

# LATVIA UNIVERSITY OF LIFE SCIENCES AND TECHNOLOGIES

## REGULATION OF DOCTORAL STUDIES

### 1. General Provisions

- 1.1. Doctoral study programmes are offered in licenced and accredited study programmes on the basis of the legislation of the Republic of Latvia, international agreements and regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers, LLU Statute, this Regulation and consecutive LLU documents.
- 1.2. The aim of the doctoral studies is to educate the young generation of researchers at the relevant international level for scientific and research work in public and private institutions.
- 1.3. The doctoral studies (hereinafter, Studies) is the priority of the LLU, and an integral part of renewal and development programme of the academic staff.
- 1.4. The doctoral study programmes correspond to the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) and the doctoral level of the Classification of Education used in the Republic of Latvia.
- 1.5. The Doctoral degree is awarded for the independently conducted research project reported in the doctoral thesis and defended at the Promotion Board.
- 1.6. This Regulation regulates the main principles of the doctoral studies.

### 2. Organization of studies

- 2.1. The procedure of studies is supervised by the Vice-rector for Studies.
- 2.2. The study programmes in the research fields and sub-branches are designed and submitted by the faculties to the Senate for approval, on the basis of the recommendations of the Board of Studies.
- 2.3. The implementation of the programme and its quality monitoring are carried out by the respective faculty and a director of the doctoral study programme.
- 2.4. Coordination, monitoring and administration of the Studies are conducted by the Studies Centre.

### 3. Doctoral study programmes

- 3.1. The doctoral study programme is designed in the respective study direction according to the LLU Regulation on designing LLU study programmes, approved by the respective promotion board, submitted to the Board of Studies for the evaluation and further submission for the approval by the Senate.
- 3.2. The licensing and accreditation of the LLU doctoral study programmes are conducted according to the legislation of the Republic of Latvia.
- 3.3. The programme is implemented by highly-qualified academic and scientific staff.
- 3.4. The duration of the full-time doctoral study programme is three years, and the duration of the part-time doctoral study programme is four years.
- 3.5. The total amount of credit points of the doctoral programme is 120 CP, including 40 CP for one year of full-time studies and 30 CP for one year of part-time studies. According to the LLU requirements, the theoretical study courses account for 20 – 30 CP, research work account for 90 – 100 CP.

- 3.6. Each study programme determines its CP distribution according to the standard of doctoral study programmes.
- 3.7. It is possible for a doctoral student to complete a doctoral study programme in a shorter period by successfully passing all the examinations of the study courses of the respective doctoral study programme, elaborating and submitting a doctoral thesis to the promotion board and defending it in public.
- 3.8. The doctoral studies in a certain study programme are terminated according to the Senate's decision on the basis of the proposal of a respective faculty.

#### **4. Supervisor of doctoral thesis**

- 4.1. A scientific advisor of a doctoral thesis can be a PhD holder who conducts research in the relevant field of science (sub-branch), who has recognized scientific publications on the research in the respective scientific field and who participates with reports in international scientific conferences.
- 4.2. If a doctoral student has two supervisors, it is possible to divide the envisaged work load for supervising the doctoral thesis between both supervisors.
- 4.3. The Board of Studies approves supervisors as well as sets limits for the maximum number of doctoral students per a supervisor at a time.
- 4.4. The obligations of the supervisor include: supervising a doctoral student in issues of writing a doctoral thesis and scientific publications, and monitoring the completion of his/her individual plan.
- 4.5. The change of a supervisor is possible on the basis of the decision of the board of a faculty and the decision of Vice-rector for Studies. In case of disagreements the change of a supervisor shall be approved by the Board of Studies.

#### **5. Admission procedure**

- 5.1. The admission takes place according to the admission regulations approved by the Senate.
- 5.2. The admission to the doctoral studies is approved at the meeting of the Board of Science in the presence of a candidate and his/her supervisor. The candidate acquaints members of the board with his/her research topic.
- 5.3. The candidate signs the agreement on studies; he/she is matriculated in the doctoral studies by the Rector's decision, which includes an approval of the supervisor of the doctoral student.

#### **6. Procedure of studies**

- 6.1. A doctoral student takes theoretical courses, takes doctoral examinations, conducts research, presents the research results in scientific conferences, submits them to internationally recognized and cited scientific journals (including Proceedings of LLU). The studies' final stage is envisaged for the elaboration and submission of a doctoral thesis as well as its summary for the defence.
- 6.2. A doctoral student works out an individual plan for the first academic year in two months' time after the matriculation (this form is issued by the Studies Centre). The individual study plan is approved by the director of the doctoral study programme and submitted to the respective department / institute. After being accepted at the department / institute, a doctoral student submits the study plan to the board of the faculty for the approval. The approved study plan is submitted to the Studies Centre by the doctoral student.
- 6.3. The results of the study plan are evaluated once every half a year according to the procedure stated by the director of the doctoral study programme.

- 6.4. Mid-term report (the form is issued by the Studies Centre) on the results of every half a year and the department's (centre's or institute's) report on the completion of the doctoral student's study plan is handed in the Studies Centre by the doctoral student.
- 6.5. Assessment of the results of studies takes place at the meeting of the board of the faculty at the end of an academic year taking into account the submitted report of the current academic year and the study plan for the next year (the form is issued by the Studies Centre).
- 6.6. The doctoral student's progress is evaluated twice a year by the competition (rotation) commission, whose activities are regulated by the Regulation on competition procedure for the state financed places in the doctoral programmes.
- 6.7. During the period of doctoral studies, the doctoral student takes final examinations in the sub-branch or direction of a sub-branch of the research field, the chosen research area and foreign language (English, German or French).
- 6.8. The content of a doctoral examination in a respective scientific field or sub-branch and in the chosen research area is worked out by the respective department (centre, institute) and approved by the board of a respective faculty.
- 6.9. A doctoral student submits an application (this form is issued by the Studies Centre) two weeks before the doctoral examination. The commission of the doctoral examination is approved by the Vice-rector for Studies on the basis of the doctoral student's application.
- 6.10. The grade of the doctoral examination is written down in the protocol and it is signed by all the members of the commission. The chairperson of the doctoral examination commission submits the protocol to the Studies Centre in four days' time.
- 6.11. The decision regarding recognition of CPs in study courses acquired in other countries is made by a supervisor and director of a study programme.
- 6.12. Upon the completion of the theoretical studies a doctoral student submits a summary of the total number of CPs approved by the programme director to the Studies Centre. The Studies Centre issues a certification proving the fact that the theoretical part of the doctoral programme has been completed.
- 6.13. The last stage of the doctoral studies envisages the elaboration and defence of the doctoral thesis according to the regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers "Procedure of and Criteria for Awarding Doctoral Scientific Degree".
- 6.14. The scientific degree is awarded by the Promotion Board which acts according to the LLU Regulation on Promotion Board.
- 6.15. The procedure of the submission of a doctoral thesis to a promotion board is determined in the LLU Regulation on Promotion Board.
- 6.16. A degree candidate (PhD student, who has been ex-matriculated) shall be matriculated for the defence of his/her doctoral thesis within a month before the specified date of the doctoral thesis' defence.

## **7. Financing doctoral studies**

- 7.1. LLU doctoral studies are financed by:
  - 7.1.1. the state-financed grant for financing doctoral studies;
  - 7.1.2. grants of other institutions;
  - 7.1.3. financial support given by private persons or legal entities.
- 7.2. A full-time doctoral student is entitled to receive a state-financed scholarship as determined by the legislation of the Republic of Latvia in addition to grants likened to loans for obtaining a scientific degree on the basis of an agreement with LLU.
- 7.3. The grant and a *grant likened to a loan* is not paid during an academic leave.
- 7.4. Full-time and part-time doctoral students whose studies are not financed by the state are entitled to sign the supplement with the payment schedule.
- 7.5. The amount of the tuition fee is stated annually by the Rector.

- 7.6. Resuming studies after an academic leave, the amount of the tuition fee is determined as at the time of resuming studies.
- 7.7. If a doctoral student has paid the tuition fee before an academic leave, he/she shall pay the difference of the tuition fee upon resuming the studies, if it has been raised.
- 7.8. The tuition fee or its part can be refunded only in exceptional cases, if a doctoral student has submitted a written application explaining the reasons of his/her request for ex-matriculation of his/her own volition in one month's time from the beginning of an academic year and has received a written approval of the respective programme's director.
- 7.9. Doctoral students may be exempted from tuition fees or may be awarded tuition fee relief in the procedure stated by the Senate.

## **8. Suspension and resuming of studies**

- 8.1. A doctoral student has the right to apply for an academic leave with the maximum duration of two years.
- 8.2. An academic leave is granted and the studies are resumed with the decision of the Rector on the basis of a doctoral student's application.
- 8.3. The status of a student is retained during an academic leave.
- 8.4. If a doctoral student does not resume his/her studies in two weeks' time after the completion of an academic leave, he/she is ex-matriculated by the Rector's decision.
- 8.5. A full-time or part-time doctoral student who is not financed by the government and who has successfully completed doctoral studies' plan is entitled to receive a recommendation from LLU for receiving a paid leave at work.
- 8.6. Members of LLU academic staff have the right to receive a paid three months leave once for elaboration of the doctoral thesis, receiving a permission from a head of a department. Members of LLU academic staff, who successfully study at the doctorate, are entitled to have an unpaid leave. The unpaid leave is possible only after an annual and additional leave.
- 8.7. A doctoral student is ex-matriculated on the basis of the Rector's decision.
- 8.8. A doctoral student can be ex-matriculated on the basis of his/her application approved by the director of a doctoral study programme and a supervisor, or an application of the head of the Studies Centre.
- 8.9. If a doctoral student has been ex-matriculated on the basis of an application of the head of the Studies Centre (except due to the completion of the doctoral studies), he/she has the right to appeal the decision of ex-matriculation in one month's time from the moment the decision has come into force (the seventh day after the letter has been registered at the post-office) by submitting an application to LLU Academic Arbitrage.
- 8.10. If a doctoral student has been ex-matriculated before the completion of doctoral studies, he/she has the right to resume the studies by paying a fee.

## **9. Obligations and rights of doctoral student**

- 9.1. LLU doctoral students have obligations and rights as stated in the LLU regulations.
- 9.2. The obligations during studies include: to
  - 9.2.1. fulfil the obligations of the LLU studies agreement;
  - 9.2.2. have regular meetings with the supervisor of doctoral thesis and inform him/her about the progress;
  - 9.2.3. submit midterm and annual reports on the completion of the individual study plan to the Studies Centre;
  - 9.2.4. observe internal rules of LLU and other LLU regulations.
- 9.3. The rights include: to

- 9.3.1. acquire the study programme and obtain a doctoral degree according to the terms of the Agreement;
- 9.3.2. get acquainted with the content of the study programme, requirements of the study programme, types of examinations and assessment criteria, as well as get acquainted with any changes in them in advance;
- 9.3.3. receive consultations from a supervisor on elaboration of the doctoral thesis and scientific articles;
- 9.3.4. suspend and resume studies according to the stated procedure, change the study programme, mode of studies, receive an approval from the director of a doctoral programme, scientific supervisor and the Studies Centre;
- 9.3.5. receive the necessary information in the LLU institutions of all levels related to the doctoral studies;
- 9.3.6. use the services of the LLU Fundamental Library, become a library user and observe the instructions for using library services;
- 9.3.7. vote and be elected in the LLU collective institutions of all levels – the Council, Senate, Board of Studies, Board of Science, the board of a faculty etc.;
- 9.3.8. submit applications and complaints regarding the implementation of the study process and violations of study procedure, receive a formal answer within the prescribed period.

## 10. Appeal

### 10.1. Submitting an appeal:

#### 10.1.1. A doctoral student has the right **to appeal** to complain about:

- the grade of a doctoral examination or the result of any other type of assessment;
- organisation and procedure of the study process;
- the tuition fee;
- ex-matriculation.

#### 10.1.2. In case of an objection a student orally agrees with the responsible member of academic staff or another LLU employee, responsible for tackling the respective case;

#### 10.1.3. If an oral agreement is impossible to reach, a student can submit an appeal to the head of the responsible unit (head of department, centre / director of an institute, director of a study programme or the dean of a faculty, or the Studies Centre);

#### 10.1.4. Appeal with a complaint about violations of the study procedure shall be submitted in writing within three working days' time to the head of a unit;

#### 10.1.5. Appeal regarding the tuition fee shall be submitted in writing within three days' time to the dean of a faculty from the moment of finding out the fact.

#### 10.1.6. Appeal regarding the reason of ex-matriculation shall be submitted in writing within one month to the LLU Academic Arbitrage.

### 10.2. Appeals procedure:

#### 10.2.1. Appeal is addressed by the appeals commission (hereinafter – commission), which is established and summoned by an appeal receiver;

#### 10.2.2. The chairperson of the commission receives the appeal, and the commission includes specialists related to the content of the appeal, except for persons to be blamed for an offense. The commission consists of not less than three persons;

#### 10.2.3. The chairperson of the commission informs the appeal's author and persons against whom the appeal is written on their rights to participate in the appeals commission meeting and offer their explanations;

- 10.2.4. Appeal shall be dealt with as soon as possible, and it shall not be pending for more than seven workdays from the date of its reception. The chairperson informs in writing the author of the appeal about the commission's decision;
- 10.2.5. In case when a doctoral student is not satisfied with the decision of the appeals commission, it could be appealed to the next rank official (Vice-rector for Studies or Rector);
- 10.2.6. The highest body for solving disagreements in the LLU is the Academic Arbitrage;
- 10.2.7. The above mentioned officials (10.2.5.) and the LLU Academic Arbitrage make a decision and announce the results according to the rules and regulations of the Republic of Latvia.