

In accordance with the Statutes of the University of Ljubljana (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 4/2017 with amendments and supplements), at its 36th ordinary session held on 30 March 2021 the Senate of the University of Ljubljana adopted the following

## **RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR DOCTORAL STUDIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF LJUBLJANA**

### **General provisions**

#### Article 1

These Rules regulate doctoral studies at the University of Ljubljana (hereinafter: UL) and define the basic standards of quality for doctoral studies. For the purpose of achieving academic excellence, additional requirements may be determined for individual doctoral programme.

#### Article 2

The terms used in these Rules shall have the following meanings:

- Candidate is a person that has applied in the call for enrolment in a doctoral studies programme, up until their enrolment.
- Doctoral candidate is a person that has enrolled in doctoral studies, up until the successful defence of their doctoral dissertation.
- The Doctoral Studies Committee (hereinafter: DSC) is a working body appointed by the senate of a UL member faculty or academy (hereinafter: UL member) to monitor the doctoral candidate from the registration of the doctoral dissertation proposal until the assessment and defence of the dissertation.
- Responsible body is the body, authorised by an UL member or the UL through its rules or agreements among UL members to adopt decisions in connection with doctoral studies.
- Course unit is an expression used for subjects, seminars, exercises and other forms of work in accordance with the accredited study programmes.
- The proposal or topic of a doctoral dissertation (hereinafter: doctoral dissertation proposal) is the proposed research and a presentation of the expected original contributions to science.

### **UL Doctoral School**

#### Article 3

The UL Doctoral School is a joint organisational unit of the UL. The main objectives of the UL Doctoral School are ensuring the quality of doctoral studies at UL and maintaining the prominence of this quality in Slovenian and world academic spheres and in society.

In accordance with the Statutes of the UL, the rules and work of the Doctoral School are defined by the UL Senate via a founding resolution.

#### Article 4

The UL Doctoral School has a Head and a Council of Doctoral Programme Coordinators (hereinafter: Council of Coordinators). The Head is a professor employed full-time at the UL.

The Head is appointed by the Rector from among the higher education teachers on the proposal of the UL member.

The Head manages and represents the UL Doctoral School, provides for the functioning of the Council of Coordinators, and participates in the work of the UL Senate Committee for Doctoral Studies and of the UL Senate.

### **Doctoral programme coordinators and Council of Coordinators**

#### *Article 5*

A UL member's senate or the relevant programme council, in the case of interdisciplinary doctoral degree programmes, shall appoint a doctoral programme coordinator.

The main tasks of the coordinator shall be the management, coordination, development and presentation of a doctoral degree programme.

#### *Article 6*

The Council of Coordinators is a consultative body of the UL Doctoral School, composed of doctoral programme coordinators. The Council is headed by the Head of the UL Doctoral School.

### **Doctoral degree programmes**

#### *Article 7*

Doctoral degree programmes shall last three or four years, and shall comprise 180 ECTS credits in three-year programmes and 240 ECTS credits in four-year programmes.

One study programme year shall comprise 60 ECTS credits. The value of a course unit shall be at least 3 ECTS credits, while the recommended number of ECTS credits of a specific course unit shall be 5 or a multiple of that number.

#### *Article 8*

A total of 60 ECTS credits shall be assigned to organised forms of study in the doctoral programme, including the presentation of doctoral dissertation proposal, presentation of the results of research work before completion of the doctoral dissertation and the PhD viva.

Research work in the scope of studies shall be assigned 120 or 180 ECTS credits. Research work shall also include the publication of scientific achievements in accordance with Article 29 of these Rules.

#### *Article 9*

Doctoral degree programmes are provided by the UL members.

At the UL, doctoral degree programmes are coordinated at one of the UL members, at several UL members or in the case of joint doctoral programmes, jointly with one or more higher education institutions in Slovenia or abroad.

#### Article 10

An individual research field shall only be provided by a single doctoral degree programme at the UL.

### **Call for enrolment**

#### Article 11

In accordance with the Higher Education Act and the Rules on the call for enrolment and enrolment in higher education, the UL shall publish a joint call for enrolment in doctoral degree programmes.

#### Article 12

Candidates shall apply to the call for enrolment in accordance with the Rules on the call for enrolment and enrolment in higher education.

### **Enrolment requirements and selection criteria**

#### Article 13

In the case of restricted enrolment, enrolment requirements and selection criteria shall be laid down by the accredited doctoral programme.

#### Article 14

UL members providing doctoral degree programmes shall publish lists of potential supervisors and the fields in which they work, in accordance with Article 32 of these Rules. The lists shall also be published on the UL Doctoral School's website.

By the end of the application deadline, the candidate is required to choose a higher education teacher or research associate to act as supervisor or co-supervisor and, by no later than enrolment, to submit their consent to act as supervisor or co-supervisor and a short draft of the research work. The potential supervisor or co-supervisor shall not be obliged to accept the supervising or co-supervising.

#### Article 15

The responsible body shall adopt decisions on the selection of candidates for enrolment in a doctoral programme.

### **Enrolment**

## Article 16

Enrolment in doctoral degree programmes shall be carried out in accordance with the Rules on the call for enrolment and enrolment in higher education.

Doctoral candidates who have not submitted the consent to supervision or co-supervision by enrolment, pursuant to Article 14 of these Rules, or in the case of non-fulfilment of the conditions for supervision, must submit the relevant consent no later than by the deadline set by the responsible body. The doctoral candidate has the duty to find a new supervisor or co-supervisor. Failing this, the candidate cannot complete the study requirements and thereby complete their doctoral studies.

## Article 17

The candidate or doctoral candidate and the supervisor, in agreement with the coordinator of the doctoral programme, shall determine the curriculum (select the courses and define the research plan).

At the time of enrolment, a doctoral candidate may also select course units from other doctoral study programmes. The responsible body shall come to an agreement on this with the other UL member or other university.

Upon any change to the curriculum, the doctoral candidate must obtain the consent of their supervisor and course leader, and of the doctoral programme coordinator or field coordinator in question, and notify the student affairs office or competent department. A decision on this shall be made by the responsible body of the doctoral programme.

## Article 18

At the beginning of their studies, candidates shall sign a Statement of commitment to respect UL codes of ethics in accordance with the Code of Ethics of UL Researchers.

## Article 19

Following enrolment, the doctoral candidate and UL or UL member shall sign a contract on education, under which the contracting parties shall agree on the mutual rights and obligations arising from doctoral studies, and the amount of tuition fee and payment method.

## Article 20

Tuition fees for doctoral studies shall be paid in accordance with the UL Price List adopted by the UL's Governing Board for an individual academic year.

## **Study regulations**

### Article 21

The course unit leader and/or teacher in a doctoral programme is a person that holds the title of higher education teacher (assistant professor, associate professor and professor) and the relevant references in the course unit field, and is responsible for implementation of the course unit.

#### Article 22

Draft timetables shall be published by the provider UL members no later than by the start of the academic year or the semester in which the specific course units will be provided.

#### Article 23

Examinations and other forms of knowledge assessment regarding doctoral studies shall be carried out by deadlines that are not necessarily linked to examination periods. A doctoral candidate and the provider of the examination or other forms of knowledge assessment may determine the deadline for the fulfilment of requirements. The consent of the responsible body is therefore not required.

#### Article 24

A doctoral candidate shall register for an examination by the announced deadline via the study information system, if announced in this way, or in agreement with an examination provider.

The provider shall enter their report on the knowledge assessment in the study information system or submit it to student affairs office, if the doctoral candidate did not register for an examination via the study information system.

#### Article 25

A doctoral candidate may take examinations relating to course units of upper years following approval by the responsible body.

#### Article 26

Doctoral candidates may take an examination three times. An examination shall be taken for the third time before a commission comprising at least three members.

A doctoral candidate who fails in their final attempt to pass an examination in accordance with the Statutes of the UL may not complete studies in the same research field.

#### Article 27

The responsible body shall determine the number of course units in which a doctoral candidate may improve a grade and the period in which they may improve a grade.

#### Article 28

In accordance with the Statutes of the UL and valid doctoral degree programmes, the responsible body may recognise the fulfilment of requirements by a doctoral candidate outside of the doctoral programme in which they are enrolled. Requirements recognised as such shall be added to the ECTS credits required to complete the doctoral programme.

#### Article 29

The conditions for completing studies and acquiring the scientific title »doktor/doktorica znanosti« comprise the completion of all study requirements laid down in the programme and the publication

or acceptance for publication of at least one research article with the student's name listed as first author during the period of doctoral studies. The article must be based on the research presented in the doctoral dissertation and published or accepted for publication in a publication that is considered in the UL's habilitation criteria.

If first authorship is not possible (for example, in international research or for other justified reasons), the supervisor shall issue a statement confirming that the doctoral candidate's contribution in the article is significant.

The doctoral candidate must have published or accepted for publication a research article upon submission of the doctoral dissertation for assessment, except the doctoral candidates enrolled in the already accredited joint three-year doctoral programme who must do so before the PhD viva at the latest.

Affiliation to the University of Ljubljana must be stated in all publications in connection with research in the scope of doctoral studies. This shall also apply when the doctoral candidate, supervisor or co-supervisor are employed by another organisation.

#### Article 30

The day of completion of the doctoral programme shall be deemed to be the day when the doctoral candidate has successfully completed all the study requirements, and when the assessment of the defence of the doctoral dissertation is entered into official record.

#### Article 31

In addition to the provisions of these Rules, the provisions of the UL's Study Regulations shall also apply *mutatis mutandis* to doctoral study programmes.

### **Supervision**

#### Article 32

Supervisors and co-supervisors in doctoral studies shall be teachers of the UL with the title of assistant professor, associate professor or professor, or a researcher with the title of research associate, senior research associate or senior research fellow, and has proof of research activity with a relevant scientific bibliography in the broader field covered by the doctoral dissertation. The minimum condition for the demonstration of research work of the supervisor or co-supervisor shall be set out in a decision adopted by the Senate of the UL, which shall be published on the website of the UL Doctoral School.

Researchers with the appropriate habilitation of another institute (domestic or foreign) may also be supervisors or co-supervisors. They must have references from the broader field of the doctoral dissertation topic, and work in a doctoral programme or be employed by an institution with whom the UL or a UL member has concluded an agreement or entered into a cooperation agreement.

Doctoral candidates may have several supervisors or co-supervisors.

Supervisors and co-supervisors may be members of the DSC, but shall not participate in the assessment process.

One person may supervise or co-supervise a maximum of six doctoral candidates enrolled in any doctoral programme at the UL, and no more than two years have elapsed since their last enrolment in a year or additional year. That number shall not include doctoral candidates who have already submitted their dissertation for assessment.

Supervisors and co-supervisors shall be appointed by a UL member's senate. When approving the doctoral dissertation proposal, the UL Senate shall verify the fulfilment of conditions for supervision or co-supervision, and shall call on a UL member to make a replacement if those conditions are not met.

A doctoral candidate and their appointed supervisor or co-supervisor may, for valid reasons, make a written proposal for the replacement of the supervisor or co-supervisor with the responsible body.

### Article 33

Supervisors and co-supervisors shall:

- monitor the work of a doctoral candidate during the drafting of the research work concept, preparing the doctoral dissertation proposal and the doctoral dissertation itself, and participate in the work of the DSC in all phases of the process, except assessment;
- facilitate the doctoral candidate's inclusion in research work;
- advise the doctoral candidate and participate in the definition of the content and work method and standards associated with the doctoral dissertation, and in the planning of research and research data management, and point out known facts in the research field;
- introduce the doctoral candidate to the immediate and broader research community in which they work (invitations to meetings, conferences at home and abroad, etc.);
- be accessible to the doctoral candidate for regular consultations by mutual agreement;
- participate in the presentation of the doctoral dissertation proposal, in the presentation of the results of research work and in the PhD viva;
- regularly request from the doctoral candidate oral or written reports on the progress and results of research work, and provide advice regarding the possible publication of the partial results of the doctoral dissertation or the presentation thereof at research events; and
- serve as an example of ethical research work through their own actions.

In addition to the responsible bodies of the UL member, the field coordinator, doctoral programme coordinator and Head of the UL's Doctoral School may help in the resolution of potential disagreements between the doctoral candidate, supervisor and co-supervisor.

### Article 34

Doctoral candidates shall:

- reach an agreement on supervision or co-supervision of their doctoral studies;
- regularly fulfil their study and research requirements;
- register their doctoral dissertation proposal in accordance with the study programme, and publicly present the doctoral dissertation proposal and the results of research work, write their doctoral dissertation, publish or have accepted for publication at least one research article in accordance with Article 29 of these Rules and give a PhD viva;
- work with the supervisor and co-supervisor, and consult on the content and work method and standards in connection with their doctoral dissertation;
- report regularly to their supervisor and co-supervisor on the progress of their work;

- conduct research work in accordance with the ethical norms of the UL;
- respect and publicly acknowledge the contributions of their supervisor and co-supervisor, and other co-workers;
- reach agreement with their supervisor and co-supervisor and other co-workers on the publication of the results of research work in connection with the doctoral programme;
- ensure the transparency and verifiability of the research work and provide for the most open possible access to research data in accordance with Article 50 of these Rules. The candidate shall report on this to the supervisor and co-supervisor and also to the DSC.

## **Registration and approval of the doctoral dissertation proposal**

### Article 35

In agreement with the supervisor and potential co-supervisor the doctoral candidate shall register the doctoral dissertation proposal in accordance with the rules and regulations of the UL member leading the procedure for obtaining a PhD.

A doctoral candidate may register the proposal of their doctoral dissertation proposal no more than twice in the same field of the doctoral study programme prior to submitting their doctoral dissertation for assessment. On the second registration, the doctoral candidate may register either a new proposal of the dissertation or an updated proposal of the dissertation which was already considered by the senate of the UL member. A second registration of a rejected dissertation proposal shall not be permitted.

If the senate of a UL member or the UL Senate rejects the doctoral dissertation proposal which the doctoral candidate is registering for the second time, the candidate may no longer complete the doctoral programme in that field.

### Article 36

A doctoral candidate shall submit an application for approval of the doctoral dissertation proposal to the responsible body in accordance with the rules and regulations of the UL member.

The application shall contain information on the doctoral candidate and:

1. the doctoral dissertation proposal (3 to 7 pages of text and a list of the main references and sources), comprising:

- the title of the dissertation in Slovenian and English, or in another foreign language in the case of the study of a foreign language and literature;
- the research field of the doctoral dissertation;
- a research description, including:
  - a brief overview of the specific research field and a presentation of the research done to date in the field of the dissertation, and the purpose of the research;
  - clearly presented hypotheses or research questions or objectives with a brief explanation;
  - the research concept and a description of the research methods;
  - the definition of expected results and the original contribution to science;
  - a list of relevant references from the field of the dissertation;



- a draft of the research data management plan in accordance with Article 50 of these Rules;
2. the proposal for supervision and potential co-supervision, the consent of the supervisor and potential co-supervisor and an indication of their 3 to 5 scientific references in the broader field of the doctoral dissertation;
  3. the CV of the doctoral candidate and bibliography (list of main scientific, professional, project and other publications and works);
  4. the approval of the Medical Ethics Committee of the Republic of Slovenia or another ethics committee or the permission of the Office of the Republic of Slovenia for Safe Food, Veterinary Medicine and Plant Protection to conduct tests on animals, where the nature of the proposed doctoral dissertation proposal requires it;
  5. a possible request for approval of writing the doctoral dissertation in English, or in another language in the case of studying foreign languages in accordance with Article 44 of these Rules.

Upon registering the application for approval of the doctoral dissertation proposal the doctoral candidate shall also attach other required documents in accordance with the instructions of the UL member.

The application for approval of the doctoral dissertation proposal shall be written in Slovenian. If a candidate requests approval of writing the doctoral dissertation in English, they must also submit the proposal of the dissertation and their CV in English, in accordance with Article 44 of these Rules. If the doctoral candidate is a foreign national, the dissertation proposal and CV may be written only in English.

If the registration documentation is incomplete, the responsible body of the UL member shall call on the doctoral candidate to supplement it by a specific deadline that shall not exceed one year. If within this deadline the documentation is not supplemented, the application for approval of the dissertation proposal shall be discarded by a decision.

## **Appointment of Doctoral Studies Committee**

### *Article 37*

When a doctoral candidate submits an application for approval of the doctoral dissertation proposal, the senate of the UL member shall as a rule at its next session appoint a chair and members of the DSC.

The DSC shall comprise at least three assessors selected from higher education teachers or researchers who hold a valid teaching or scientific title and have a track record in research, with relevant published work, covering the broader field of the doctoral dissertation. At least one assessor shall be from another university or another research organisation, and exceptionally from another UL member. Such exception must be fully justified by the UL member. If the supervisor and co-supervisor serve as members of the DSC, the number of members shall be increased accordingly.

Foreign members of the DSC may be higher education teachers or researchers who hold a valid teaching or scientific title and/or have a track record in research, with relevant published work, covering the broader field of the doctoral dissertation.

The senate of the UL member shall provide written notification to the doctoral candidate, members of the DSC, supervisor and co-supervisor regarding the appointment of the DSC.

The chair of the DSC shall coordinate the work of committee members and draw up an assessment of the doctoral dissertation proposal. As a rule, the assessment of the doctoral dissertation proposal shall be made jointly. Committee members may also submit separate assessments.

The members of the DSC, supervisor and co-supervisor shall avoid situations that constitute or could constitute conflicts of interest in accordance with the Rules on avoiding conflict of interest and on conditions for performing work outside the UL.

### **Presentation of a doctoral dissertation proposal**

#### Article 38

A doctoral candidate shall present the doctoral dissertation proposal to the DSC and research audience generally within one month of the appointment of the DSC.

A record shall be made of the presentation, including remarks and the deadline for supplementing the doctoral dissertation proposal, where necessary, regarding which the UL member shall notify the doctoral candidate and supervisor. The record shall be signed by the DSC members.

### **Assessment of doctoral dissertation proposal**

#### Article 39

Within one month following the presentation of the doctoral dissertation proposal or following the submission of a supplemented doctoral dissertation proposal, the DSC shall submit an assessment of the doctoral dissertation proposal to the senate of the UL member that conducts the procedure.

If the doctoral candidate fails to submit a supplemented proposal within the deadline for supplementing the doctoral dissertation proposal, the DSC must provide an assessment of the originally received doctoral dissertation proposal, where the deadlines for submission of an assessment by the DSC shall not be implemented in July and August.

#### Article 40

In its assessment of the doctoral dissertation proposal the DSC shall provide a clear judgement regarding the suitability of the expected results and the expected original contribution to the research field of the doctoral dissertation. In its assessment the DSC shall also determine the suitability of:

- the proposed supervisor and potential co-supervisor;
- the title of the dissertation in Slovenian and English, or in another foreign language in the case of the study of a foreign language and literature;
- the proposed content of the dissertation with regard to the selected field of study, and its current and scientific relevance;
- the research hypotheses or research questions or objectives;
- the envisaged research methods and their feasibility;

- the draft of the research data management plan;
- the references stated in the proposal.

If the nature of the research so requires, assessment shall also contain an opinion regarding the necessity of approval of the Medical Ethics Committee of the Republic of Slovenia or another ethics committee or the permission of the Office of the Republic of Slovenia for Safe Food, Veterinary Medicine and Plant Protection to conduct tests on animals.

The assessment of the doctoral dissertation proposal must comprise substantive justification by individual indents in accordance with the first and second paragraphs of this article.

The assessment shall also include the date and signatures of the evaluators.

When a committee member is a foreign national who does not understand Slovenian, the assessment in Slovenian shall be accompanied by an assessment in English or another foreign language in the case of studying a foreign language and literature, which shall be signed by the foreign committee member. The assessment of the foreign committee member shall not necessarily be identical to the assessment in Slovenian.

#### Article 41

The assessment of the doctoral dissertation proposal shall be discussed by the responsible body of the UL member within two months. That body shall propose that the senate of the UL member:

- accept the doctoral dissertation proposal;
- set the doctoral candidate a deadline within which they must amend or supplement the doctoral dissertation proposal;
- reject the doctoral dissertation proposal.

In the event of dissenting opinions amongst members of the DSC, the senate may appoint an additional member to the DSC, who shall draw up an additional assessment.

In deciding on the doctoral dissertation proposal the senate of the member shall not be bound by the assessment of the DSC. If the decision of the UL member senate does not adhere to the assessment/s of the DSC, the UL member senate must justify its decision.

When the UL member senate accepts a doctoral dissertation proposal and its assessment, it shall send the application to the UL Senate for approval.

If the UL member senate sets the doctoral candidate a deadline for amending or supplementing the doctoral dissertation proposal, the DSC shall review the amended/supplemented proposal and submit a new written assessment of the proposal as a rule at the next meeting of the senate. If the doctoral candidate fails to submit the amended/supplemented proposal within the deadline, the senate shall as a rule accept or reject the incomplete proposal at its next meeting.

If the UL member senate rejects the doctoral dissertation proposal, the procedure is ended. The doctoral candidate may not resubmit a dissertation proposal that has been rejected.

#### **Approval of doctoral dissertation proposal by the UL Senate**

#### Article 42

An application for approval of a doctoral dissertation proposal being sent by a UL member for approval by the UL Senate shall include:

1. the UL form for approval of the doctoral dissertation proposal;
2. the doctoral dissertation proposal, ranging from 3 to 7 pages of text and a list of the main references and sources;
3. the consent of the supervisor and potential co-supervisor and a statement of their 3–5 references from the broader field covered by the doctoral dissertation topic, the SICRIS researcher code, if they have one, and the necessary bibliometric indicators;
4. the assessment of the DSC;
5. the CV of the doctoral candidate and their bibliography (list of main scientific, professional, project and other publications and works);
6. the approval of the Medical Ethics Committee of the Republic of Slovenia or another ethics committee or the permission of the Office of the Republic of Slovenia for Safe Food, Veterinary Medicine and Plant Protection to conduct tests on animals, where the nature of the proposed doctoral dissertation topic requires it.

Before being discussed by the UL Senate, the application for approval of the doctoral dissertation proposal shall be discussed by the UL Committee for Doctoral Studies. The UL Senate may authorise the UL Committee for Doctoral Studies to approve the doctoral dissertation proposals.

The UL Committee for Doctoral Studies may:

- adopt a decision approving the doctoral dissertation proposal;
- call upon the UL member to supplement or amend the application, with the UL member setting the deadline for such changes;
- propose that the UL Senate rejects the doctoral dissertation proposal.

The UL Senate or UL Committee for Doctoral Studies shall within two months notify the UL member of the decision, where the procedures for approving the doctoral dissertation proposal at the UL Senate shall not be implemented in July and August.

The decision regarding approval of the doctoral dissertation proposal shall include the name and surname of the doctoral candidate, the name of the study programme and field of study, the title of the doctoral dissertation, the names of the supervisor and potential co-supervisor, and the possible approval of the writing of the dissertation in a foreign language.

The UL member shall inform the doctoral candidate, supervisor and co-supervisor and members of the DSC of the decision of the UL Senate.

## **Presentation of the results of research work before completion of the doctoral dissertation**

### Article 43

When the supervisor, potential co-supervisor and doctoral candidate are of the opinion that research work is in its final stage, and when it is possible to submit a draft of the conclusions in accordance with the set objectives or hypotheses or research questions, the doctoral candidate shall submit a draft of the doctoral dissertation to the members of the DSC, and shall present the results of their research work, with an emphasis on the main findings and contribution to science, and also the updated research data management plan in accordance with Article 50 of these Rules.

A record shall be made of the presentation and shall include, or have attached, the written questions or comments of members of the DSC and the decision regarding the success/failure of the

presentation, with an explanation. If corrections to the draft doctoral dissertation are required, the DSC shall set a deadline by which the doctoral candidate shall resubmit their draft. That deadline may not exceed the deadline set for submission of the dissertation. The record, which is to be signed by the members of the DSC, shall be delivered to the doctoral candidate, supervisor and potential co-supervisor.

As a rule, presentations shall be public. In the case of data of a confidential nature, the supervisor, co-supervisor and doctoral candidate may propose that the presentation be closed to the public.

A presentation of the results of research work that is deemed unsuccessful may only be repeated once. If the second presentation is also unsuccessful, the procedure shall be concluded and the doctoral candidate may not complete this programme in the same field.

## **Doctoral dissertation**

### Article 44

A doctoral dissertation shall be a written final study assignment that represents an independent and original contribution to the research field covered by the doctoral dissertation.

The doctoral dissertation shall be written in Slovenian. It may be written exceptionally in a foreign language in accordance with the Statutes of the UL.

The doctoral candidate may request the writing of their dissertation in English if they are a foreign national, if their supervisor or co-supervisor is a foreign national or if a foreign national is a member of the DSC, or if the dissertation is composed of research articles published in English. In the event of the study of foreign languages and literature, the dissertation may also be written in another foreign language. In the event of writing a doctoral dissertation in a foreign language, the dissertation must contain an extensive summary (approximately ten percent of the text of the dissertation) using appropriate scientific terminology in Slovenian.

The doctoral dissertation must be prepared in accordance with the rules and regulations of the respective UL member.

### Article 45

A doctoral dissertation shall include:

- the title in Slovenian and English, or in another language in the case of the study of a foreign language and literature;
- a summary in Slovenian and English (maximum of 300 words) that will be published in the UL Repository;
- a table of contents and other indexes as needed;
- an overview of the field/background of the research problem;
- the purpose of the research;
- the hypotheses or research questions or objectives;
- a description of the research methodology;
- results;
- discussion;
- conclusions;
- a list of references and sources;

- the final draft of the research data management plan, and other possible annexes;
- an extensive summary using appropriate scientific terminology in Slovenian, if the dissertation is written in a foreign language.

A declaration by the doctoral candidate that the submitted dissertation is their independent work and that the electronic copy is identical to the printed copy should be enclosed with the doctoral dissertation.

#### Article 46

A doctoral dissertation may be composed of at least three research articles by the doctoral candidate, published or accepted for publication, if the nature of the research and the method of publication in the specific field permit this.

Research articles shall be connected in terms of content (i.e. complementary) and shall be the result of the doctoral candidate's work on an approved doctoral dissertation proposal.

In addition to the aforementioned articles, the doctoral candidate shall also write an introduction and conclusion to their dissertation, in which they shall present the theoretical and methodological basis of their research, link together the content of the individual articles, and provide key findings.

The author of a doctoral dissertation written in the form of articles shall obtain consent from the publishers, to whom they have previously exclusively transferred material copyrights to articles, for the inclusion of such articles in the printed and electronic forms of the dissertation.

### **Submission of doctoral dissertation**

#### Article 47

Doctoral candidates shall submit their doctoral dissertation to the UL member in electronic and printed form, together with the consent of the supervisor and co-supervisor, within two years of enrolment in the final year of the study programme or of enrolment in an additional year.

Where there are justified reasons (such as parenthood, lengthy illness of the candidate, exceptional family and social circumstances, status of student with special needs), the UL member may on request extend the deadline for the doctoral candidate to submit their dissertation, by a maximum of one year.

Doctoral candidates may also submit their dissertation for assessment without the prior consent of their supervisor and possible co-supervisor. However, the supervisor and/or co-supervisor shall provide the UL member's senate with a written explanation as to why they disagree with the submitted work.

The doctoral dissertation must be submitted in accordance with the UL Statutes, and in accordance with the UL's Rules on Content Similarity Detection of the Electronic Form of the Written Final Work of Studies and on Provisions Regarding Temporary Inaccessibility of the Content of the Written Final Work of Studies.

If the UL Senate approves a change to the doctoral dissertation proposal prior to the deadline for the submission of the final doctoral dissertation, the deadline for the submission of the doctoral dissertation set by the UL Senate shall remain unchanged.

## Article 48

If a part of the content of a doctoral dissertation is of a confidential nature (e.g. protection of a trade secret, protection of results in order to exercise intellectual property rights, ensuring the safety of people and nature, protection of confidential data), a doctoral candidate may, prior to submitting their doctoral dissertation, request temporary inaccessibility of the content thereof in accordance with the UL's Rules on Content Similarity Detection of the Electronic Form of the Written Final Work of Studies and on Provisions Regarding Temporary Inaccessibility of the Content of the Written Final Work of Studies.

## Article 49

If a doctoral candidate fails to submit their doctoral dissertation by the deadline set out in the first paragraph of Article 47 of these Rules, they may submit a request to the UL member for the continuation or completion of their doctoral studies. Based on the doctoral candidate's request and the opinions of the supervisor and possible co-supervisor, the responsible body of the UL member shall decide on the continuation or completion of studies. In the event of a positive decision regarding the continuation or completion of doctoral studies, the responsible body of the UL member shall issue a decision in which it shall define the obligations that the doctoral candidate must fulfil to continue or complete their studies, including the deadline for the registration of a doctoral dissertation proposal, which shall not exceed two years.

Doctoral candidates shall register their doctoral dissertation proposal by the deadline set by the UL member in the decision referred to in the preceding paragraph, and submit their final doctoral dissertation within two years of approval of their doctoral dissertation proposal by the UL Senate. If within the deadline set by the UL member a doctoral candidate does not register their doctoral dissertation proposal, or if the UL Senate does not approve their doctoral dissertation proposal or if the doctoral candidate does not submit their final doctoral dissertation by the set deadline, the candidate may not complete doctoral studies in the same field.

If a doctoral candidate has a break in studies exceeding two years and their doctoral dissertation proposal has not yet been approved by the UL Senate, the possibility of continuing or completing those studies shall be assessed in accordance with the provisions of the Statutes of the UL.

A doctoral candidate whose request to continue or complete studies after such break has been approved, shall complete their studies according to the currently valid study programme.

## **Research data management**

### Article 50

Research data generated and collected for the needs of a doctoral dissertation must be published or otherwise accessible in such a way that allows their visibility, access, interoperability and the possibility of renewed evaluation and use. The doctoral candidate shall submit research data to a data repository, data centre or research data archive, which shall satisfy the principle of verifiability, transparency and open science. As a priority the research data shall be sent to the sectoral national or international data centres intended for specific types of data, or to the UL Repository.

The doctoral dissertation shall state where the data are accessible and how they can be accessed. Exceptions in the sharing of data shall be justified where they involve personal or sensitive data,

or where there are reasons for protecting intellectual property or for non-disclosure of vulnerable areas, groups or species. In the case of implementing justified exceptions to data sharing, the doctoral candidate shall ensure an appropriate method of protecting the data and limiting access to such data in agreement with the data centre. In this case at least freely available metadata must be generated for the catalogue of the data centre, so as to indicate clearly where and under what conditions the research data are accessible.

### **Assessment of doctoral dissertation and suitability of original research article**

#### Article 51

Members of the DSC who assess a doctoral dissertation and the suitability of a research article published or accepted for publication shall submit to the UL member senate separate assessments of the doctoral dissertation and an opinion on the suitability of the article published or accepted for publication. The assessments shall be submitted within two months of receiving the doctoral dissertation and article, where the deadlines for submitting a DSC assessment shall not be implemented in July and August. In the opinion on the suitability of the article they shall also verify the reference stating affiliation to the UL.

In the case of withdrawal of members of the DSC for justified reasons (e.g. lengthy illness, living abroad, parental leave), the UL member senate shall appoint a new member. The doctoral candidate, supervisor, potential co-supervisor and members of the DSC shall be notified of this matter.

#### Article 52

The assessment of a doctoral dissertation shall comprise:

- the title of the doctoral dissertation;
- the name and surname of the doctoral candidate;
- the name of the study programme and field;
- the date of appointment of the DSC member to the DSC;
- the date of receipt of a submitted doctoral dissertation;
- analysis of the doctoral dissertation, containing:
  - a presentation of the structure of the dissertation;
  - analysis and assessment of the methods used;
  - assessment of the validity of the confirmation or rejection of the set hypotheses or research questions or objectives;
  - possible specifics of the dissertation;
  - assessment of the stylistic and linguistic level of the dissertation;
- a detailed assessment of the originality of the contribution to science;
- a decision in which the member of the DSC shall propose to the senate of the UL member the approval, supplementation or rejection of the dissertation;
- date of assessment;
- the signature of the member of the DSC that assessed the doctoral dissertation.

#### Article 53

Members of the DSC shall submit separate assessments of the doctoral dissertation and assessments of the suitability of a research article published or accepted for publication to the



senate of the UL member. Based on the assessments received, regarding the dissertation the UL member senate shall:

- accept it,
- reject it or
- call on the doctoral candidate to supplement and/or correct their dissertation by a specific deadline, taking into account potential comments, and/or submit a suitable article.

In the event of dissenting opinions amongst members of the DSC, the senate may appoint an additional member to the DSC to draw up an additional assessment.

When the senate of the UL member approves a dissertation, the doctoral candidate shall submit to the UL member the required number of bound copies of the dissertation, and submit an electronic copy of the dissertation to the UL member's study information system. After acceptance of the doctoral dissertation by the UL member senate, the doctoral candidate shall as a rule have the PhD viva within one month.

If the UL member senate calls on the doctoral candidate to supplement and/or correct the dissertation in accordance with potential comments, and/or to submit a suitable article, the members of the DSC shall conduct a new assessment of the submitted corrected dissertation and/or new article. The new assessments shall be processed once again by the responsible body of the UL member, which shall propose that the senate of the UL member decide on the dissertation. The senate of the UL member shall approve or reject the dissertation.

If the doctoral candidate fails to correct their doctoral dissertation by the set deadline, the senate of the UL member shall reject that dissertation. If within the set deadline the candidate does not submit a suitable article, the UL member senate shall not call a viva, even if it has accepted the dissertation.

A doctoral candidate may not resubmit a rejected doctoral dissertation in any other doctoral study programme at the UL.

In the event of a rejected doctoral dissertation or if within the set deadline the doctoral candidate has failed to submit a suitable article, the procedure for obtaining a doctoral degree shall be ended. In such case the doctoral candidate may no longer complete studies in the same field.

## **PhD viva**

### Article 54

The PhD viva or public defence is an academic discussion between the doctoral candidate, members of the DSC and members of the public with an interest. The main purpose of the viva is the presentation of the doctoral dissertation.

### Article 55

The public shall be notified of the viva at least three days in advance on the website of the UL member and on the website of the UL Doctoral School.

In the event of data of a confidential nature the supervisor, co-supervisor and doctoral candidate may propose that the public be excluded for any potential presentation of data of a confidential nature.

#### Article 56

The doctoral candidate shall defend their doctoral dissertation before the DSC. The PhD viva, which typically takes place in Slovenian, shall be led by the chair of the DSC, or the dean or vice-dean of the UL member.

The PhD viva shall proceed according to the UL member's protocol.

#### Article 57

The supervisor and co-supervisor shall also be present at the PhD viva. A record shall be drawn up on the defence of the dissertation. The record shall be signed by all members of the DSC, whose roles on the DSC shall be stated next to their signatures in the record.

The members of the DSC who are evaluators shall adopt a decision on the success or failure of the defence, which may be publicly proclaimed with the doctoral candidate's prior written consent.

The successful defence of a doctoral dissertation shall serve as evidence that the doctoral candidate has achieved research competences at the highest academic and research level.

Upon the successful defence of their doctoral dissertation, the doctoral candidate shall receive the scientific title of »doktor/doktorica znanosti«, together with all of the rights that derive from that title.

The defence of a doctoral dissertation that the DSC has assessed as unsuccessful may not be repeated and no appeal shall be possible.

#### Article 58

If after a successful defence and based on positive assessments (assessments of the doctoral dissertation, suitability of the article and success of the dissertation defence) the DSC determines that the work of the doctoral candidate overall and under all assessment criteria is of exceptional quality, it may propose to the senate of the UL member that the candidate's work be awarded a distinction (cum laude). The UL member senate shall decide on this based on the reasoned assessment of the DSC that the doctoral candidate's work constitutes a superlative achievement and a breakthrough in the research field.

### **Doctoral awards ceremony**

#### Article 59

Following the successful defence of a doctoral dissertation, the UL member that conducted the procedure to obtain the title of »doktor/doktorica znanosti« shall send the record of the defence of the dissertation and the form UL Registration of Doctoral Awards Ceremony to the Rector for the awarding of the title.

#### Article 60

Based on applications for a doctoral awards ceremony, the UL's Office for Doctoral Studies shall set a date for the ceremony in agreement with the Rector, and shall inform the UL member

accordingly. The UL member shall inform the doctoral candidates, supervisors, possible co-supervisors and deans of the date of the doctoral awards ceremony.

#### Article 61

Doctoral degree diplomas shall be prepared in accordance with the UL's rules governing the issue of public documents and confirmations.

#### Article 62

The official doctoral awards ceremony, along with the presentation of doctoral diplomas, shall be conducted by the Rector.

Doctoral awards ceremonies shall be public. The procedure is set out in a protocol and is in accordance with the tradition of doctoral awards ceremonies at the UL.

The doctoral awards ceremony shall be attended by doctoral candidates, supervisors, the deans of the UL members at which the doctoral candidates defended their doctoral dissertations, and invited guests. The deans of the UL members shall present the doctoral candidates, and the supervisors shall present the candidates' research.

#### Article 63

The UL shall maintain a special Book of Doctoral Graduates which shall be signed by the newly promoted doctoral graduates, supervisor, the dean of the UL member and the Rector.

The UL Office for Doctoral Studies shall keep records of promoted doctoral graduates.

#### Article 64

A diploma supplement shall be given to a doctoral graduate by an authorised representative of the UL member.

#### Article 65

The procedure of revoking the scientific title »doktor/doktorica znanosti« shall be conducted in accordance with the provisions of the Statutes of the UL.

### **Transitional and final provisions**

#### Article 66

If the doctoral candidates enrolled in three-year doctoral degree programmes, the duration of which was amended to four years, progress through the programme regularly, they shall complete their studies on the three-year doctoral programme. Their doctoral dissertation topic will have a validity of four years from the approval of the doctoral dissertation topic by the UL Senate. Such doctoral candidates must have a research article accepted for publication in accordance with an accredited doctoral programme.

A doctoral candidate unable to submit their doctoral dissertation within four years from the day their doctoral dissertation topic was approved by the UL Senate may, with the consent of their

supervisor and co-supervisor, request an extension prior to the expiry of the aforementioned deadline. The decision in this regard shall be made by the senate of the UL member, which may extend the deadline once for the preparation of the doctoral dissertation for one year. The UL member shall notify the UL Office for Doctoral Studies accordingly.

If a doctoral candidate fails to submit their doctoral dissertation by the deadlines set out in the first or second paragraph of this Article, the possibility of their continuing or completing studies may be assessed in accordance with the procedures set out in Article 49 of these Rules.

#### Article 67

The provisions of these Rules shall be harmonised within six months following the accreditation of the doctoral programme in Art to obtain the title of »doktor/doktorica umetnosti«.

#### Article 68

These Rules shall enter into force on 1 October 2021. For the generations of students enrolled prior to the 2021/2022 academic year, Article 50 and all the provisions relating to it shall not apply. UL members providing doctoral degree programmes shall harmonise their internal regulations with the provisions of these Rules by 1 October 2021.

Procedures implemented prior to the entry into force of these Rules shall be concluded in accordance with the Rules on Doctoral Studies at the UL, adopted by the UL Senate in its meeting of 28 May 2019.

On the day that these Rules enter into force, the Rules on Doctoral Studies at the UL of 28 May 2019 shall cease to be in force.

#### Article 69

The UL Senate shall evaluate the application of the provisions of these Rules every three years.

Prof Dr Igor Papič  
Rector