

REGULATIONS FIXING THE GENERAL PRINCIPLES APPLICABLE TO THE STUDIES, WORK AND ASSESSMENT LEADING TO THE ACADEMIC DOCTORATE (PhD), WHICH IS OBTAINED UPON DEFENDING A THESIS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MONS.

Decision #11/XXVII of the Board of Directors of 13th September 2010, modified by decision #29/XIV of 11th June 2012, #51/XIII of 8th September 2014, #3/XIV of 17th November 2014, and #58 of 4th May 2015 - coordinated version

CHAPTER I - General Provisions

Article 1. These Regulations aim to establish the general principles applicable to the studies, work and assessment leading to the academic doctorate (PhD), which is obtained upon defending a thesis at the University of Mons. They are in compliance with the regulations regarding doctoral committees set by ARES, pursuant to Article 134 paragraph 3 of the Decree of 7th November 2013 defining the higher education landscape and the academic organisation of studies, annexed to these Regulations (Annex 1).

There are specific provisions for the PhD in Arts and Art Science. These are noted in Chapter VIII.

The UMONS Faculties award the academic doctorate, in the fields outlined in the list of courses offered by UMONS, according to the specific conditions as set out in these Regulations.

Article 2. For the purpose of these Regulations,

- The word “Faculty” means the Faculty or School concerned;
- The word “Dean” means the Dean or the Head of the Faculty or School concerned;
- “University” or “UMONS” means the University of Mons;
- “Academic Staff” means:
 - Teaching staff subject to the law of 28th April 1953 on the organisation of university education by the state (full professors, associate professors, professors, lecturers);
 - Staff members of ‘*cadres d’extinction*’ (status for FTI-EII teachers before the creation of UMONS in 2009), classified under the category of teaching staff (professors and lecturers);
 - Scientific staff in rank B for the purpose of the Royal Decree of 31st October 1953 establishing the status of specialists, tutors and scientific staff of state universities, or scientific staff recognised as level B at for the purpose of the Decree of 19th July 1991 on the careers of scientific researchers with permanent contracts;
 - Senior Research Assistants;
 - Doctoral assistants and other members of scientific staff with PhDs;
 - FNRS researchers and researchers (of associated funds) with permanent contracts;
- “Faculty Board” means all members of the academic staff of a UMONS Faculty or School;

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- “Faculty Committee” is the committee referred to in Article 7 (below);
- “Examining Committee” is a board of at least five members, referred to in Article 15 (below), and is formed by the Faculty Board specific to each PhD candidate.
- The “Decree of 31st March 2004” (Bologna) is the Decree defining higher education, promoting its integration into the European Higher Education Area and refinancing universities, as amended.
- The “Decree of 7th November 2013” (“*Paysage*”) is the Decree defining the higher education landscape and the academic organisation of studies.

Article 3. The list of PhDs (doctorates) offered at UMONS is included in the list of courses, which is determined annually by the Board of Directors.

Article 4. The doctoral assessment consists of:

1. Writing an original thesis within the discipline as either a personal theory or a test demonstrating the value of a coherent set of publications and achievements of which the candidate is author or co-author;
2. The public presentation of this work highlighting its qualities, originality and popular science capabilities of the candidate.

Research for the preparation of a doctoral thesis corresponding to at least 180 credits, which have been obtained upon completion of the initial training referred to in Article 115 of the Decree of 7th November 2013.

The Examining Committee referred to in Article 15 judges the value, originality and relevance of the work. The work must be written and presented in French or English, or, if the nature of the thesis so requires, in another language accepted by the Examining Committee.

Prior to the public presentation (public defence) of the thesis, the PhD candidate must privately defend the thesis in front of the Examining Committee who will judge the admissibility of the thesis (private defence).

Article 5. Revoked

Article 6. In the Faculties that award PhDs in different fields, the Faculty Board may delegate all or some of its powers to Faculty Boards of the field in question. In this case, the Dean may also delegate any of its powers to the Chairperson of the Board.

Article 7. Annually, at the latest in September and by the Dean's initiative, the Faculty Board may appoint one or more Admissions Committees, which comprise, at least, the Dean, Vice-Dean, the Faculty's Secretary and representatives of the Faculty, appointed by the Faculty Council and representatives of the Faculty that the Faculty Council designates if desired.

For fields that concern both a Faculty and a School of UMONS, the Admissions Committee may comprise, besides those mentioned above, the Head of School and another member thereof, appointed by the Governing Board of the School.

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The procedure for the appointment of the Faculty Committee may be electronic.

The Faculty Committee is chaired by the Dean or, in the Dean's absence, the Vice Dean; the secretariat of meetings is the Secretary of the Faculty.

The Faculty Committee may appoint a PhD coordinator from among its members.

The Faculty Committee shall decide by consensus. However, in cases of persistent disagreement between its members, the Chairperson may vote. In this case, the decision is then made by simple majority of votes. In case of a tie, the Chairperson has the casting vote.

In each Faculty Committee meeting, the Secretary shall prepare the minutes containing, at least, the agenda and decisions made. The minutes are signed by the Chairperson and the Secretary. The Dean keeps this at the Faculty Secretariat. The Secretary authenticates the extracts of the minutes.

CHAPTER II - Conditions for access to studies and work regarding the preparation of a doctoral thesis

Article 8. §1. Applications for admission are sent by the candidate to the Dean on the basis of a complete file describing the university curriculum followed (with transcripts of results and copies of qualifications obtained) and official documentation attesting to potential qualifications that the candidate wishes to make valid.

§ 2. Admission to studies and work regarding the preparation of a doctoral thesis is decided by the Faculty Board or the Faculty Committee, defined in Article 7, which verifies:

1. The eligibility of the candidate for studies and research, under the conditions established by Article 115 of the Decree of 7th November 2013 and Article 182 of the Decree of 31st March 2004.
2. The candidate's ability for personal work and scientific research, which is assessed particularly according to: scientific work already carried out (dissertation, technical report, publication, etc.), the advice of a Scientific Committee in awarding the candidate a research or education mandate, and the passing of 2nd cycle studies (Master's degree) with a grade higher than or equal to a distinction or an average higher than or equal to 14/20; without these criteria, the candidate is automatically denied admission.
3. Admissibility of the thesis;
4. The agreement of a research unit or a UMONS department to receive them;
5. The presence of a supervisor willing to supervise the candidate in their work.

§ 3. The Faculty Board or the Faculty Committee may establish additional conditions as prerequisites to be acquired prior to admission to the PhD programme.

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§ 4. No one may acquire a PhD if they have successfully completed a corresponding doctoral course.

Article 9. For each academic year, registration must take effect no later than 15th January (the application must have previously been considered and approved by the Faculty Board concerned and sent in full to the Registration Office by this date); in particular circumstances, registration can, however, be considered after this date, subject to the approval of the Faculty concerned. Registration is only effective upon full payment of tuition fees.

CHAPTER III - Organisation of Studies and Work

Article 10. Work regarding the preparation of a doctoral thesis takes place under the guidance of a supervisor. This supervisor must be a member of academic staff of the University, as defined in Article 2, and must either: have the title of Doctor, as obtained upon defending a thesis, or be a qualified teacher of higher education, or have been appointed to the rank of Lecturer, despite the lack of such titles, on the basis of Article 22, § 1, paragraph 3, of the Law of 28th April 1953 on the organisation of university education by the State.

The supervisor may be appointed as co-supervisor if they are: a member of academic staff from a university and do not have the title of Doctor, as obtained upon defending a thesis, or a member of another university or research institution. In all cases, the supervisor or co-supervisor must, at least, be a member of academic staff of the Faculty or School concerned, or must teach at the University.

In exceptional and acceptable circumstances, and considering the reputation of the person concerned, the Faculty Board may exempt the supervisor or co-supervisor from the obligation of having the title of Doctor, as obtained upon defending a thesis, or being a qualified teacher of higher education (or having benefited from an exemption of this title upon their appointment to the rank of Lecturer by the Board of Directors). However, in all cases, the supervisor or co-supervisor must have, at the very least, the qualification that the PhD candidate is working towards.

Article 11. Doctoral Training

§ 1. Upon the candidate's admission to doctoral studies/training, or at the latest after one year, the Admissions Committee designates a Thesis Advisory Committee to the PhD candidate. It is composed of at least three members of academic staff of a Belgian university. It comprises at least the supervisor, possible co-supervisor and two members of the Faculty or School concerned. The other members of the Thesis Advisory Committee must have the title of Doctor, as obtained upon defending a thesis. The Thesis Advisory Committee may appoint, in an advisory capacity, experts chosen within the university or outside of it. It is chaired by one of its members, excluding the supervisor.

The Thesis Advisory Committee meets at least once a year. It hears the candidate and assesses the progress of their work. It submits a written report, based on the outline annexed to these Regulations. The candidate is informed of the outcome of the assessment.

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In case of serious shortcomings, by a duly reasoned opinion, the Thesis Advisory Committee may consult with the Admissions Committee and recommend that the candidate be refused registration the following academic year.

§ 2. The candidate's Thesis Advisory Committee establishes a project within their doctoral training (60 credits), which is adapted to their scientific profile and which meets the needs of the proposed research project. This is subject to validation from the Faculty Board and may be adapted, where necessary, during meetings with the Thesis Advisory Committee, depending on the progress of doctoral research (opportunity to participate in a summer school, presentation of results accepted at a conference, etc.).

§ 3. Doctoral training is provided by graduate schools (EDT), but can also be followed elsewhere. With each PhD candidate, the supervisor suggests activities that best correspond to the doctoral training, which is tailored to the research project.

The doctoral training programme is formally approved by the Thesis Advisory Committee, which is appointed by the Faculty Board or the Faculty Committee.

Under the advice of the supervisor, the Thesis Advisory Committee is therefore responsible for:

- From the outset, advising the PhD candidate in preparing their doctoral training programme;
- Periodically evaluating the quality of the PhD candidate's research and the progress of their work;
- Assessing credit acquisition and validating the programme for the following year (and modifying it if necessary);
- Recommending (or not) to the Faculty Board the PhD candidate's re-registration.

§ 4. For admission to the PhD programme, the doctoral training is tailored according to the candidate's specific learning outcomes of their Master's degree (2nd cycle studies) and any other previous experience.

§ 5. The Thesis Advisory Committee is appointed by the Faculty Board or the Faculty Committee in order to confirm the passing of the doctoral training, in full or in part, and award the associated credits.

§ 6. When the PhD candidate is an assistant under mandate, the Thesis Advisory Committee shall also perform all the tasks entrusted to it by the regulations concerning non-permanent scientific staff and any other UMONS regulations.

Article 12. A retired professor cannot take on the role of supervisor after their departure from UMONS. If, in the four years preceding the date of retirement, a faculty member is appointed as thesis supervisor, a co-supervisor will be appointed.

The co-supervisor is appointed by the Faculty Board or the Faculty Committee in compliance with the conditions mentioned in Article 10, paragraphs 1 and 2; the co-supervisor automatically takes over the role of the former thesis supervisor upon their retirement.

If the procedure laid out in the preceding paragraph cannot be followed, especially in the event of early retirement, a new supervisor or co-supervisor must be appointed by the Faculty Board or Faculty Committee as soon as all parties have been made aware of this and after consulting the Thesis Advisory Committee.

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Only retired teachers allowed to pursue activities at the University may be appointed as co-supervisors of theses for which they have provided supervision or are a contributing member of an Examining Committee.

A retired professor may, however, remain a member of Thesis Advisory Committees for PhDs of which they were the supervisor, even if they are not granted the authorisation referred to above.

Article 13. If the duration of the work relating to the preparation of a doctoral thesis exceeds four years (full-time) - or six years for an assistant - re-registration is subject to the express agreement of the Faculty Board or the Faculty Committee on the reasoned opinion of the Thesis Advisory Committee.

Article 14. In case of conflict between the candidate and the supervisor or the managers at the reception service, the parties agree on a mediator who, without denying anyone of their responsibilities, hears the parties and suggests a solution, which is accepted by all parties for the completion of the thesis. The Dean of the Faculty is notified of this mediation.

If this procedure fails within two months or in case of disagreement between the candidate or the supervisor and the Thesis Advisory Committee, the Dean becomes the mediator. In the event of continued disagreement, and if deemed appropriate, the Dean may suggest the appointment of a new Thesis Advisory Committee or a new supervisor, if the candidate agrees.

CHAPTER IV - Composition of the Thesis Advisory Committee

Article 15. To award a doctoral degree (PhD), the Faculty Board has an Examining Committee specific to each candidate. This Examining Committee is composed of at least five members (including a chairperson and a secretary) who have the title of Doctor, as obtained upon defending a thesis, or who are recognised for their high scientific or artistic competence in the field.

It is chaired by a teacher from UMONS who cannot be the supervisor or co-supervisor.

At least two members must be academic staff of the Faculty or School concerned. Supervisors (1) and co-supervisors are part of this, *ex officio*. At least two members, chosen for their particular expertise in the subject of the thesis, must not be UMONS members.

If Master's degrees are invoked as a condition of access by the candidate and are granted at the University by other Faculties, or belong to a domain where they are conferred by other Faculties, at least one member of the Examining Committee must be a member of academic staff of one of these Faculties and in the field of the Master's degree.

Article 16. No later than eight days before the submission of the thesis manuscript, the Thesis Advisory Committee shall deliver an opinion and, as suggested by the supervisor, propose the composition of the Examining Committee.

The Faculty Board or the Faculty Committee approves or rejects this proposal.

In the latter case, they shall designate another Examining Committee.

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This Examining Committee will then designate, by consensus, a Chairperson and a Secretary, both of whom cannot be the supervisor or co-supervisor.

Article 17. The Examining Committee may hear, in an advisory capacity, experts chosen within the University or outside of it.

Article 18. §1. Each Examining Committee member has one vote and participates in the deliberations in person or through a written assessment.

§2. The Examining Committee's deliberations take place in a closed meeting. All members have a duty to respect the secrecy of deliberations and votes.

§3. The Examining Committee decides independently and collectively. Decisions are made by a simple majority vote. In case of a tie, the Chairperson has the casting vote.

§4. The Examining Committee gives reasons for its decision in a defence report that specifies, at least, that the minimum number of credits acquired, the conditions of the study programme have been met, the conditions of access to studies were met, and the PhD candidate was duly registered at UMONS.

§5. The Examining Committee's decisions are made public and are then displayed for at least two weeks following the announcement.

(1) One per institution in the case of co-supervision.

CHAPTER V - Thesis Defence

Article 19. To be eligible to defend their thesis, the candidate must be routinely registered for studies related to the preparation of a doctoral thesis.

Article 20. The thesis manuscript is submitted to the Dean in ten copies.

Article 21. The designation of an Examining Committee must take place within one month of submitting the thesis manuscript, excluding the period of 15th July to 15th August.

Article 22. In agreement with the supervisor, the Dean determines the schedule. The private defence, the aim of which is to assess the admissibility of the thesis, must take place at least one month after the Examining Committee has been appointed and no more than two months after the thesis manuscript has been submitted. The public defence must take place no later than one month after the private defence.

These time limits are suspended from 15th July to 15th August. They are also suspended during examination periods, unless the members of the Examining Committee unanimously decide otherwise.

The Faculty shall advertise the date, time and place of the public defence, notably via the University's website at least fifteen days before the date of the defence. The Dean's Office communicates the date, time and place of both the private and public defences to the candidate and to the Examining Committee members.

Article 23. The private defence on the admissibility of the thesis takes place in a closed meeting with at least half of the Examining Committee members present. Except in cases of force

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majeure, Examining Committee members who are unable to attend this meeting are obliged to provide a justified reason in writing.

After assessing the work, the Examining Committee may hear the candidate and discuss the work in the presence of and under the guidance of its Chairperson.

The Examining Committee then makes recommendations on how to proceed. They may recommend to the candidate to publicly defend the thesis, as well as request additional time to revise certain parts, or waive the public defence.

The outcome of this deliberation is immediately communicated to the candidate.

Article 24. If the Examining Committee recommends an extension, this can not exceed six months. In this case, the Dean sets a new and final date for a private defence and a public defence. The Examining Committee determines the schedule and terms of the extra work. If the candidate fails to follow these terms, the Examining Committee rejects the thesis.

Article 25. The public defence consists of a public presentation of the candidate's thesis with at least half of the Examining Committee members present. This is followed by a discussion in which the audience is invited to participate. The defence may not exceed two hours. The Chairperson of the Examining Committee moderates the discussion.

The Examining Committee then retires to deliberate on the entire work - the thesis, the private defence and the public defence - and decides whether or not to award the academic doctorate.

The outcome of this deliberation is recorded in the Deliberations Register and is immediately communicated to the candidate. The Dean keeps the Deliberations Register at the Faculty Secretariat.

Article 26. When the candidate has been awarded the title of "Doctor", the Secretary of the Examining Committee writes a summarised report of the thesis defence. This report will be attached to the PhD degree certificate.

No later than one month after the defence, the Secretary of the Examining Committee presents this report, duly approved by all members of the Examining Committee and signed by: The Chairperson and the Secretary of the Examining Committee, at the Faculty which will send a certified copy to the Doctor and keep the original in its archives.

Article 27. In case of refusal after the public defence, the reasoned decision is recorded in the Deliberations Register and is also submitted in writing to the candidate. If the candidate wishes to re-register, they must first obtain the explicit agreement of the Faculty Board. In this case, a time limit of at least one year must pass before a new thesis manuscript can be submitted.

CHAPTER VI - Provisions for theses carried out under joint supervision

Article 28. §1. The PhD thesis can be carried out under joint supervision with another Belgian or foreign university.

§2. "Joint supervision" means the co-supervision of a PhD by two universities, leading to a double or a joint degree.

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§3. The candidate must be admitted onto the PhD programme at UMONS following the procedure outlined in the Study Regulations.

§4. The PhD candidate carries out their work under the supervision of two thesis supervisors - one at each university - who fully carry out their supervisory roles.

Article 29.

§1. For each joint supervision, the partner universities sign an agreement adopting a principle of reciprocity and describing the terms of the joint supervision.

§2. While respecting the regulations in force at UMONS, the agreement must specify the following points:

- The specific parties (the PhD candidate and the supervisors);
- The commitment of the partner universities to award a PhD (if successful);
- The title of the doctoral training(s) or PhD degree(s) awarded;
- The provisions for registration and tuition fees, including possible exemptions of payment of fees in one of the partner universities;
- The expected duration of the thesis and distribution of time spent in each university;
- The language(s) of the written thesis and the defence;
- The terms of submission, composition of the Doctoral Committee and organisation of the defence;
- The provisions for insurance;
- The provisions for intellectual property;
- In the case of a joint supervision with a university in the French Community of Belgium, the referring institution and how the funding is distributed between the universities.

§3. At UMONS, the agreement is verified and validated by the Academic Affairs Department before it is signed.

§4. The agreement is signed at UMONS by the Rector, the Dean, the supervisor and the PhD candidate. It is also signed by the supervisor and the authorities of one or both partner universities.

Article 30. According to the laws and regulations of both sides, the PhD candidate obtains either a single degree or two degrees, if successful.

Article 31.

§1. The PhD candidate is registered annually on the doctoral programme in each of the partner universities.

§2. Except in particular circumstances, they pay full tuition at UMONS during the initial registration on the doctoral programme and training.

However, in the case of joint supervision with a university in the Flemish Community or a university abroad, the joint supervision agreement may stipulate that the payment of full tuition at UMONS can be deferred until the following year if it is paid in the first year at the partner university.

In the case of joint supervision with a university in the French Community of Belgium, the joint supervision agreement shall stipulate that the tuition fees are paid in full at the referring institution.

§3. At re-registration, the PhD candidate pays the relevant tuition and administrative fees.

Article 32. To ensure that joint supervision is carried out, each university provides supervision of the PhD candidate's work for a period of at least 6 months.

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Article 33.

§1. The Doctoral Committee is composed by mutual agreement between the two partner universities.

§2. In accordance with internal rules applicable to each institution, the Doctoral Committee is made up of scientists from both universities, both of whom are the PhD candidate's supervisors. Scientists who are not members of either university may be invited to have a place on the Doctoral Committee.

§3. The assessment consists of a single private defence and/or a single public defence, which may take place either in one or both universities.

§4. If the defence does not take place at UMONS, the PhD candidate presents the thesis during a seminar held no earlier than one month before the defence.

Article 34. The procedure to be followed is annexed to these Regulations (Annex 2).

CHAPTER VII - Additional Provisions

Article 35. In establishing the terms of the University's regulations on doctoral degrees awarded after the thesis defence, and without waiving the provisions of the Decree of 7th November 2013, the Faculty Boards apply any special provisions from implemented decrees, from these Regulations and from the regulations concerning non-permanent scientific staff that they consider useful.

Article 36. The Faculty Boards are authorised to clarify the following points:

- The specific prerequisites required in order to work on a thesis or prior to submission of the thesis manuscript;
- The additional practical procedures of submissions, the organisation of the private and public defences, and the conduct of the deliberations;
- The follow-up and management terms of the candidates by the Faculty and the Thesis Advisory Committee;
- Their modes of operation as well as those of the Examining Committee and possible Thesis Advisory Committees.

CHAPITRE VIII - Specific Provisions for the PhD in Arts and Art Science

Article 37. The PhD in Arts and Art Science is split into two: a practical part, which consists of an artistic creation or a restoration project, and a theoretical part, which consists of a written thesis. The two are closely connected and together they make up the whole PhD programme, which is subject to a final assessment.

In all cases, practical and theoretical research is carried out collectively by interacting between the artistic work and theoretical reflection. This dual aspect of the PhD in Arts and Art Science makes it necessary to collaborate between universities and Art Schools (in Belgium and abroad) to support PhD candidates in this field.

Joint supervision is mandatory due to the specific definition of the thesis, which requires the supervision and management of the theoretical side and the practical side of the work. A supervisor from the University must be accompanied by a co-supervisor (a teacher) from an Art School who commits to co-supervising the candidate in their work.

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Article 38. Annually, at the latest by 15th September, the Faculty Board for the PhD in question appoints an Admissions Committee specific to the PhD in Arts and Art Science; this is made up of the Dean, Vice-Dean, the Faculty's Secretary and representatives of the Faculty, appointed by the Faculty Council.

Article 39. Conditions of Admission:

The PhD in Arts and Art Science is accessible to holders of a Master's degree (or equivalent) either in Plastic, Visual and Spatial Arts, Music, Drama and Speech Arts, Performing Arts, or Broadcasting and Communication Techniques.

The Admissions Committee specific to the PhD in Arts and Art Science, appointed by the Faculty Board, takes advice from both the co-supervisor and the Head of the Art School, as referred to for each application for admission.

Article 40. Thesis Advisory Committee

The Thesis Advisory Committee consists of academic staff from UMONS and the Art Schools. It includes the supervisor, co-supervisor, a member of UMONS and a member of the Art School concerned.

Academic members must have the title of Doctor, as obtained upon defending a thesis. The Thesis Advisory Committee may, in an advisory capacity, call upon experts chosen within the University, the Art School, or from further afield.

Article 41. The Examining Committee

The Examining Committee specific to each candidate is composed of at least six members who have the title of Doctor, as obtained upon defending a thesis, or who are recognised for their high scientific or artistic competence in the field. It includes: the supervisor, the co-supervisor, a member of the Faculty concerned, a member of the Art School concerned, and two external members, one of whom belongs to a university or research institution and the other to the domain of higher education in art.

Article 42. Thesis Defence

The private defence is divided into two parts: the practical work is presented and defended in a suitable location, as determined by mutual agreement between the supervisor, co-supervisor and the PhD candidate. The written thesis is then presented and defended on the University's premises no later than the following working day.

The public defence may be restricted to the defence of the written thesis.

Article 43. These Regulations apply to PhD candidates registered onto PhD programmes (3rd cycle studies) from the academic year 2014-2015.

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