology, results, general discussion, and main conclusions of the doctoral work. Such a summary of the articles is considered equivalent to a scientific monograph.
2. The doctoral thesis in the artistic field is an original artistic research within the context of contemporary artistic creation and concludes with the presentation of the artistic work as well as the publication of a theoretical paper related to that work.

### **Article 15**

#### **Language and Formatting**

1. The doctoral thesis may be written in Albanian, English, or another internationally used language if the doctoral candidate, mentor, and members of the evaluation committees are competent in the respective language.
2. A thesis written in Albanian must include a summary in English. A thesis written in a language with international circulation must include summaries in both Albanian and English. The title, summary, and keywords of the doctoral thesis must be written in both Albanian and English. The summary should allow understanding of the purpose of the thesis, research methods, results, and conclusions.
3. The graphical appearance of the doctoral thesis must comply with the guidelines provided in Form F5.

### **Article 16**

#### **Duration**

1. The doctoral candidate must submit the completed doctoral thesis to the academic unit council for evaluation within three (3) years from the date the topic was approved by the UP Senate. The candidate must first obtain the written approval and opinion of the mentor regarding the research conducted and the original scientific contribution achieved.
2. The doctoral candidate may request from the academic unit council an extension of the dissertation or research period for up to one additional year.

3. If the candidate does not submit the completed doctoral thesis for evaluation within the regular or extended dissertation period, it is considered that the candidate has withdrawn from the assigned dissertation topic.

### **Article 17**

#### **Procedure for Evaluating the Doctoral Thesis**

1. The doctoral candidate submits the doctoral thesis, with the signed approval and opinion of the mentor and co-mentor (if any) regarding the research conducted and the original scientific contribution (Form F6), officially to the faculty or university (if studies are organized at the university level). At the same time, the candidate submits a written declaration of originality. If the mentor does not wish to give approval, they are obliged to provide a written justification within 15 days. After this period, within one (1) month from submission of the mentor's justification, the Doctoral Studies Council of the academic unit reviews the justification and proposes to the academic unit council the formation or rejection of the commission for evaluating the doctoral thesis. In both cases, the mentor's justification is provided to the members of the evaluation commission, who will take it into account during the evaluation.
2. Before the dissertation is submitted for evaluation, the Doctoral Studies Office of the academic unit must provide written confirmation that the doctoral candidate has fulfilled all obligations as required by the doctoral study program. This includes an ethics declaration and a plagiarism check report (the candidate is required to provide the plagiarism report only if the University of Prishtina provides access to the appropriate software). The plagiarism check must be conducted using computer programs determined by the University of Prishtina or equivalent systems.
3. For evaluation purposes, the doctoral candidate must submit the dissertation in both printed (paper) and electronic form. In the case of artistic works, in addition to the public presentation, the doctoral candidate must also submit the theoretical part and the corresponding documentation for evaluation.
4. The Council of the academic unit, upon the proposal of the Doctoral Studies Council, appoints the commission for the evaluation of the doctoral dissertation. The commission consists of three (3) members, at least one of whom must be from a university outside Kosovo. The external member is recommended to be from a university ranked higher than the University of Prishtina in the Times Higher Education Ranking (THE). The mentor cannot be a member of the evaluation commission. The commission may also include one reserve member.
5. Members of the doctoral dissertation evaluation commission must hold at least the academic title of Assistant Professor (meeting the criteria for mentorship) and must belong to the relevant academic field.
6. At the same time as the appointment of the evaluation commission, the academic unit must publish the title and summary of the dissertation in both Albanian and English

on its official website for a period of 30 days, allowing the dissertation to be subject to scientific and professional critique.

7. Members of the evaluation commission and all those who have access to the doctoral dissertation are obliged to handle the data and findings with confidentiality before the public presentation of the evaluation, in order to protect the scientific contribution of the dissertation as intellectual property.
8. The doctoral dissertation evaluation commission is required, within two (2) months of its appointment, to prepare a written report evaluating the dissertation (Form F8) and submit it to the academic unit council. The chairperson of the commission drafts the report based on the written evaluations of the members and any comments arising from the public discussion. The final joint report is signed by all members of the commission. The report, written on the university form, is submitted to the doctoral studies council of the respective faculty. In case of disagreement with the joint final evaluation, any member of the commission has the right to submit a separate final evaluation. The commission's report must contain an explicit assessment of the candidate's original scientific or artistic contribution. Depending on the quality of the dissertation, the commission may also recommend that the academic unit council request revisions to the dissertation or its complete rejection.
9. In its next scheduled session, the Council of the academic unit, based on the report of the evaluation commission and the Doctoral Studies Council, decides on one of the following:
  - a) Acceptance of the dissertation in its submitted version;
  - b) Rejection of the dissertation due to failure;
  - c) Returning the dissertation for completion or revision.
10. If the dissertation is returned for completion or revision, the Council of the academic unit sets a time frame of 2 to 6 months within which the dissertation must be revised or supplemented.
11. The completed or revised dissertation must be resubmitted to the Council of the academic unit along with the opinion of the doctoral dissertation evaluation commission (which also takes into account the opinion of the mentor or co-mentor, if applicable).
12. Upon approval of the evaluation commission's report, the Council of the academic unit establishes the Doctoral Defense Commission. This commission consists of at least three (3) members and may have the same composition as the dissertation evaluation commission.
13. The positive decision of the Council of the academic unit regarding the dissertation is reviewed by the Central Commission for Doctoral Studies (KQSD) within two (2) months from the date of submission. If all the conditions prescribed by this regulation are met, KQSD proposes the dissertation for ratification by the Senate.

14. The Senate, within one (1) month from the date of the positive recommendation by KQSD, makes the final decision regarding the ratification of the doctoral dissertation.

### **Article 18**

#### **Procedure for the Defense of the Doctoral Dissertation**

1. The doctoral candidate, in agreement with the dean of the academic unit and the committee for the defense of the doctoral dissertation, must conduct the public defense of the dissertation within two (2) months from the date of its ratification by the Senate.
2. The mentor participates in the defense of the doctoral dissertation on the side of the doctoral candidate but does not have the right to participate in the decision-making process.
3. The defense of the doctoral dissertation must be conducted in person and is public. In exceptional cases, one of the committee members may participate virtually. The announcement for the public defense must be posted in the facilities of the academic unit, on the official website of the academic unit, and on the university's website at least eight (8) calendar days before the defense. The defense must be held within the university premises, or within those of its academic units, in the language in which the doctoral dissertation was written. In the case of dual doctorates or joint doctoral programs, the defense may be organized at another university. The defense procedure is carried out according to the protocol presented in Form F9.
4. The committee for the defense of the doctoral dissertation conducts the evaluation immediately after the public defense of the dissertation. The possible evaluations of the defense are:
  - Defended with excellent success;
  - Defended with very good success;
  - Defended with good success;
  - Not defended.
5. In cases where the defense committee determines that the doctoral candidate failed to defend the dissertation due to intentional disregard of the defense procedures, deliberate disrespect toward the defense committee, or any other behavior contrary to the normal conduct of the defense, the candidate loses the right to defend the doctoral dissertation.
6. In cases where the defense committee determines that the doctoral candidate failed to defend the dissertation due to insufficient preparation, failure to provide adequate answers to the committee's questions, or demonstrating a lack of serious understanding of the material presented in the dissertation, the committee may decide to grant the candidate a period of one (1) year to repeat the defense process. If, after

the second attempt, the candidate again fails to successfully defend the dissertation, they lose the right to defend the doctoral dissertation.

7. The decision, based on the evaluation resulting from the defense process, is made by a majority vote of the members of the defense committee, confirmed by their signatures.
8. A record of the defense procedure (minutes) is prepared in the Albanian language. If the defense is conducted in another language, the minutes are also prepared in that language.

## **Article 19**

### **Intellectual Property and Data Protection**

1. In cases where the research results of the doctoral dissertation represent an innovation that requires protection under intellectual property rights, the doctoral candidate and the mentor must inform the Central Doctoral Studies Council (KQSD). In such cases, the doctoral candidate, with the mentor's approval, may request that the submitted dissertation be handled confidentially until the moment of the public defense.
2. The KQSD implements the legal and commercial protection procedures for the research results, in full compliance with the applicable legal framework.
3. If, during the research work for the doctoral dissertation, the doctoral candidate achieves scientific results leading to an invention and/or innovation protected by intellectual property rights, the candidate and the mentor must notify the Doctoral Studies Council of the academic unit, the KQSD, and the Office for Career and Innovation (ZÇA) (or another designated office) of these achievements.
4. The doctoral candidate, with the mentor's approval, may request a postponement of the dissertation defense for up to one (1) year (Form F7). They may also request that, even after the defense, the publication of the dissertation manuscript be delayed for 1 to 3 years, depending on the authors' request, particularly if this period is related to patent or commercialization processes.
5. The doctoral candidate is obligated to authorize the university to hold and use the intellectual property rights for the commercialization of the invention or innovation and to enable further scientific research, if necessary. The doctoral candidate and the mentor retain moral rights over the invention or innovation, regardless of who holds the commercial rights.
6. In cases where the invention or innovation results from the doctoral candidate's work within a research project supported by industry, the authorization of intellectual property rights is regulated based on the pre-existing agreement between the involved parties, which defines both ownership and exploitation/commercialization rights.

7. In cases of commercialization, the profits generated from the commercialization of the scientific invention or innovation belong to the university, which may use them for further research investments in the same field and for rewarding the authors, in accordance with the agreed contract and the applicable legal framework.
8. In such cases, the public defense may be postponed, in agreement with the doctoral candidate, for up to one (1) year from the date of the dissertation's ratification by the senate. The decision to postpone the public defense is made by the senate, based on the recommendation of the KQSD and the candidate's request.

## **Article 20**

### **Publication and Preservation of the Doctoral Dissertation**

1. The doctoral dissertation, in its entirety, shall be published on the university's website no later than one month after the defense. Information regarding the practical part of the doctoral dissertation from the field of arts shall also be announced on the university's website within one month after the defense. In exceptional cases, based on a well-justified written request by the doctoral graduate and upon the recommendation of the KQSD (Council for Doctoral Studies), the Senate may decide to postpone the publication on the website for up to two years.
2. The printed version of the doctoral dissertation shall be preserved as one copy in the archive of the academic unit, one copy in the university archive, and one copy in the Central University Library, as well as in electronic form.
3. The doctoral dissertation in the field of arts shall be preserved, depending on the type of work, in an appropriate format (written form, photography, video recording, audio recording, etc.) in the archive of the academic unit, the university archive, and the Central University Library, no later than one month after the defense.

## **Article 21**

### **Promotion**

1. After the successful completion of the dissertation defense, the doctoral candidate earns the academic title Doctor of Science (Dr. Sc.) or its equivalent and obtains the full rights of the academic degree and diploma during the promotion ceremony, where the doctoral graduate also takes the oath and signs the university's scientific/artistic doctoral register.
2. The doctoral candidate must, within one month after the defense, fill out the form for promotion to the degree of Doctor of Science/Arts and submit to the doctoral studies office of the academic unit the bound dissertation and an electronic version for publication on the university's website, or, in the case of artistic fields, in an appropriate documentation format (written form, photograph, video recording, audio recording, etc.).

3. The Rector presents the doctoral diploma to the graduate during the formal promotion ceremony, in which the doctoral candidate must participate personally or, in case of inability to attend, may authorize another person in writing to receive the diploma on their behalf.
4. Upon a written request, for any objective or subjective reason, the doctoral candidate may request exemption from participating in the formal promotion ceremony (as mentioned in point 3 of this article), provided that they have fulfilled all obligations specified in points 1 and 2 of this article.

## **Article 22**

### **Method of Ensuring the Quality of Doctoral Studies**

1. The doctoral studies office of the academic unit is obliged to maintain and preserve detailed records related to the research work and the completion of other academic duties of each doctoral candidate. This includes the preparation of the doctoral candidate's file, maintaining records of the number of enrolled candidates, and the number of those who have successfully defended their dissertations.
2. Based on the annual reports of doctoral candidates (Form F10) and mentors (Form F11), the Council for Doctoral Studies prepares an annual self-evaluation report regarding the doctoral study program (Form F12) and forwards the relevant notification to the Faculty Council, which then sends it to the Central Council for Doctoral Studies and the University Senate. This annual self-evaluation report is attached to the application for reaccreditation.
3. The evaluation criteria include: the scientific/artistic output of both the academic staff and doctoral candidates, the quality of teaching, the quality of dissertations, statistical indicators on the duration of studies, the annual number of newly graduated doctors in comparison with the total number of doctoral candidates, as well as the implementation of international cooperation.

## **Article 23**

### **Revocation of the Doctor of Science Title**

1. The academic title "Doctor of Science" may be revoked in cases where evidence shows that:
  - 1.1. The dissertation was not the candidate's own work;
  - 1.2. The dissertation was not the result of the candidate's personal achievement;
  - 1.3. The dissertation is based on relevant parts of previously published scientific results by other individuals or institutions;
  - 1.4. It is plagiarism or a violation of copyright;
  - 1.5. It is the result of any other unethical practice.
2. A complaint for revocation may be submitted to the academic unit council by any individual or institution, supported by detailed written evidence.

3. Upon receiving the complaint, the academic unit council shall establish a three (3)-member commission composed of professors from the same scientific discipline as the dissertation.
4. Members of the original dissertation commission under complaint shall not be appointed to this commission.
5. The commission shall present an evaluation report regarding the validity of the complaint and propose further procedures within two (2) months from the initiation of the process.
6. Following the report and proposal of the commission, the academic unit council shall decide at its next meeting whether to reject or accept the complaint for revocation.
7. If the academic unit council accepts the complaint, the University Senate shall vote on the decision in its next session. The concerned Doctor of Science must be invited to appear before the Senate to provide testimony.

#### **Article 24**

#### **Transitional and Final Provisions**

1. Upon the entry into force of this regulation, the Regulation with protocol number 937 dated 26.04.2023 on doctoral studies shall be repealed.
2. Doctoral candidates who enrolled before the entry into force of this regulation shall continue their doctoral studies in accordance with the regulation that was in force at the time of their enrollment. For doctoral candidates who have exceeded twice the duration of the standard study period, the regulation that was in force at the time their study extension was last approved shall apply.
3. This regulation enters into force on the date of its approval by the Senate of the University of Prishtina (UP).
4. Academic units are obliged to prepare their respective guides in accordance with this regulation.
5. The following forms constitute an integral part of this regulation and govern their use:
  - F1 – Submission of the topic and mentor;
  - F2 – Evaluation of the topic, mentor, and doctoral project proposal;
  - F3 – Decision on the approval of the doctoral dissertation topic;
  - F4 – Request for change of topic and/or mentor;
  - F5 – Guidelines for drafting the doctoral dissertation;
  - F6 – Request for dissertation evaluation;

- F7 – Request for postponement of the public defense of the dissertation;
- F8 – Report on the evaluation of the dissertation work;
- F9 – Protocol and minutes of the dissertation defense;
- F10 – Annual report of the doctoral candidate;
- F11 – Annual report of the mentor on the doctoral candidate’s progress
- F12 – Annual report concerning the doctoral studies program

Chairperson of the Senate of the University of Prishtina

---

Prof. Arben Hajrullahu, Rector