

## Doctorate Regulations 2025-2026 Academic Year

### **Preamble**

The term "doctorate" is used to refer to the level 8 academic degree awarded by a university for postgraduate studies after the defence of a thesis.

The doctorate is framed at legislative level by the [decree defining the higher education landscape and the academic organisation of studies of 7<sup>th</sup> November 2013](#) ("Décret Paysage") and at regulatory level by the ARES Regulations of 10<sup>th</sup> June 2014<sup>1</sup>, the [General Regulations on Studies and Evaluations \("RGEE"\)](#), the faculty regulations and the college regulations.

[The Doctoral Charter](#) contextualises and frames the Doctorate Regulations, in order to more precisely guide the relationships between doctoral students and thesis supervisors within the University of Liège, and to promote a dynamic that supports the smooth progress of the doctoral journey.

ULiège has been awarded the "HR Excellence In Research" (HRS4R) label, and is developing a human resources management strategy for research which incorporates the principles of the [European Charter for Researchers](#). Its ambition is to constantly improve the quality of the working environment for researchers.

**Also see** [https://www.recherche.uliege.be/cms/c\\_9141585/en/doctorates-at-uliege](https://www.recherche.uliege.be/cms/c_9141585/en/doctorates-at-uliege)

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<sup>1</sup>ARES Board of Directors of 10<sup>th</sup> June 2014, Annex no. 049 ("Règlement unique des jurys chargés de conférer le grade de doctorat").

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## Chapter I: Definitions

### Article 1

For the application of these regulations, the following definitions shall apply:

- **ARES:** Academy of Research and Higher Education which groups together the higher education institutions in the French Community of Belgium and is responsible for guaranteeing the exercise of the various missions of higher education, research and service to the community of higher education institutions in the French Community of Belgium.
- **Doctorate Board:** Executive body of the *Conseil Universitaire de la Formation Doctorale et du Doctorat* ((CUFDD) - University Council for Doctoral Training and Doctoral Degrees)
- **College:** Jury constituted for the third cycle within the meaning of Article 131, §1 of the Paysage Decree.
- **Thesis Committee:** Body set up by the faculties and whose tasks are set out in Article 16 of these regulations.
- **Commission universitaire de la recherche et de l'enseignement (CURE):** The University Commission for Research and Teaching is the body in charge of preparing, formalising and transmitting an opinion to the Board of Directors on any matter referred to it by the Rector or for which its opinion is required by an internal regulation.
- **Conseil universitaire de la formation doctorale et du doctorat (CUFDD):** The University Council for Doctoral Training and Doctoral Degrees is an institutional body which ensures the implementation of a strategy for the supervision and monitoring of doctoral students in order to promote this training within ULiège.<sup>2</sup>
- **Study Cycle:** Studies leading to an academic degree. Higher education is organised into three cycles.
- **Doctoral Student:** The person who is enrolled on a doctoral programme.
- **Doctoral School:** Organisational structure whose mission is to host, promote and develop the creation of thematic doctoral schools in its field. There are currently 23 doctoral schools recognised by the French Community of Belgium, one per field of study<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup>This Council is subject to a specific regulation and replaces the Doctoral Council.

[https://www.recherche.uliege.be/upload/docs/application/pdf/2022-04/reglement\\_du\\_cufdd.pdf](https://www.recherche.uliege.be/upload/docs/application/pdf/2022-04/reglement_du_cufdd.pdf).

<sup>3</sup>The Doctoral Schools are as follows: Philosophy – Theology (not organised by ULiège) – Languages, literatures and translation studies – History, art history and archaeology – Performing arts and communication and broadcasting technology – Architecture and urban planning – Information and communication – Political and social sciences – Law – Criminology – Economics and management – Psychology – Medicine – Public health – Education and teaching – Veterinary sciences – Dentistry – Biomedical and pharmaceutical sciences – Movement sciences – Science – Agriculture and bio-engineering – Engineering and technology – Arts and art sciences

- **Thematic Doctoral School:** Organisational research and teaching structure responsible for providing doctoral training and in the fields of study of the doctoral schools to which it belongs.
- **Faculty:** Body created by the Board of Directors, on a proposal from the CURE, after consulting the University Councils (University Teaching and Training Council (CUEF) and University Research and Development Council (CURV)) and the faculty/faculties potentially concerned, with a view to organising teaching, research and community services in a given field or fields. ULiège has 11 faculties: Philosophy and Letters - Law, Political Science and Criminology - Science - Medicine - Engineering - Veterinary Medicine - Psychology, Speech Therapy and Education - HEC Liège Business School - Gembloux Agro-Bio Tech - Architecture.
- **Specific jury for doctoral students:** in accordance with Article 1, §1 of the ARES regulations, "with a view to conferring the doctoral degree, the academic authorities of the university shall set up a specific jury for each student".
- **ULiège:** The University of Liège

## **Chapter II: Doctorate and Doctoral Training**

### **Article 2: The Doctorate**

§1 The doctoral examination consists of:

- Writing a personal and original work based on the results of research that the doctoral student has carried out alone or as part of a team.

Each college specifies in its own regulations (cf. Article 45, §3 of these regulations) what form this work should take. This work must be written in French or English, unless otherwise stipulated in the colleges' regulations (see Article 45, §4 of these regulations) and should be:

- either a dissertation in the discipline;
- or an essay by the doctoral student showing the coherence of a set of scientific publications;
- or a collection of scientific articles (with an introduction and a conclusion);
- or a dissertation linked to a work, a project or group of achievements.

The practical modalities imposed by the colleges are also listed in the regulations of the colleges (see Article 45, §3 and §4 of these regulations).

And

- A public presentation of the doctoral work highlighting its qualities, its originality, and the doctoral student's capacity for scientific popularisation.

§2 The doctorate is awarded in the fields of study outlined in the decree. At the University of Liège the fields covered are: Architecture and urban planning – Performing arts and communication and broadcasting technology – Arts and art sciences – Criminology – History, art history and archaeology – Information and communication – Languages, literatures and translation studies – Philosophy – Science – Agriculture and bio-engineering – Biomedical and pharmaceutical sciences – Engineering and technology – Movement sciences – Public health – Education and teaching - Dentistry – Economics and management – Law – Medicine – Political and social sciences – Psychology – Veterinary sciences

§3 Doctoral studies correspond to<sup>4</sup> at least 180 credits acquired after initial training leading to a Master's degree or equivalent.

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<sup>4</sup>This evaluation is independent of the duration of the work.

- §4 The college may give credit for previous studies up to a maximum of either 60 credits, in which case the minimum duration of doctoral studies may be reduced by one year, or 120 credits, in which case the minimum duration of doctoral studies may be reduced by 2 years.
- §5 A diploma is awarded upon successful completion of doctoral studies in accordance with Article 24 of these regulations.

### **Article 3: Doctoral Training**

- §1 No one can obtain a doctoral degree without having successfully completed a corresponding doctoral programme.
- §2 Doctoral training is linked to the specific competences of the research teams and provides graduates with a high scientific and professional qualification. Individuals are supervised by teams associated with a thematic doctoral school.
- §3 The doctoral training programme is established by the relevant college which ensures its promotion. This programme consists essentially of specific activities related to the profession of researcher and may not include more than 30 credits of learning activities.

Doctoral training is divided into three parts: transversal training, thematic training and scientific production. The college may decide to include the practice of didactic supervision activities as part of the doctoral training, but the value of this practice may not exceed 6 credits.

At its meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2015, the University Board of Directors approved a [framework for doctoral training](#), including certain obligatory activities, which the colleges may adapt according to their specificities and/or the recommendations of the doctoral schools concerned (see specific templates). Thus, the doctoral training programme may include: learning and practising scientific communication; participation in scientific congresses, conferences, study days or any other training deemed equivalent.

- §4 Successful completion of the doctoral programme leads to the award of a certificate, known as the "research training certificate" in the Paysage Decree, representing 60 training credits. This does not preclude the actual doctoral training from comprising more than 60 credits, which is to be determined by the colleges. The certificate is signed by the Rector and the President and the Vice-President of the college.

The college may award a maximum of 30 credits. The doctoral student who holds an Advanced Master's degree<sup>5</sup> in the same field as its doctorate is automatically entitled to the valorisation of 30 credits maximum relating to learning activities.

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<sup>5</sup>Or, in some cases, a foreign higher education qualification that has been recognised as equivalent.

§5 Each academic year, the college shall validate the progress of the doctoral training for each doctoral student, upon recommendation of the thesis committee (see Articles 15 and 16 of these regulations).

The college may allow or require that the training programme be completed in one year, provided that the doctoral candidate's registration request has been introduced by 30<sup>th</sup> September of the current academic year at the latest.

## **Chapter III: Admissions Conditions for 3rd Cycle Studies**

### **Article 4: Competent Body**

Admission onto doctoral studies and doctoral training is the responsibility of the college in the student's research field, subject to compliance with the minimum conditions set out in Article 5 of the present regulations.

### **Article 5: Minimum Admissions Conditions**

No one may be admitted onto the doctorate and doctoral training:

1. If they do not meet the legal conditions for access:

§1 Subject to the general conditions determined by the academic authorities, access to postgraduate studies, with a view to obtaining the degree awarded, is open to doctoral candidates who hold:

1° a Master's degree of at least 120 credits;

2° a similar academic degree awarded by a higher education establishment, within or outside the French Community of Belgium, by virtue of a decision by the academic authorities and subject to the additional conditions that they determine;

3° a foreign academic degree recognised as equivalent [to that mentioned in 1°] pursuant to the Paysage Decree, a European directive, an international convention or other legislation, under the same conditions;

4° an Advanced Master's degree in Teaching - Sections 1 and 2 or an Advanced Master's degree in Teaching - Sections 3, 4 and 5, as defined in Article 43, § 4, of the decree of 7<sup>th</sup> February 2019 defining initial teacher training.

The additional entry conditions referred to in 2° are intended to ensure that the doctoral student has acquired the subjects and skills required for the studies in question. When these complementary admissions conditions consist of one or more additional courses, these may not represent more than 60 additional credits for the doctoral student, taking into account all the credits that they may otherwise use for their admission.

§2 Under the general conditions set by the academic authorities, a doctoral student who holds a second cycle qualification, diploma, degree or certificate, from within or outside the French Community of Belgium, which does not give them access to third cycle studies by virtue of the preceding paragraph, may nevertheless be admitted by the jury, subject to the additional conditions it sets, if the totality of the higher education studies they have successfully completed is validated by the jury for at least 300 credits.

§3 By way of derogation from these general conditions, and subject to the additional conditions they set, the academic authorities may also admit onto postgraduate studies holders of a qualification, diploma, degree or certificate awarded outside the French Community of Belgium which, in that system of origin, gives direct access to doctoral training or studies and work relating to the preparation of a doctoral thesis, even if the studies attested by these qualifications or degrees are not organised in distinct cycles or over at least 5 years.

This admission must be exceptional and duly justified on the basis, in particular, of formal and authentic proof of this capacity to pursue doctoral studies in the system of origin.

2. If they do not meet any additional conditions indicated in the college regulations.
3. If they do not have a sufficiently defined research project, including a work plan, and do not provide written proof that their research project is supported by a future supervisor who meets the conditions of Article 13, §2 of these regulations. In particular, consideration will be given to issues relating to the use of the data and research results concerned, access to equipment and the doctoral funding plan, including, if necessary, the remuneration of the doctoral student.

The application form for initial registration is available from each doctoral college.

#### **Article 6: Additional Conditions for Admission (Learning Related)**

If deemed necessary, the college may decide to require a doctoral candidate to undertake one or more complementary learning activities, but these activities may not represent more than 60 credits<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>6</sup>The jury therefore cannot impose a doctoral training programme that would comprise of more than 120 credits.

## **Chapter IV: Registration Procedure**

### **Article 7: Procedure**

#### §1 Initial Registration

Candidates shall submit their applications for registration for doctoral studies and doctoral training in accordance with point a) or b) of this article.

- a) The holder of a Belgian higher education diploma, acquired after second cycle studies of at least 120 credits<sup>7</sup>, may submit their application file directly to the President of the college. The President of the college, or the person the President has designated for this purpose, will notify the applicant of their decision.

Applications for registration must be submitted no later than the day before the opening of registrations for the following academic year, unless the college regulations specify an earlier date.

- b) By way of derogation, applicants who do not have the diploma referred to in point a) may submit their application to the Registration Office, enclosing the written agreement of their future supervisor. After administrative verification, the Registration Office transmits it to the doctoral college and notifies the applicant of its decision.

The application file must be submitted no later than 10 working days before the day before registration opens for the following academic year, unless the college regulations specify an earlier date.

#### §2 Subsequent Registrations

On the basis of the authorisation to re-register issued by the college to which they belong, doctoral students must re-register for the doctorate and/or doctoral training each year by 30<sup>th</sup> September of the academic year in question at the latest.

### **Article 8: Status**

- §1 Doctoral students have student status. They are considered as researchers at the beginning of their career, in accordance with the European Charter for Researchers. As such, they are attached to a research entity (UR, CARE) and “supervised” by their supervisor. This researcher status gives them access to intranet/internet services and to institutional research and teaching support resources equivalent to those available to members of temporary scientific staff (“u” identifier, intranet access, @uliege.be e-mail address, SEGI services, mobility assistance for researchers, occupational medicine, access badge).

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<sup>7</sup>Including candidates who hold a degree acquired under the pre-2004 legislation, in particular those who are “licenciés” (4 years of study).

§2 In addition to their student status, doctoral students may be members of the scientific staff on the basis of a contract, a mandate or any other contractual relationship with ULiège.

### **Article 9: Registration Fees**

§1 The terms and conditions for payment of registration fees, if due, are set out in Annex I to these regulations.

§2 In accordance with the terms of Article 7 of the RGEE, the doctoral candidate must pay tuition fees in the first year of registration. Only one fee is paid when the doctoral candidate registers simultaneously for the doctorate and the doctoral training.

§3 The registration fee includes the application fee, registration for the academic year and registration for the assessments organised during the academic year (1st and 2nd sessions).

The amounts of the registration fees are detailed in Annex I.

§4 In subsequent years, including the year of the defence, only the application fee is due.

§5 By derogation to the previous paragraphs, registration for the doctorate and doctoral training is free of charge for members of ULiège staff as well as for researchers attached to ULiège and beneficiaries of an FRS-FNRS mandate and its associated funds.

§6 If the doctoral student has not paid 50€, or the totality of the registration fees if less than 50€ is owed, by 31<sup>st</sup> October<sup>8</sup>, they will be informed<sup>9</sup> that their registration cannot be accepted. From that date onward, they are considered as not having been registered for the current academic year<sup>10</sup>.

Notification is sent to the doctoral student's "doct.uliege.be" university e-mail address.

§7 Except in cases of *force majeure*, if the doctoral student has not paid the full amount of the registration fee by 1<sup>st</sup> February at the latest<sup>11</sup>, they will be notified that their registration is invalid.

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<sup>8</sup>For registrations after 31<sup>st</sup> October and before 1<sup>st</sup> February, payment of the deposit will be required on the day of registration.

<sup>9</sup>In the event of non-compliance with payment deadlines, or any other administrative reason that could lead to deregistration/cancellation of registration, the supervisor will receive generic information: they will be warned that the doctoral student's administrative situation requires them to contact the Registration Office as soon as possible or risk having their registration invalidated/cancelled. The supervisor may then invite the doctoral student to contact the Registration Office.

<sup>10</sup>Until they have paid the 50€ registration fee, or the full fee if it is less than 50€, doctoral students cannot receive a family allowance certificate or their student card. They do, however, have access to the university intranet.

<sup>11</sup>Or upon registration if this is after 1st February.

The doctoral student is still liable for the full registration fee.

Notification is sent to the doctoral student's "doct.uliege.be" university e-mail address.

§8 In the case of joint degrees, the terms of payment of registration fees are determined by the joint-supervision agreement.

## **Chapter V: Colleges**

### **Article 10: Constitution and Composition**

- §1 The faculties propose the constitution of the colleges to the Doctorate Board, which gives its opinion to the CURE for submission to the Board of Directors.
- §2 The colleges are composed of members of the teaching staff, as defined in Article 3 of the [Regulations on the Academic Organisation of ULiège \('ROA'\)](#)<sup>12</sup>, as well as, if possible, members of the scientific staff, who hold a doctorate. They must have at least 5 members. Each year, their composition is decided upon by the faculty or faculties concerned. The regulations of the colleges specify the procedures for appointing members of the colleges under their jurisdiction.
- §3 Each year, each college elects a President and a Vice-President from among its members who assumes the function of secretary.
- §4 The college may decide to invite one or more representatives from among the doctoral students to its meetings.
- §5 Annually, and by 30th September at the latest, the composition of the colleges, as well as the names of the Presidents and Vice-Presidents, shall be communicated by the administrative managers of the faculties to the Doctorate Board, for ratification, by the Executive Board of the Board of Directors. If a change has to be made for duly substantiated reasons, it will be submitted in the same way to the Executive Board for ratification.

### **Article 11: Missions**

- The college shall be responsible for:
  - drafting the college regulations, in accordance with Chapter XVII of these regulations, in consultation with the faculty to which it belongs;
  - validating and publicising the doctoral programme;
  - admitting doctoral students, and deciding on equivalences and recognition of prior learning<sup>13</sup>;
  - validating the appointment of the supervisor(s) and of the co-supervisor, as well as validating the change of supervisor, in accordance with the procedures set out in Article 13, §5 of these regulations, taking into account questions relating to the use of the data and research results concerned, access to equipment and the doctoral funding plan that will have been drawn up, including, if necessary, the payment of the doctoral student;
  - validating joint supervision agreements;
  - carrying out the scientific assessment of the doctoral student throughout the duration of their studies.

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<sup>12</sup> DOC. 21.161/CA/15.05.2024 – coordinated version.

<sup>13</sup>From an academic point of view.

- The college proposes the composition of the doctoral student's thesis committee and jury (Chapter VI, Sections 2 and 3 of these regulations) to the faculty or faculties concerned.<sup>14</sup>
- The college serves as intermediary between the doctoral student, the members of the thesis committee and the jury. It may be called upon to handle any dispute that may arise between them and does its utmost to settle it in an amiable manner, if necessary, with the help of appropriate administrative services.
- Each year, on the basis of the report of the thesis committees, the college rules on the progress of the doctoral training and thesis work of its doctoral students. Within this framework, it justifies, for each doctoral student, its decision to admit them to continue, not to admit them to continue, or to admit them under conditions or to postpone the deliberation. A case of postponed deliberation must be treated at the latest by 13<sup>th</sup> September of the current academic year.

By 10<sup>th</sup> July at the latest, the college notifies the Registration Office and the doctoral student of the college's agreement or refusal to re-admit the doctoral student for the following academic year. It also sends a list of doctoral students who have passed the research training certificate.

- The college may decide to set up specific committees or a board from among its members and determine their delegated responsibilities.

## **Article 12: Function**

In view of the specific nature of doctoral studies, the way in which the college operates derogates from the ROA governing the subject.

### §1 Conflict of Interests

This matter is governed by the relevant [regulations issued by the Board of Directors](#).

### §2 Rights and Obligations of college Members - Confidentiality

This matter is governed by the relevant [regulations issued by the Board of Directors](#).

Any member unable to attend must notify the President, giving the reason for their absence.

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<sup>14</sup>Or the faculty to which the doctoral student belongs if the regulations of the college so provide.

### §3 How the college Works

- Announcement of Planned Meeting - Meeting Agenda

The college shall meet at least once a year. It shall be called by its President or at the request of one fifth<sup>15</sup> of its members.

The announcement of the planned meeting, the agenda for the meeting and the place and time of the meeting, together with the supporting documents, shall be sent to members by ordinary mail or electronically, or shall be available for download from the college's intranet site, in reasonable time before the meeting<sup>16</sup>.

The President shall invite any person to attend the meeting, without giving the right to vote, whose opinion they feel may be of assistance to the work of the college.

- Quorum and Voting Procedures

The decisions of the college, as provided for in Article 11 of these regulations, shall be valid only if more than half of its members are present. Decisions are taken by an absolute majority of the members present<sup>17</sup>. In the event of a tied vote, the President shall have the deciding vote.

- Remote Meetings

In principle, meetings are held face-to-face. At the request of the President, for duly substantiated reasons, and with the agreement of the college, the college may meet in hybrid mode or by videoconference.

- Written Consultation

By way of derogation from the above provisions, the members of the college may be consulted in writing, in particular for the admission of candidates or in duly motivated exceptional cases of urgency and under the conditions set out below.

In this case, the President shall send the members of the college the file relating to the point submitted, asking them to give their opinion within three working days of its transmission. If, within this period, a member notifies the President that they object to the use of the written procedure, the item shall be put on the agenda of the next college meeting.

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<sup>15</sup>When calculating the fractions or percentages referred to in these regulations, the result must be rounded up to the nearest whole number.

<sup>16</sup>Working days are defined as every day of the week except Sundays and public holidays. The period begins on the day the documents are sent and ends the day before the meeting.

<sup>17</sup> Abstention is therefore considered as a negative vote.

If there are no objections, the proposal shall be adopted if an absolute majority of the members vote in favour of it.

Members who have a personal interest in the discussion shall not be taken into account for the calculation of the said absolute majority. Decisions taken through this written procedure shall be communicated to the college at its next meeting.

## Chapter VI: Supervisor, Thesis Committee and Jury for Each Doctoral Student

### Section 1: Supervisor(s)

#### Article 13: Designation

§1 Upon admission of the candidate, the college validates the designation of a supervisor. In circumstances which it shall positively assess, the college may also appoint two co-supervisors. In this case, one of the two supervisors is designated as the person responsible for the administrative oversight of the doctoral student for ULiège.

§2 Each supervisor (with the exception of a joint PhD<sup>18</sup>) shall be a member of ULiège or attached to it<sup>19</sup>. They shall be a member of the teaching staff or permanent scientific staff<sup>20</sup>.

In exceptional circumstances as determined by the College, in particular in consideration of the reputation of the person concerned, each supervisor shall hold the title of doctor with thesis or “*agrégé de l'enseignement supérieur*”. The college will monitor the issue of conflicts of interest.

In circumstances assessed by the college, they may also validate the appointment of a co-supervisor who may be exempted from the conditions set out in §2<sup>21</sup>.

§3 When the thesis is supervised by a single supervisor, as designated in application of §1 and §2, and they lose their status as a member or “*attaché effectif*” of the University either because they retire<sup>22</sup> or because they leave ULiège, the college must designate - on the basis of a proposal by the supervisor and the doctoral student - a second supervisor to oversee the administrative responsibilities for the doctoral student on behalf of ULiège<sup>23</sup>.

§4 When the thesis is supervised by two supervisors who are members or “*attaché effectif*” of ULiège and the supervisor responsible for the administration of the doctoral student, as designated in application of §1 and §2, loses this capacity, either because they retire or because they leave ULiège, the administrative responsibility is transferred to the other supervisor<sup>24</sup>.

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<sup>18</sup>In the case of a joint PhD, one of the supervisors will meet the conditions set out in §2, the other will belong to the University with which the joint PhD agreement has been signed.

<sup>19</sup>The phrase "attached to ULiège" refers specifically to the permanent members of the F.R.S.-F.N.R.S. linked to ULiège.

<sup>20</sup>In particular, rank A scientists (First Assistant) not included in the definition of teaching staff, including members of the scientific staff on tenure-track for full appointment, provided that in this case a second supervisor or a co-supervisor who is a member of the permanent teaching or scientific staff is simultaneously appointed.

<sup>21</sup>The college may not designate a member of ULiège as a co-supervisor if two members of ULiège have already been jointly designated as supervisors.

<sup>22</sup>Authorisation to continue an activity at ULiège is subject to a procedure governed by the Board of Directors. (DOC. 21.447/CA/19.02.2025).

<sup>23</sup>The designation of this second supervisor will be made in accordance with §2.

<sup>24</sup>In case of joint supervision, the college must designate, on the basis of a proposal by the supervisors and the doctoral student, a new supervisor to hold administrative responsibility.

§5 Any request to change the doctoral student's supervisors during the course of the thesis must be submitted to the President of the college<sup>25</sup> specifying reasons for the requested change.

If the request for a change is approved by the college and the parties concerned, the college will notify the old and new supervisors as well as the doctoral student. The host faculty is also notified of the change so that it can adapt the composition of the thesis committee.

If the proposal suggests continuing the doctorate at another college, it is up to the doctoral student to obtain the latter's agreement<sup>26</sup>.

In case of a disagreement between the supervisors or between the supervisor(s) and the doctoral student regarding this change, the college will listen, arbitrate the dispute and motivate its decision. If a new supervisor is not designated and approved by the college, the doctoral student will not be allowed to continue.

#### **Article 14: Missions**

The supervisor assists the doctoral student in defining and planning their doctoral project, from a material, scientific and ethical point of view. They support the student's motivation. The supervisor suggests that the doctoral student complete the [Doctoral Partnership Guide](#) to ensure a harmonious working collaboration.

Supervision of the doctoral student's work is the responsibility of the supervisor(s) and co-supervisor(s). The supervisor(s) is/are responsible for regularly convening the thesis committee.

#### **Section 2: Thesis Committee**

##### **Article 15: Designation and Composition**

Within the first month of the doctoral student's registration (except in the case of a derogation duly justified by the college), and at the latest one year after registration, the faculty/faculties concerned<sup>27</sup> must compose the thesis committee based on the proposal of the college and with the consent of the doctoral student.

The thesis committee shall be composed of at least three members, including the supervisor(s) and co-supervisor(s).

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The appointment of this new supervisor will be made in accordance with §1 and §2. In this case, a supervisor who loses their status of member or "*attaché effectif*" of ULiège may be designated as a co-supervisor by the college.

<sup>25</sup> Or Vice-President if the latter is concerned.

<sup>26</sup> And the conditions of this college will apply.

<sup>27</sup> Or the faculty to which the doctoral student belongs if the regulations of the college so provide.

The members are chosen for their competences and cannot all belong to the same research team as the supervisor. They must hold a doctorate with thesis or be “*agrégé de l’enseignement supérieur*”. In exceptional circumstances, after assessment and review of the competence of the person concerned, the faculty or faculties concerned<sup>28</sup> may exempt a member of the thesis committee from the requirement of holding a doctorate with thesis or being “*agrégé de l’enseignement supérieur*”.

The college regulations may also outline additional requirements specific to the appointment and composition of the committee.

### **Article 16: Missions**

§1 The thesis committee advises the doctoral student on the preparation and writing of their thesis.

They must meet<sup>29</sup> at least once a year in the presence of the doctoral student, who presents on the progress of their thesis and doctoral training.

§2 Annually and no later than 31<sup>st</sup> May<sup>30</sup>, upon review of the elements provided by the doctoral student, the committee submits its report to the corresponding doctoral college and to the doctoral student (see college regulations for the modalities related to this report). This report explicitly mentions the date on which the meeting with the thesis committee took place, details the thesis committee's reasoned opinion on the progress of the doctoral training and the doctoral thesis and makes a recommendation to the college concerning the doctoral student's reregistration.

In the event that the thesis committee recommends that the college not to allow the re-registration of the doctoral student, or recommends admitting them subject to certain conditions<sup>31</sup>, the doctoral student has the right to be heard by the college, at their request. They may also be heard by the college at its request.

§3 When the state of progress of the thesis justifies it and the conditions imposed are met, the committee verifies that there is no plagiarism and submits a report to the college approving the submission of the thesis and proposing that the specific jury be formed.

§4 The committee ensures that, where applicable, the obligations of confidentiality imposed are respected without hindering the proper conduct of the research and the thesis submission.

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<sup>28</sup>Or the faculty to which the doctoral student belongs if the regulations of the college so provide.

<sup>29</sup>For exceptional and justified reasons, the active participation of the doctoral student, or of one or more members of the thesis committee, may be carried out by videoconference.

<sup>30</sup>Except in case of a deferred deliberation request to the college.

<sup>31</sup> « Amber light ».

### **Section 3: The Doctoral Jury**

#### **Article 17: Designation and Composition of the Jury**

§1 Upon the proposal of the college, the faculty or faculties concerned<sup>32</sup> constitute the doctoral thesis examination jury and appoint the President and Secretary<sup>33</sup>.

§2 (ARES Regulations)

“This jury is composed of at least five members, including the President and Secretary, who hold the title of doctor with thesis or who are recognised as having high scientific or artistic competence in the field.

It is chaired by a member of the academic body<sup>34</sup> of the University, who is neither the supervisor nor one of the co-supervisors of the thesis.

It must include the supervisor(s) of the research and members from outside the university chosen for their particular competence in the subject of the thesis being defended.”

The college regulations may also specify additional requirements for the appointment and composition of the jury.

§3 The doctoral student’s jury can only be constituted if they have successfully completed their doctoral training and are in administrative order with regard to their registration.

#### **Article 18: The Moderator**

Insofar as its rules so provide, each college may decide to appoint a member of the teaching staff, appointed from within the college and responsible for moderating, to the specific juries for a renewable period of 2 years.

The moderator's task is to ensure the homogeneity of the assessment criteria. To this end, they shall attend the deliberations of the juries and have the right to vote.

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<sup>32</sup>Or the faculty to which the doctoral student belongs if the regulations of the college so provide.

<sup>33</sup> The request for the composition of the jury may also be presented to the faculty/faculties concerned, or to the faculty in which the doctoral student is registered if the rules of the college so provide, at the initiative of the doctoral student alone. In this case, a report from the thesis committee is attached to the request. This report expresses the collegial opinion of the committee members. It is accompanied by the doctoral student's possible remarks.

<sup>34</sup>For the application of this paragraph, the members of the permanent scientific staff and the permanent representatives of the F.R.S.-FNRS are considered members of the academic body.

## **Chapter VII: Thesis Defence**

### **Article 19: Procedure for Eligibility of the Defence**

The college regulations will specify whether or not an eligibility procedure prior to the defence is imposed. If this is the case, this procedure must take place, unless an exemption is granted by the college, at the earliest one month after the jury has been appointed and the doctoral student has communicated the provisional text of the thesis to all members of the jury. The jury is invited to decide on the admissibility of the public defence.

- If the jury decides that the thesis is eligible to be defended in public, the jury, in agreement with the doctoral student, proposes to the dean of the faculty (or faculties) concerned <sup>35</sup> a date for the public defence, respecting the deadline set in Article 20 of these regulations. The jury specifies to the doctoral student any points that they would like to see improved prior to the public defence.
- If the specific jury considers, for justified reasons, that the thesis is not eligible to be defended in public, it informs the doctoral student and specifies the deadline for a new consultation of the jury.

The college regulations specify the modalities and structure for this procedure.

### **Article 20: The Thesis Defence**

A thesis defence cannot take place if the student is not registered in good standing for the doctorate. This must occur no later than 13<sup>th</sup> September of the current academic year. However, in the case of a joint PhD, at the proposal of the dean(s), the Rector may, exceptionally, allow for a thesis defence beyond this date. However, the scheduled date may not exceed 14<sup>th</sup> November of the current calendar year.

In agreement with the supervisor, the dean shall set the timetable. Unless an exemption is granted by the college, the defence of the thesis must be organised:

- at the earliest one month after the appointment of the jury or, if consultation of the jury is provided for by the college regulations, at the earliest one month after this consultation;
- at the latest, three months after these dates.

### **Article 21 (ARES Regulations)**

§1 “At least half of the members of the thesis examination jury shall actively participate in the public <sup>36</sup>defence of the thesis<sup>37</sup>.”

§2 “Each member of the thesis examination jury has one vote and participates in the deliberation, either in person or through a written evaluation.

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<sup>35</sup>Or the faculty to which the doctoral student belongs if the regulations of the college so provide.

<sup>36</sup>Or behind closed doors, if this is decided.

<sup>37</sup>For exceptional and justified reasons, and with the consent of the doctoral college concerned, the active participation of the doctoral student and/or one or more members of the jury may take place by videoconference.

- §3 The deliberations of the thesis examination jury take place behind closed doors. All members of this jury have a duty to uphold confidentiality of the deliberations and any votes.
- §4 The thesis examination jury shall make its decisions in a sovereign and collegial manner. Decisions are taken by a simple majority. In the event of a tie, the President has the casting vote.
- §5 The thesis examination jury will state the reasons for its decision in a report on the defence, which will refer, at minimum, to the criteria set out in Article 3 of the ARES regulations.
- §6 The decisions of this jury are made public by proclamation, then posted<sup>38</sup> for at least fifteen days following the proclamation.”

## **Article 22**

### §1 (ARES Regulations)

The thesis examination jury confers the academic degree of doctor on the doctoral student when it finds that the minimum number of credits has been acquired, that the conditions of the study programme have been met, that the conditions of access to the studies have been satisfied and that the student has been regularly enrolled.

### §2 In its deliberations, the jury takes into account, in particular, the following criteria:

- the quality and originality of the written work;
- the quality of the oral presentation;
- the response to questions during the defence.

### §3 (ARES Regulations)

“The degree of doctor is conferred with a pass/fail grade.”

## **Article 23 (ARES Regulations)**

When the doctorate is carried out under joint supervision, the rules of the doctoral student's jury are determined by the joint supervision agreement, established in application of Article 82 of the decree of 7<sup>th</sup> November 2013 defining the higher education landscape and the academic organisation of studies.

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<sup>38</sup> Paper or electronic display.

## **Article 24: Diploma and Defence Report**

§1 After the deliberation, the secretary of the jury draws up two copies of the defence report, signed by the President and the Secretary of the jury.

A copy of this report is attached to the diploma which is given to the doctoral student. The faculty to which the doctoral student is administratively attached keeps the second copy in its archives.

§2 The doctoral degree is specified by the title of the thesis defended and by the field(s) to which it relates.

§3 The doctoral diploma is signed by the Rector, and the President and the Secretary of the student's thesis examination jury.

## **Chapter VIII: Duration of Doctoral Studies**

### **Article 25**

§1 Except in duly noted, extenuating circumstances accepted by the college, no one may be proclaimed a doctor if they have not been enrolled on doctoral studies for three years.

In application of Article 2, §4 of these regulations, in the event of a previous course being validated, the minimum duration stipulated in paragraph 1 may be reduced by one year in the event of 60 credits being validated, or by 2 years in the event of 120 credits being validated.

§2 The doctoral degree can only be awarded if the doctoral student has acquired the research training certificate.

## **Chapter IX: Practical Details Concerning the Presentation of the Thesis**

### **Article 26**

- §1 The ULiège name appears on the cover page in accordance with the model defined by the faculty and, where applicable, specified in the college regulations.
- §2 The copy page, identical to the cover page, is immediately followed by a brief summary presented in the form of an abstract, in French, English and, as appropriate, in one or more other languages.
- §3 An electronic version of the thesis (at least the summaries in French and English, the table of contents and bibliographical information) must be deposited on the ULiège electronic thesis directory ([ORBi](#)) according to the decision of the ULiège Board of Directors of 5<sup>th</sup> July 2006.
- §4 As soon as they are accepted for publication, the references of all publications, scientific communications and the full text of all scientific articles produced within the framework of doctoral training and the doctorate, must be deposited in ORBi, the ULiège institutional directory.

## **Chapter X: Joint PhDs**

### **Article 27**

All joint PhD agreements drawn up for a doctorate must be approved by the International Relations Department and then by the college.

## **Chapter XI: European Label and “UniGR” Label**

### **Article 28: European Label**

§1 At the request of the doctoral student or the supervisor(s), the European doctoral "label" may be awarded, in addition to the diploma awarded by ULiège, when the following four conditions are met:

- The thesis submission has been authorised on the basis of reports written by at least two professors belonging to two higher education institutions from two other EU Member States ;
- One member of the jury belongs to a higher education institution from another EU Member State.
- Part of the oral defence is conducted in an official language of the European Union other than French.
- The doctorate has been partly prepared during a stay of at least one term in another EU country.

§2 The application must be submitted to the Doctorate Board which examines whether the conditions are met.

§3 The awarding of the European doctorate "label" takes the form of a certificate signed by the Vice-Rector for Research and bearing ULiège's seal. This certificate is attached to the diploma, but separate from it.

### **Article 29: European Label “Université de la Grande Région”<sup>39</sup>**

§1 At the request of the doctoral student or their supervisor(s), the European label "University of the Grande Région" may be awarded, in addition to the diploma awarded by ULiège, when, in addition to the conditions set out in Article 28, §1 of these regulations, the following criteria are met:

- The doctoral training is subject to additional supervision by a professor or doctor from another from another Grande Région member university in another country;
- During the course of the doctoral training, the doctoral student has spent a total of at least six months outside their home university, including at least three months in another university in the Grande Région;
- The doctoral student has followed transversal skills training sessions comprised of a minimum duration of 16 hours and ideally in a University of the Grande Région other than their home university (e.g., training in management, in leading meetings, or in languages);
- The doctoral student demonstrates an experience of international cultural openness in the country of the Grande Région where the mobility was carried out.

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<sup>39</sup>The universities of the “Grande Région” are: Universität des Saarlandes, Université de Liège, Université du Luxembourg, Université de Lorraine, Technische Universität Kaiserslautern and Universität Trier.

To this end, prior to the thesis defence, a document of maximum three pages must be produced, consisting of a critical analysis of one or several points relating to the culture of the country (i.e. the way of life, thought, artistic and cultural expression). This document will be validated by the thesis supervisor and the advisor of the university in which the student's mobility has occurred;

- One member of the jury must belong to a University of the Grande Région network other than the student's home institution.
- §2 Doctoral students wishing to obtain the European label "Université de la Grande Région" must submit an application to the ["Université de la Grande Région" contact](#) at ULiège.
- §3 The awarding of the label takes the form of a certificate co-signed by the Rector of ULiège and the President of the University of the Grande Région.

## **Chapter XII: Registration Fraud**

### **Section 1: Fraud Discovered When the File is Compiled**

#### **Article 30**

Any false declaration or falsification in the preparation of an application for admission or enrolment at ULiège constitutes "registration fraud" which will automatically lead to refusal of enrolment for a period of 3 academic years in any higher education establishment in the French Community of Belgium.

If the Registration Office suspects fraud, it will notify the person concerned by e-mail, setting out the alleged facts.

The person concerned may contest the alleged facts by lodging an appeal with the Vice-Rector for Teaching within 15 days of notification.

Where appropriate, the person shall provide any evidence likely to prove their good faith. If the Vice-Rector considers it useful, they will hear the person, if necessary in consultation with the Vice-Rector for Research and the Vice-Rector for Mobility and International Affairs.

If, after analysing the case, the Vice-Rector for Teaching finds that the person concerned has indeed committed fraud, they will forward the case to the Government Commissioner.

After checking that the procedure has been followed and that the fraud is genuine, the Government Commissioner enters the information relating to the person concerned in the database set up by ARES, which includes the names of fraudsters. The Government Commissioner informs ULiège.

ULiège notifies the person concerned that their application for enrolment has been rejected on the grounds of fraud, and informs them that their information has been included in the database containing the names of fraudsters. This notification indicates the procedures for exercising rights of appeal (Article 117 of the RGEE).

### **Section 2: Fraud Discovered When the Person is Already Registered as a Doctoral Student**

#### **Article 31**

If registration fraud is discovered when the person concerned is already registered as a doctoral student, the Rector will impose a disciplinary penalty of exclusion.

The file of the person concerned is forwarded to the Government Commissioner.

After checking that the procedure has been followed and that the fraud is genuine, the Government Commissioner enters the information relating to the person concerned in the database set up by ARES, which includes the names of fraudsters. The Government Commissioner informs ULiège.

Exclusion automatically implies refusal of enrolment for a period of 3 academic years in any higher education establishment in the French Community of Belgium.

This 3-year period begins on the first day of the academic year in which the fraud is punished.

The notification of the disciplinary decision indicates the procedures for exercising rights of appeal (Article 117 of the RGEE).

### **Section 3: Consequences of Fraud**

#### **Article 32**

In the event of fraudulent registration, the student shall immediately lose their status as a regularly registered student, as well as all the rights linked to this status and the legal effects linked to the passing of tests during the academic year concerned. The registration fees paid to ULiège are definitively acquired by the latter.

## **Chapter XIII: Breach of Scientific Integrity, Disciplinary Proceedings and Academic Penalties**

### **Article 33**

- §1 Any behaviour contrary to the laws and regulations, or likely to be qualified as displaying a [lack of scientific integrity](#) and/or which is likely to disrupt university activities and/or which undermines the honour or values of ULiège, may result in the opening of disciplinary proceedings.
- §2 Such behaviour is reported to the Rector, who may refer the matter to the relevant bodies.

## **Chapter XIV: University Life - Doctoral Students' Rights and Responsibilities**

### **Section 1: Safety, Contagious Diseases, Pregnancy and Insurance**

#### **Article 34**

- §1 Within the framework of their activities at ULiège, the doctoral student is required to comply with all security and biosafety measures taken by ULiège or any person acting on its behalf.
- §2 When the doctoral student is required to participate in a professional integration activity, mobility or any other activity within a private or public entity, an administration or any other institution, they must comply with the safety regulations in force there.

#### **Article 35**

A doctoral student who contracts a contagious disease likely to have serious consequences for others (e.g. suspected meningococcal meningitis, diphtheria, poliomyelitis, coronavirus, etc.) must immediately inform their supervisor and the administrative management of their faculty. They must scrupulously respect the instructions given to them and comply with the directives and procedures in place at ULiège.

#### **Article 36**

Any doctoral student who is aware that they are pregnant is invited to make themselves known to their faculty by following the procedure put in place by ULiège. This procedure will enable all precautionary measures to be taken with regard to the health of the future mother and that of the unborn child. Doctoral students who are breastfeeding are invited to follow the same procedure.

#### **Article 37**

Regularly enrolled doctoral students are insured by ULiège as part of their university activities.

### **Section 2: Network Access, Processing of Personal Data and Archives**

#### **Article 38**

All regularly registered doctoral students have access to ULiège's network infrastructure, subject to compliance with the network usage rules.

### **Article 39**

The conditions governing the use of personal data provided by doctoral students for the purposes of admission and registration, as well as for the management of their files throughout their academic career, can be consulted on the institutional website. At the time of their initial registration, doctoral students are expressly invited to read them.

### **Article 40**

Archives are all documents, whatever their date, form or medium, produced or received by any natural or legal person, and by any public or private body, in the course of their activity.

Some documents have historical or heritage value and must be kept indefinitely. Other documents may be destroyed after a certain period. The period in question depends on the nature of the document. Copies of assessments and assignments must be kept for the duration of the doctoral student's studies plus one year. Thereafter, these documents may be destroyed, with the exception of files that are the subject of proceedings pending before a court.

The legal rules on the protection of privacy (GDPR) require personal data to be processed in such a way as to respect its confidentiality, even when it is destroyed. Archives containing personal data must therefore be stored and disposed of securely. For the disposal of documents, refer in particular to the "recycling information for faculty administrative services" validated by the Rector and the Kingdom's Archivist General (available on the [myArchives](#) intranet).

Advice on document management is available on the myArchives intranet, and the General Archives Service ([service.archives@uliege.be](mailto:service.archives@uliege.be)) is available to members of the university community.

### **Article 41**

The regulations on the [Ownership, Protection and Promotion of the Results of Research Carried Out at the University of Liège](#) apply to doctoral students.

### **Article 42**

The same rules of conduct that apply to students also apply to doctoral students, in particular the articles of the RGEE relating to respect for ULiège, its members and its infrastructures.

## **Chapter XV: Appeals**

### **Article 43**

§1 The doctoral student may refer to the college for any dispute with their thesis committee, supervisor(s) or jury. A letter outlining this request along with reasons for the appeal should be submitted by letter (or e-mail) to the President of the college or, if the latter is concerned, to the Vice-President.

After having gathered any opinions deemed appropriate and heard the doctoral student, their supervisor(s) and those concerned, the college shall take a position within two months of the request and inform the doctoral student in writing of the decision taken. However, if the college identifies a difficulty requiring the intervention of other bodies, it may pause the proceedings and/or take any useful provisional measure while it awaits the intervention of the competent bodies.

§2 The doctoral student, the supervisor(s) or the member(s) of the thesis committee may lodge a suspensive appeal with the doctorate board against the decision, or lack of decision, of the college. This appeal must be lodged with the President or, if they are concerned, with the Vice-President within 15 days of receipt of the information notifying the college's decision or the expiry of the 2-month period referred to in §1, paragraph 2 above.

## **Chapter XVI: Equivalence of Qualifications**

### **Article 44**

- §1 The holder of a doctoral diploma with a thesis issued by a foreign higher education institution who wishes to obtain the equivalence of their diploma, must send a reasoned request to the Registration Office. After administrative verification, the Registration Office forwards the file to the doctoral college.
- §2 Determining equivalencies is the responsibility of the college in the doctoral student's field of research.

In the event of agreement, the applicant is given an equivalence decision signed by the President of the college, the Vice-President of the college and the Rector.

The college may, if necessary, appoint one or more readers of the thesis to advise it on the equivalence to be granted.

## **Chapter XVII: College regulations**

### **Article 45**

§1 Each college shall adopt, in accordance with the rules stipulated in the Paysage Decree and these regulations, [regulations](#) setting out the procedures for the organisation and conduct of doctoral studies within its jurisdiction<sup>40</sup>. The regulations in question may take the form of faculty regulations common to all colleges belonging to the same faculty.

§2 These regulations are approved by the Faculty Council(s) concerned and transmitted to the University Board of Directors for ratification, after the doctorate board has given its advice to the CURE.

§3 The college regulations specify:

- a) the type of the thesis (see Article 2 of these regulations), the material requirements of the doctorate (number of pages, place and submission of the thesis, etc.) and the possible expectations in terms of publications;
- b) any specific pre-requisites required for admission (see Article 19 of these regulations);
- c) the possible requirement of a private defence or prior consultation of the jury and the modalities of such a consultation (see Article 19 of these regulations);

When a college has several faculties, it shall specify with which faculty the doctoral student is registered.

§4 The college regulations may also specify:

- a) a possible deadline for registration in the first year of the doctorate prior to the day before the opening of registration for the following academic year (see Article 7, §1 of these regulations);
- b) the procedures for appointing the members of the colleges (see Article 10, §2 of these regulations);
- c) any specific conditions required to be a supervisor (see Article 13 of these regulations)

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<sup>40</sup>These regulations may either take the form of additions to the general regulations or may be an independent document.

- d) additional requirements for the appointment and composition of the Thesis Committee (see Article 15 of these regulations);
- e) additional requirements for the appointment and composition of the student's jury (see Article 17 of these regulations);
- f) the possible appointment of a moderator (see Article 18 of these regulations);
- g) any arrangements for appointing the reader(s) in the context of requests for equivalence(s) (see Article 44 of these regulations).
- h) special arrangements concerning the languages authorised for writing the thesis and oral defence.

## **ANNEX I - REGISTRATION FEES**

### **Doctorate - 3<sup>rd</sup> Study Cycle**

- Initial Registration **835 €** (**50 €** minimum by 31/10)
- As of the second year (application fee): **32 €** (to be paid by 31/10)
- Doctoral Student with a grant (FRIA, FRESH, FNRS, ARES): **0 €** (upon presentation of the relevant documentation)
- Staff member or researcher hosted by ULiège: **0 €** (upon presentation of the relevant documentation)