

## **Latvia University of Life Sciences and Technologies REGULATIONS ON THE PROMOTION COUNCILS AND THE PROMOTION**

The Regulations of the Latvia University of Life Sciences and Technologies on Promotion Councils and Promotion have been prepared on the basis of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Latvia Regulations No. 1001 “Procedure and Criteria for Awarding a Doctoral Degree (Promotion)” adopted on 27 December 2005.

### **General question**

1. The Regulations prescribe the procedure for the establishment and operation of promotion councils, as well as the procedure for awarding a doctoral degree at the LLU.

2. Abbreviations and terms used:

AC	- LLU Administrative Centre;
LLU	- Latvia University of Life Sciences and Technologies;
LR	- Republic of Latvia;
LCS	- Latvian Council of Science;
CoM	- Cabinet of Ministers;
CoM Regulations No. 1001	- Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Latvia, 27 December 2005 regulations No. 1001 “Procedure and Criteria for Awarding a doctoral degree (promotion)”;
Regulations	- Latvia University of Life Sciences and Technologies Regulations on promotion councils and promotion;
candidate	- author of the doctoral thesis;
NSQC	- National Scientific Qualification Commission.

### **Doctoral thesis and its supervision**

3. A doctoral thesis can be:

- 3.1. a thesis;
- 3.2. a thematically unified collection of scientific publications. They must be published or approved for publication in scientific periodicals which are peer reviewed anonymously, are available internationally in repositories of scientific information and are cited in internationally available databases;
- 3.3. a monograph - a peer-reviewed scientific book dedicated to one topic, available internationally in repositories of scientific information, contains a bibliography and a summary in a foreign language.

4. The supervisor of the doctoral thesis may be a doctor of science who conducts research in a relevant field of science (subsector), who has generally recognised peer-reviewed scientific publications on research in this field of science, and who participates with reports in international scientific conferences.

5. The doctoral thesis can be developed in partner institutions<sup>1</sup>. In this case, a representative of the partner institution may be approved as the supervisor in accordance with the Doctoral Study Regulations of the LLU, if his/her qualification complies with the requirements of Paragraph 4 of these Regulations, at the same time approving as the supervisor representative of the academic staff of LLU who also complies with the requirements of Paragraph 4 of these Regulations.
6. An extract with the adopted decision from the minutes of the meeting of the structural unit, which is necessary for the submission of the doctoral thesis, is prepared by the academic or scientific structural unit of the LLU or the partner institution where the doctoral thesis is developed or recommended for defence.
7. Requirements for the scope, structure and format of the doctoral thesis are determined by the “Regulations on the technical formatting of the scientific work to be submitted to the promotion council” approved by the study council of the LLU.

### **Promotion council**

8. The composition of the promotion council in the field or subsector of science in which the promotion rights are delegated at the LLU is approved by the rector. The council shall include at least five LCS experts who have the rights of an LCS expert in the field of science in which the doctoral thesis is being defended.
9. Foreign scientists may be included in the council if the consent of the National Scientific Qualification Commission (hereinafter NSQC) has been received.
10. Candidates for the promotion council are nominated by the councils of the respective faculties of the LLU, the compliance is evaluated by the Council of Science of the LLU, and the rector of the LLU approves the promotion councils.
11. The order of the rector of the LLU includes information on the commencement of the work of the respective council, term of office, appointment of the chairman, deputy chairman and secretary of the council.
12. Only a member of the respective council who has been elected to the LLU in an academic position may be the chairman of the council. The secretary of the council may not be a member of the council.
13. The council shall act in accordance with these Regulations.
14. The council shall take all decisions by open voting by a simple majority of those present. In the case of an equal division of votes, the chairman of the council shall have the decisive vote.
15. The work of the council is provided by LLU. The costs of the doctoral thesis process are covered from the funds provided for the implementation of the doctoral study program. If the candidate has not mastered the relevant program at LLU or has acquired it more than

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<sup>1</sup> Partner institution - a scientific institution (university, higher education institution, scientific institute, derived public person - scientific institute) or another institution (company, state agency, state institution), which is not a structural unit of LLU, and which is able to provide material and technical equipment or an information base for doctoral thesis development.

two full calendar years without obtaining a degree, the costs of the promotion shall be covered by the candidate.

## Submission of the doctoral thesis

16. The promotion councils of the LLU have the right to accept scientific work from the Republic of Latvia and other countries for defence. The conformity of the scientific work to the profile of the council is determined by the council, which accepts the work for defence.
17. The candidate's doctoral thesis is checked before submission:
  - 17.1. by the chief specialist of the LLU Administrative Centre in cooperation with decision-making institutions – compliance of the format with the requirements set by the LLU;
  - 17.2. by the plagiarism control technical specialist of the Study Centre of the LLU – electronic version of the work (in *pdf* format) in the unified university plagiarism control system.
18. The candidate submits the following documents to the AC:
  - 18.1. application with the approval of the supervisor(s) of the doctoral thesis;
  - 18.2. doctoral thesis (1 copy);
  - 18.3. summary of the doctoral thesis in Latvian (2 copies);
  - 18.4. LLU or other university academic reference on the completion of the doctoral study program;
  - 18.5. statement from the Study Centre of the LLU on the results of the examination of the doctoral thesis of the candidate in the inter-university unified computerised plagiarism control system;
  - 18.6. creative and applied biography of the candidate (*Curriculum vitae* in European format);
  - 18.7. list of scientific publications reflecting the results of the doctoral thesis and copies thereof;
  - 18.8. extract(s) from the minutes of the meeting of the academic staff of LLU, another structural unit of the higher education institution or scientific institution where the doctoral thesis has been developed, which reflects in detail the discussion of the doctoral thesis, confirms the scientific novelty of the doctoral thesis and the candidate's personal contribution.
19. If the doctoral thesis is a unified scientific collection of publications containing co-authors or a collective monograph, it shall be accompanied by the written consent of all co-authors of the publications included in the doctoral thesis to use the publication in the doctoral thesis and attestation of the corresponding (first) author regarding the individual contribution of the candidate in the preparation of the publication.
20. The AC shall, within five working days, evaluate the formal compliance of the documents with the requirements of these Regulations:
  - 20.1. if no deficiencies are found, the documents shall be submitted to the promotion council;
  - 20.2. if deficiencies in the documents are established, the candidate must submit the missing or non-compliant documents within two weeks;
  - 20.3. if the candidate does not want or is unable to eliminate the indicated deficiencies, the documents shall be returned to him or her within one month after receipt of the refusal.

## Alignment of the academic activity of the PhD candidate with the requirements of the doctoral study program

21. In order to align academic activities, documents shall be submitted in accordance with Cabinet Regulation No. 1001 requirements based on the decision of the Council of Science of LLU.

### **Evaluation of the doctoral thesis**

22. The council shall accept the doctoral thesis for public defence if it complies with the Cabinet Regulation No. 1001 and the requirements of this Regulation.
23. Works in which violations of scientific ethics have been established shall not be accepted for re-examination.
24. Within one month after receiving the doctoral thesis from the AC, the council:
  - 24.1. decides on its acceptance for promotion;
  - 24.2. appoints three reviewers, one of whom is an expert of this council in the relevant field of science, two – experts of the field from other scientific institutions or organisations (one preferably outside Latvia), who comply with the qualification requirements of the LCS expert and requirements of the Paragraph 18 of the Cabinet Regulation No. 1001;
  - 24.3. determines the time of the promotion meeting not earlier than three months and not later than six months after receipt of the doctoral thesis;
  - 24.4. determines in which foreign language and within what term the translation of the summary of the doctoral thesis shall be prepared;
  - 24.5. requests from the candidate the number of copies of the doctoral thesis and summary required for the further promotion process and the electronic version of the thesis;
  - 24.6. informs the candidate in writing regarding the composition of the promotion council and the reviewers;
  - 24.7. sends the doctoral thesis, summary, its translation and their electronic versions to the reviewers.
25. If the council finds that improvements are needed in the doctoral thesis, it shall return the documents to the candidate, indicating the identified deficiencies. In this case, the Candidate has the right to resubmit the documents not earlier than after three months.
26. If the council acknowledges that the doctoral thesis does not comply with the Cabinet Regulation No. 1001 or its scientific competence, it shall provide the candidate with a reasoned decision to refuse to continue the evaluation of the doctoral thesis.
27. The candidate has the right to resubmit the work for defence at LLU not earlier than after one year.
28. The candidate must confirm in writing his/her consent to the composition of the council, the appointed reviewers, the number of copies to be submitted, the submission of the electronic version, the amount of its publication on the internet, as well as the promotion costs and the payment procedure.
29. If the candidate has substantiated objections to the composition of the council or reviewers, the LLU Council of Science may recommend to the rector to change the composition of the council or instruct the council to invite other reviewers of the doctoral thesis within a month. If the candidate has objections to the re-established council or the invited reviewers, he/she may withdraw his/her application for the defence of the doctoral thesis.

30. After receiving the candidate's consent, the council submits the candidate's documents to the AC for sending to the NSQC for an opinion.
31. Upon receipt of a positive decision of the NSQC, the candidate:
  - 31.1. at least two weeks before the defence of the doctoral thesis, submits one copy thereof together with the summary to the Fundamental Library of the LLU, but the electronic version shall be sent to the email: llufb@llu.lv. The doctoral thesis and summary are posted on the library's website until the defence. If the doctoral thesis is a monograph or a set of publications, or contains information to be classified within the meaning of the Law "On Official Secret", only a summary shall be placed on the website;
  - 31.2. in accordance with the "Law on Compulsory Copies", submits to the AC the required number of copies of the doctoral thesis and summary for delivery to the National Library of Latvia.
32. The council prepares and submits the text of the AC announcement on the defence of the doctoral thesis.
33. The AC announces it in the newspapers "Latvijas Vēstnesis" and "Zinātnes Vēstnesis" at least two weeks before the defence of the doctoral thesis.

#### **Public defence of the doctoral thesis and awarding of a degree**

34. The meeting of the council, which decides on the promotion, is open, except in cases when the doctoral thesis contains information or a trade secret to be classified within the meaning of the Law "On Official Secret". All interested persons may participate in the meeting and ask questions to the candidate, the council and reviewers, as well as comment on the doctoral thesis.
35. If the doctoral thesis contains information to be classified within the meaning of the Law "On Official Secret", only persons who are allowed access to classified information in accordance with the procedures prescribed by law may participate in the composition of the council and in the promotion process.
36. If the doctoral thesis contains commercial secrets to which the candidate has specifically indicated, the members of the council and reviewers, as well as other persons whose presence is necessary in the promotion process, shall sign the minutes of the meeting to confirm the commitment not to disclose the secret.
37. Information about the defence in a closed meeting is indicated in the information published in the newspapers "Latvijas Vēstnesis" and "Zinātnes Vēstnesis".
38. The reviewers of the thesis with the right to vote participate in the meeting of the council where the promotion takes place. A meeting of the council shall have a quorum if not less than half of the number of experts entitled to vote in the council and not less than two reviewers participate in it. According to the regulations of the council, the doctoral thesis meeting may take place via online video conferencing (real-time transmission of image and sound) if the candidate, council member or reviewer is in another place and cannot attend the place of the doctoral thesis meeting.
39. One scientific work can be defended at each council meeting, there can be only two meetings in one day. The chairperson of the council or his deputy shall open the meeting,

announce the quorum and introduce the PhD candidate. Before defending the work, the chairperson of the meeting announces the granting of the status of the council members to the reviewers of the work. The secretary of the council shall take detailed minutes of the meeting. If necessary, a translation into Latvian is provided.

40. At the doctoral thesis meeting:
  - 40.1. reports on the documents submitted by the candidate, all decisions made regarding the promotion, and acquaints those present with the candidate's applicable biography;
  - 40.2. those present have the right to ask questions about the information provided;
  - 40.3. the candidate, using handouts and, if necessary, also audio and video materials, reports on the doctoral thesis and answers the questions of those present regarding the content and results of the doctoral thesis;
  - 40.4. the council hears and discusses the reviewers' feedback, as well as the candidate's academic discussion with the reviewers. If one of the reviewers has not been able to attend, the meeting participants shall be introduced to their written statement;
  - 40.5. the council hears the feedback of the supervisor(s) of the doctoral thesis on the academic activity of the candidate.
41. The decision to award or refuse a degree shall be taken by the council by a simple majority of votes cast, voting openly.
42. The AC shall send an announcement of the results of the vote to the newspaper "Zinātnes Vēstnesis" within a week.
43. In the event of a tie, the council shall hold a debate and vote again. If, after a second ballot, the votes are equally divided, the council shall re-examine the work, but not earlier than one month and not later than six months after the doctoral thesis meeting at which the decision was not made. Until the next meeting of the council, the Candidate has the right to make corrections in the doctoral thesis after coordination with the chairman of the promotion council. The candidate shall be informed during the meeting that the decision has not been made, the Vice-Rector for Science of the LLU and the NSQC shall be informed in writing within a week.
44. Within one month after the meeting of the promotion council, LLU or NSQC has the right to request in writing any documents related to the specific promotion from the promotion council and to contest the decision of the council if non-compliance to the requirements for the allocation of the degree have been established in the doctoral thesis or the promotion procedure is not followed.
45. If the objections are found to be justified and the decision of the promotion council is not contested, the council shall inform the NSQC and the candidate about the incident and further action.
46. If the objections concern the formal organisational issues of the promotion process, a repeated meeting of the council is held within two months.
47. If the objections concern the issues of scientific compliance of the doctoral thesis or its implementation, the AC shall return the doctoral thesis to the candidate, keeping one copy. In a work that contains scientifically, insufficiently substantiated or erroneous results, the candidate may make corrections and resubmit it for promotion no earlier than after one year.

48. The diploma for awarding the degree is issued at LLU not earlier than six weeks and not later than six months after the decision of the promotion council to award the degree, if this decision is not contested.

### **Challenge and appeal against decisions**

49. Decisions made by the LLU, the promotion council or the NSQC and the actual actions in the promotion process may be challenged by the LCS within a month.

### **Record-keeping**

50. In order to ensure uniform records of LLU, uniform procedural documents shall be used.
51. Samples of document forms are approved by the Council of Science of the LLU.
52. Samples of the relevant document forms are published on the LLU website.
53. Within one month of the defence, the secretary of the promotion council shall deposit all documents with the AC.