

**DOCTORAL STUDIES  
REGULATIONS - Doctoral  
School** at the Universidad  
Internacional de la Empresa

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## Preamble

The integration of the Spanish University into the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) meant a transformation of the university structure in the country. During the first years of the Bologna Process, this transformation mainly affected the articulation of the Bachelor's and Master's degree cycles. Since the Berlin meeting in 2003, from the awareness of the importance of research as an integral part of higher education throughout Europe, the doctorate was formally included as a third cycle of education.

Defined as the first stage of a research career, the doctorate is the link between the EHEA and the European Research Area (ERA). The ERA is an open knowledge area in which researchers, scientific knowledge and technologies circulate freely. By creating this area in the year 2000, the European Union seeks to promote the development of transnational cooperation, competitiveness, including that of its industry, and research actions deemed necessary by social and labour market needs.

By their very nature, the EHEA and the ERA are closely interlinked, as recognised in the Bergen Communiqué of 2005, which underlines the relevance of both research and research training. Building on the Bergen Communiqué, European ministers responsible for higher education invited the European University Association (EUA) to prepare a report on the future development of the basic principles of doctoral studies. This report calls for the adoption of ten basic principles (Salzburg Decalogue) for the development of doctoral studies: advancement of knowledge through doctoral training; integration of doctoral studies into institutional strategies and policies of universities and governments; diversity of doctoral programmes in Europe; doctoral students as researchers in initial training, contributing to the creation of new knowledge; crucial role of supervision and evaluation of the doctoral candidate; need for critical mass in doctoral programmes; duration of doctoral programmes limited to three or four years; innovative organisational structures for interdisciplinary training and for the development of transferable skills; geographical mobility of doctoral students and faculty in a framework of international cooperation; ensuring appropriate and sustainable funding as a guarantee of quality of doctoral programmes.

Building on the work done by the EUA, the Communiqués of subsequent meetings - such as London 2007, Finland 2008, Leuven 2009, Bucharest 2012, Yerevan 2015, Paris 2018 and Rome 2020 - have highlighted the importance of research as a fundamental pillar of quality education, and continue to stress the need to improve, expand and develop synergies between higher education, research and innovation policies.

Research is an intrinsic part of UNIE's commitment to the scientific-university community and, therefore, to society. One of the fundamental missions of this University is research, promoting innovation with the aim of generating science and ensuring that a large part of this scientific knowledge is transferable to companies and the third sector and, in this way, contributing to development and social progress. Through research, knowledge is created, preserved and disseminated, contributing to cultural, economic and social development. UNIE pursues the development of highly specialised, international and business-related research of excellence, seeking to improve the innovation and competitiveness of companies, improve the quality of life of citizens and contribute to economic and social progress. UNIE is built on the basis of a balanced combination of teaching and research that responds to a holistic educational model,

updated in accordance with the demands of today's society to constitute a project with a significant return in the professional, personal and social spheres. The University in the 21st century must be seen not only as a generator of ideas, but also as a source of knowledge and competence that can benefit society.

In UNIE's university model, research is conceived as an intrinsic part of academic activity. One of the main functions of research is to ensure academic excellence in its programmes in order to meet the highest quality criteria in higher education. It is along these lines that the third cycle studies covered by this Regulation are positioned.

Knowledge is an essential component of the current processes of economic, technological and social transformation. Spain lags behind other advanced countries in terms of the professional importance given to the PhD degree. It is to be expected that, in the coming years, the demand for PhDs will increase in the labour market. In an advanced, liberal and complex society such as Spain's, it is important to have centres of reference for training in the social sciences. The training of PhDs in Social Sciences is not only academically relevant, but can also contribute to improving public decision-making processes through a rigorous diagnosis of problems and the formulation of political, economic and social solutions. Likewise, the presence of PhDs in the public sphere (from universities, foundations, think-tanks, consultancies, NGOs and the media) can enrich the debate on the challenges facing advanced societies. From this point of view, the university, through the training of PhDs, plays a fundamental role in the new knowledge society.

Royal Decree 99/2011, of 28 January, which regulates official doctoral studies, fits into this context, linking the Bologna process to doctoral training and research careers, and including the possibility of creating Doctoral Schools.

Based on this legal framework, in accordance with the guidelines established for doctoral studies, and assuming the principles referred to above, UNIE-University specifies and develops, through these Regulations, the mechanisms for the implementation of Royal Decree 99/2011, without prejudice to the fact that, in the future, based on accumulated experience, it may be advisable to modify the regulations in this area.

## **Chapter I. General Provisions**

### **Article 1. Objectives of this Regulation**

1. Establish its own pathway for training PhDs according to the needs of the environment, guaranteeing research excellence by promoting the quality of research results, internationalisation, mobility and knowledge transfer.
2. To regulate the organisation of doctoral studies at the University through the creation of a Doctoral School that integrates and coordinates all possible programmes, designs activities common to all programmes and leads the institutional strategy for doctoral training.
3. To contemplate the monitoring of the training of doctoral students from the moment of enrolment, which is specified in the Documentary Commitment to Supervision, where their rights and duties are made explicit. Likewise, each student will have an associated Activities Document which will include all the academic activities of interest for their training.

### **Article 2. Organisation of doctoral studies**

1. In accordance with article 9 of R.D. 99/2011, the Doctoral School of UNIE University will be responsible for the organisation, management and academic direction of the institution's doctoral studies.
2. Doctoral studies will be organised through doctoral programmes and will end with the preparation and defence of a doctoral thesis by the doctoral student, developed in any field of knowledge, which incorporates original research results and enables him/her to work independently in the field of research, development and innovation (R+D+i).
3. At the head of these programmes, the Academic Committees will articulate the training and supervision of the doctoral student's training period.

### **Article 3. Proposal for doctoral studies**

1. The offer of doctoral studies shall be made taking into account the offer of bachelor's and master's degrees at the University and the criteria approved for this purpose by the Academic Governing Board.
2. The proposal will be strategic and multi-annual. It shall be drawn up on the basis of requests from faculties, schools and university research institutes.

### **Article 4. Budget**

1. The budgets of UNIE University shall transfer, according to its needs, financial allocations for the proper functioning of the Doctoral School.
2. The Doctoral School may apply to competitive calls for additional resources.

### **Article 5. Infrastructure**

The Doctoral School will have the infrastructures in which to carry out its activities. It is also possible that the infrastructures of the Centres, Faculties and Institutes participating in its training programmes may be shared.

## Chapter II. The Doctoral School

### Article 6. Concept

The Doctoral School of UNIE University is the body that regulates, decides and monitors activities related to doctoral studies, by delegation of the Academic Governing Board and under its supervision, under the terms established in the current regulations.

### Article 7. Governing bodies

The organs into which the Doctoral School is structured are as follows:

1. The Director of the School, appointed by the Rector, who meets the requirements of article 9.6 of R.D. 99/2011.
2. the Governing Board of the School, in accordance with the provisions of Article 19.2 of the University's Regulations on Organisation and Operation, a Governing Board of the Doctoral School shall be constituted comprising the Rector, the Director of the Doctoral School, a lecturer representing each Faculty or School, a representative of the University Research Institutes, the Vice-Rector responsible, and a representative of the doctoral students to be determined by the regulations to be drawn up. The Council shall be chaired by the Rector or the person delegated by him/her.
3. The Academic Committees of the doctoral programmes.

### Article 8. Director of the Doctoral School

1. The appointment of the Director shall be made by the Rector from among the University's doctoral lecturers and researchers. He/she must be a researcher belonging to the staff of the institution, with at least three periods of recognised research activity or equivalent merits, in accordance with the provisions of the Order of December 1994 establishing the procedure for the evaluation of research activity in development of Royal Decree 1086/1989, of 28 August, on the remuneration of university teaching staff.
2. The functions of the Director are, in accordance with Article 25 of the University's Regulations on Organisation and Operation:
  - i. Establish generic guidelines for the development of doctoral studies and evaluate and guarantee their quality.
  - ii. Promote doctoral programmes and the excellence of these programmes.
  - iii. To draw up the internal regulations governing doctoral studies.
  - iv. Any others assigned to it by the applicable regulations.

### Article 9. Governing Board

1. The Governing Board of the Doctoral School of UNIE University will be made up of:
  - a. The Vice-Chancellor with responsibility for doctoral studies, who shall chair it.
  - b. The Vice-Rectors responsible for academic planning, teaching staff and quality.
  - c. The Director.
  - d. The head of the corresponding Administrative Unit, or person delegated by him/her, who shall act as Secretary, with voice, but without vote.
  - e. The coordinators of the doctoral programmes.
  - f. Representatives of the institutions and entities with which an agreement has been signed, according to the terms defined in said collaboration.

- g. A PhD student at UNIE University.
- 2. The student will be appointed by the Director of the Doctoral School, at the proposal of the Academic Coordinator of the programme and his/her term of office will be four years, extendable for a further four years. The number of students on the Committee may increase according to the number of doctoral students.
- 3. The Governing Board shall meet at least once every two months in ordinary session during the school term, and in extraordinary session when convened by its chairman.
- 4. The Governing Board shall act autonomously, reporting in due time and form to the Governing Board on its actions and resolutions.
- 5. The decisions of the Governing Board in all matters within its competence may be appealed to the Rector, in accordance with the legislation in force.

## **Article 10. Functions of the Governing Board**

The following functions correspond to the Governing Board of the Doctoral School:

- i. Drawing up the proposal for regulations on doctoral studies.
- ii. To propose the approval, modification or suppression of doctoral programmes, and supervise their delivery.
- iii. To supervise co-supervision agreements and collaboration agreements with entities and companies.
- iv. To propose the common admission and enrolment deadlines related to the doctorate.
- v. To approve the general requirements for the admission of students to the different doctoral programmes.
- vi. To decide on the admission to the reading procedure of doctoral theses, following a report from the Academic Committee of the programme responsible.
- vii. To approve the panels responsible for judging doctoral theses proposed by the Academic Committees of the doctoral programmes.
- viii. To determine the procedures for archiving and publicising doctoral theses.
- ix. To evaluate and propose the awarding of extraordinary doctorate prizes.
- x. To promote and support the improvement of the quality of the doctorate.
- xi. To agree, where appropriate, on the criteria for the distribution of the budget allocation relating to the academic activity of the doctoral programme.
- xii. To decide on appeals against decisions taken by the academic committees of doctoral programmes on admission and assessment.
- xiii. To decide on applications for a change of doctoral programme.
- xiv. To promote the mobility of professors and doctoral students.
- xv. Resolving any other incident that may arise within the doctoral programmes and proposing specific actions.
- xvi. Any other doctoral competences entrusted to it by the Governing Board and the regulations in force.

## **Chapter III. Doctoral training**

### **Article 11. Doctoral Programmes**

- 1. Doctoral programmes are the instruments through which doctoral training is articulated.
- 2. The design of doctoral programmes will include, in all cases, the following aspects: name; description of the competences to be acquired; access and admission



- requirements; planned transversal and specific training activities; procedure for assigning the tutor and thesis supervisor; assessment procedures; lines of research of the programme, and coordination mechanisms in the case of joint programmes.
3. The doctoral programmes can be carried out jointly by several universities and have the collaboration, expressed through an agreement, of other bodies, centres, institutions and entities with R+D+i activities, whether public or private, national or foreign.
  4. The programmes shall be proposed by the faculties, schools and research institutes and submitted to the Doctoral School for study and possible inclusion in the general proposal for doctoral studies to be submitted to the Governing Council for approval.
  5. Each doctoral programme will be organised, designed and coordinated by an Academic Committee.

## **Article 12. Academic Committees**

1. The academic committee of each doctoral programme is responsible for its definition, updating, quality and coordination. It must monitor the progress of the research and training of each doctoral student on the programme.
2. The Academic Committee of the Programme will be composed of the following members:
  - a) The Coordinator of the doctoral programme.
  - b) The Dean of the Faculty or Director of the School in which the programme is proposed, or the person delegated by him/her.
  - c) At least two lecturers on the doctoral programme, who shall meet at least the requirements established for thesis supervisors and tutors, as set out in articles 13 and 14 of these Regulations. They shall be appointed by the Steering Committee of the Doctoral School, at the proposal of the Dean of the Faculty or Director of the School or Institute in which the programme is proposed, who, with their election, shall try to ensure the presence of PhDs from the different lines of research of the doctoral programme. The term of office of these members shall be four years.
3. In the absence of the Dean of the Faculty or Director of the corresponding School, the Coordinator of the Doctoral Programme will act as President of the Academic Committee, and will chair its meetings. The Coordinator shall choose one of the members of the Academic Committee to act as Secretary. The position of Secretary shall be held for two years, which may be renewable.

## **Article 13. Functions of the Academic Committees**

The Academic Committee of each doctoral programme will be responsible for:

- i. Proposing to the Governing Board of the Doctoral School the lines of research and the list of lecturers of the doctoral programme.
- ii. Defining the transversal and specific training activities within the scope of the doctoral programme, their planning, control procedures and evaluation systems.
- iii. Determining, where appropriate, the additional training and other training activities that the doctoral student must undertake if the doctoral programme includes them.
- iv. Defining the requirements for admission of doctoral students to the programme taking into account the following criteria, in the terms established in the programme's verification report:
  - The suitability of the studies that allow access to the third cycle, in relation to the object of research on which you wish to write your doctoral thesis.
  - The applicant's curriculum vitae.

- The interest for the University of the line of research in which the applicant wishes to carry out his/her work.
  - The coherence of the planned thesis topic with the lines of research of the doctoral programme.
  - The availability of directors and tutors in the research area applied for by the applicant.
  - The availability of the means necessary for the research work that the applicant intends to carry out.
  - In general, the additional criteria established in the programme's verification report.
- v. Assigning each student a thesis supervisor from among the lecturers on the doctoral programme and, where appropriate, a tutor will be appointed. As far as possible, the tutor and supervisor will coincide, although this will be different when the thesis supervisor is a doctor from outside the doctoral programme or the university itself. Likewise, the Academic Committee will attend to requests for modification of assignments if there are justified reasons.
  - vi. Evaluating, at least on an annual basis, the Research Plan and the Activities Document of the doctoral students on the corresponding doctoral programme, as well as the reports of the tutors and thesis supervisors, within the established deadlines. In the light of these documents and reports, the Commission shall decide whether or not the persons enrolled on the doctoral programme shall continue on the programme.
  - vii. Analysing and resolving requests to extend the period of the thesis beyond the established duration in accordance with the deadlines established in RD 99/2011.
  - viii. Proposing to the Steering Committee of the Doctoral School the tribunals that are to judge the theses.
  - ix. Approving the defence of doctoral theses on the basis of the assessment of the suitability of the doctoral theses presented and the training activities carried out by the doctoral students.
  - x. Determining the exceptional circumstances that affect the non-publicity of certain contents of the thesis, in accordance with article 14.6 of R.D. 99/2011.
  - xi. Authorising the theses presented in the corresponding Doctoral Programme to compete for the "International Doctor" award.
  - xii. Reporting on and forward to the Doctoral School's Management Committee requests for the incorporation and dismissal of research staff as members of the doctoral programme.
  - xiii. Drawing up and maintaining the report to be submitted for programme verification, carrying out the annual monitoring and the improvements arising from it, the proposals for modification and the procedure for the renewal of accreditation.
  - xiv. Drawing up the Annual Report of the Doctoral Programme and applying the appropriate corrective measures, through the proposal of actions for the Doctoral Programme's Continuous Improvement Plan.
  - xv. Submitting the improvement plan and the programme monitoring/accreditation self-report to the Doctoral School Management Committee for approval.
  - xvi. Reporting on the suitability of thesis co-supervision proposals to the Steering Committee of the School for Doctoral Studies.

## **Article 14. Programme coordinators**

1. Each doctoral programme will have a person in charge of its coordination, who will be a lecturer on the programme, endorsed by the previous supervision of at least two

doctoral theses and the justification of the possession of at least two periods of recognised research activity or six-year research periods, in accordance with the provisions of the Order of 2 December 1994 establishing the procedure for the evaluation of research activity in development of Royal Decree 1086/1989, of 28 August, on the remuneration of university lecturers. In the event that the said researcher occupies a position in which the aforementioned evaluation criterion does not apply, he/she must accredit merits comparable to those indicated. The duration of the coordination will be four years, with the possibility of renewal.

2. The appointment of the person in charge of coordinating a UNIE University doctoral programme shall be the responsibility of the Rector. The appointment shall be made at the proposal of the Governing Board of the Doctoral School.
3. In the case of inter-university doctoral programmes, this appointment will be made by agreement between the Rectors of the universities participating in the programme or in the manner indicated in the agreement with other institutions when a collaborative doctoral programme is being developed. In the event that the designated person does not belong to UNIE University, a person responsible for the institution (internal coordinator) will be appointed, who must form part of the Academic Committee of the inter-university programme and will be appointed by the Rector of UNIE University. The appointment will be made after a favourable report from the Governing Board of the Doctoral School.
4. The functions of the persons in charge of coordinating doctoral programmes are as follows:
  - i. In the absence of the Dean of the Faculty or Director of the School in which the programme is held, to chair the Academic Committee of the doctoral programme and coordinate its activity, ensuring the continuity and fulfilment of its objectives, ensuring that the programme is carried out with the maximum degree of efficiency, quality and success.
  - ii. To appoint the Secretary of the Commission from among one of its members for a term of two years, which may be renewable.
  - iii. To represent the programme in the Steering Committee of the Doctoral School and the corresponding bodies and to ensure compliance with the agreements in relation to the programme.
  - iv. To ensure the dissemination of information to the members of the programme on all matters related to the programme's activities that may affect them.

## **Article 15. Thesis supervisors**

1. The thesis supervisor(s) is (are) the person(s) most responsible for conducting all the research work of the PhD student, for the coherence and suitability of the training activities, for the impact and novelty of the subject of the PhD thesis in his/her field and for guiding the planning and, where appropriate, its adaptation to that of other projects and activities in which the PhD student is enrolled.
2. National or foreign PhDs with accredited research experience may supervise theses, irrespective of the university, centre or institution where they work.
3. Accredited research experience means having at least one period of research activity recognised by the National Commission for the Assessment of Research Activity (CNEAI) in application of Royal Decree 1086/1989, of 28 August, on the remuneration of university teaching staff, or, in the event that they are not in a position to be accredited in this manner, having comparable research merits.
4. With the prior authorisation of the Academic Committee, the thesis may be co-supervised

by other PhDs, who must meet the same requirements in terms of research experience, when there are reasons of an academic or thematic interdisciplinary nature, or when the programmes are developed in national or international collaboration. The Academic Committee may authorise the co-supervision of the thesis by PhDs who do not comply with the requirements of Article 2.9 of Royal Decree 99/2011. The authorisation may be revoked if, in the opinion of the Academic Committee, this does not benefit the development of the thesis.

In no case shall the number of Supervisors exceed three.

5. Within a maximum period of three months from the student's enrolment in the doctoral programme, the programme's Academic Committee will assign each doctoral student a thesis supervisor, who may or may not coincide with the tutor. As far as possible, the interests expressed by the doctoral student and the supervisor will be respected, and the latter will formalise the acceptance of the rights and duties in their relationship, which will be incorporated into the Documentary Commitment to Supervision signed by the doctoral student and the university.
6. The thesis may be supervised by a second supervisor, who must meet the same requirements as those established for thesis supervisors on this doctoral programme.
7. Exceptionally, the Academic Committee may authorise a thesis to be co-directed by three supervisors, when there are academic reasons, such as interdisciplinary subject matter or programmes developed in national or international collaboration.
8. The Academic Committee, having heard the supervisor and the PhD student, may modify the appointment of the thesis supervisor of a PhD student at any time during the period of the doctoral programme, provided that there are justified reasons.
9. Among other functions, the thesis supervisor must ensure that the PhD student complies with his/her duty not to engage in academic fraud or, avoiding plagiarism, respecting the rights derived from intellectual and industrial property. To facilitate compliance with this duty, anti-plagiarism software applications will be made available.

## **Article 16. Tutors of doctoral students**

1. The tutor is responsible for ensuring that the student's training and research activity are in line with the principles of the programme and the Doctoral School.
2. The programme's Academic Committee will assign each doctoral student a tutor, who may or may not coincide with the supervisor, and who will be responsible for ensuring the interaction of the doctoral student with the Academic Committee and his/her supervisor, where applicable. As far as possible, the interests expressed by the doctoral student and the tutor will be respected, and the tutor will formalise the acceptance of the rights and duties in their relationship, which will be incorporated into the Documentary Commitment to Supervision signed between the doctoral student and the university.
3. All UNIE University PhDs with accredited research experience may act as tutors.
4. The Academic Committee, having heard the tutor and the PhD student, may modify the appointment of the assigned tutor at any time during the period of the doctoral programme, provided that there are justified reasons.

## Chapter IV. Organisation of doctoral studies

### Article 17. Duration

1. The maximum duration of doctoral studies will be four years full time, counting from the date of enrolment in the programme to the date of submission of the doctoral thesis. If the application for submission of the thesis has not been submitted by the end of this period, the Academic Committee responsible for the programme may authorise the extension of this period for a further year, under the conditions established in the corresponding doctoral programme.
2. Doctoral programmes may establish the possibility of part-time studies, provided that the Academic Committee responsible for the programme authorises this. In this case, such studies may have a maximum duration of seven years from the enrolment until the submission of the doctoral thesis.
3. When the doctoral student is a person with a degree of disability equal to or greater than 33%, the duration of the doctoral studies will be a maximum of six years full-time and nine years part-time.
4. Situations of temporary incapacity, childbirth, adoption, foster care for adoption, fostering, pregnancy risk, breastfeeding risk, and gender-based violence or any other situation provided for in the current regulations during the aforementioned period of time will interrupt the calculation of the time limit for the duration of doctoral studies. The PhD student may apply to change from full-time to part-time mode. This request must be addressed to the body responsible for the programme.
5. Doctoral students may apply to leave the programme temporarily for a maximum period of two years, extendable for a further year. This request must be addressed to the body responsible for the programme, which will decide whether or not to grant the doctoral student's request.

## Chapter V. The Doctoral Candidate

### Article 18. Requirements and consideration of the doctoral student

1. To be a doctoral student at UNIE University, the following requirements must be met:
  - a) To be admitted to a doctoral programme. To this end, students must hold an official Spanish bachelor's degree, or equivalent, and a university master's degree (except for exempt degrees) or the cases contained in article 6 of R.D. 99/2011, and meet the requirements set by the Academic Committee of the corresponding doctoral programme, in accordance with the provisions of the programme's verification report.
  - b) To formalise enrolment on an annual basis. In the case of inter-university programmes, the agreement established between the participating units will determine the way in which this enrolment will be formalised.
2. Students admitted and enrolled in a doctoral programme at UNIE University will be considered as trainee researchers.

## **Article 19. Selection of candidates**

1. The Academic Committee of the doctoral programme, in accordance with article 7 of R.D. 99/2011, will be responsible for the admission and selection of students. This committee will ensure compliance with the additional admission requirements and criteria, the completion of specific training complements of the programme for students who requires it, which must be passed in the initial period of thesis development, within a maximum period of one academic year. In addition, the committee may establish the endorsement of a researcher as possible Supervisor of the doctoral thesis.  
For the purposes of public prices and the awarding of scholarships and study grants, the training complements will be considered as doctorate-level training.
2. In the event that the number of applicants exceeds the maximum number established for a doctoral programme, the Academic Committee of the corresponding programme shall select the applicants on the basis of a scale previously established and approved by the Steering Committee of the Doctoral School, at the proposal of the said Academic Committee. The aforementioned scale shall include:
  - a. The student's academic record in the bachelor's degree and/or the master's degree leading to the doctoral programme (if the latter is a prerequisite).
  - b. Other merits related to research (publications, research stays, etc.), in the corresponding percentage.
3. Both the admission requirements and the scale will be available on the website of the doctoral programme.
4. At least 5% of the places offered will be reserved for students with a recognised degree of disability equal to or greater than 33%, as well as for students with permanent special educational needs associated with personal disability circumstances who have required resources and support for their full educational normalisation in their previous studies.

## **Article 20. Documentary Undertaking on Supervision**

1. The Documentary Commitment to Supervision is a document that determines the functions of supervision and monitoring of doctoral students (researchers in training). This document will include at least the following aspects:
  - i. The academic relationship between the doctoral student and the university.
  - ii. Rights and duties of the doctoral student, supervisor and tutor.
  - iii. Acceptance of the conflict resolution procedure established by the University.
  - iv. Aspects relating to intellectual or industrial property rights arising from the research.
2. The Documentary Commitment to Supervision will be signed by the PhD student, the thesis supervisor(s), the tutor, the coordinator of the PhD programme and the Director of the Doctoral School.

## **Article 21. Doctoral Student Activity Document (DAD)**

1. For each student enrolled in a doctoral programme, an Activities Document will be opened in electronic format that will include the individualised control record defined in article 2.7 of R.D. 99/2011. It will include all academic activities of interest for the training of the doctoral student, as regulated by UNIE University and the Academic Committee of the programme.
2. The Activities Document will be regularly reviewed by the tutor and the thesis supervisor, who will issue an annual report on it, which will be included in the Document.

3. The Academic Committee responsible for the doctoral programme will obtain reports from the director and tutor to evaluate the activity carried out by the doctoral student. It will carry out its assessment on an annual basis.

## **Article 22. Research Plan and Personal Training Plan**

1. Before the end of the first year of the PhD programme, counting from the date of enrolment, the PhD student will draw up a document including a Research Plan and a Personal Training Plan, with the assistance of the tutor and thesis supervisor and the approval of the programme's Academic Committee.
2. The Research Plan will include at least the following aspects: objectives to be achieved in the research work, methodology to be used, necessary means and estimated time schedule for the development of the work. The Personal Training Plan will include a forecast of the activities that will be carried out during the doctoral thesis (mobility actions, courses, seminars teaching, etc.), which will be defined in each case according to the range of activities included in the verification report of the doctoral programme. This document may be modified and detailed throughout the doctoral studies, always endorsed by the tutor and the supervisor.
3. In the case of doctoral students with an Industrial Mention, the provisions of Article 28 shall also be taken into account.

## **Article 23. Evaluation of the activity**

1. On an annual basis, the Academic Committee of the programme will evaluate the Activities Document of each doctoral student, his/her Research Plan, as well as the reports to be issued by the tutor and the thesis supervisor, and the general progress of the doctoral thesis. In the light of these documents and reports, it shall decide whether or not those enrolled in the doctoral programme shall continue in the programme.
2. A positive evaluation by the Academic Committee will be a prerequisite for continuing on the programme.
3. In the event of a negative evaluation, which will be duly justified in a report, the doctoral student must be re-evaluated within six months, for which purpose a new Research Plan must be drawn up. In the event of a second negative evaluation, the doctoral student will be permanently withdrawn from the programme, which may be appealed before the Doctoral School's Steering Committee.
4. The assessment criteria used by the Academic Committee will be those defined by the doctoral programme, which must have been approved by the Steering Committee of the UNIE University Doctoral School. The information on these criteria will be public, will be posted on the programme's website, and will form part of the Documentary Commitment to Supervision signed by the student upon enrolment. At least the following aspects will be taken into account: progress of the thesis with respect to the proposed Research Plan; scientific production to date (results, publications, etc.); stays carried out, visits to other centres, attendance at conferences, meetings, etc.; completion of activities and training complements, as well as any other activity or subject considered relevant.

## Chapter VI. About the doctoral thesis

### Article 24. Formal requirements

1. The doctoral thesis will consist of an original research work prepared by the doctoral student and related to the scientific, technical or artistic field of the doctoral programme undertaken. It must enable the PhD student to work independently and professionally in the field of R+D+i.
2. The doctoral thesis must include: introduction, methodology, results, final conclusions and bibliographical references, adapted, in any case, to the scientific field of the thesis doctoral programme. It must also meet other formal requirements that may be established by UNIE Universidad.
3. The title page of the thesis must include at least the following information: name of the doctoral studies undertaken, title of the thesis, name and surnames of the doctoral student, name and surnames of the thesis supervisor(s), the Centre (Faculty), University (or Universities in the case of co-supervision) and the year.
4. The thesis must be written in Spanish, or in one of the usual languages for scientific communication in your field of knowledge. When the thesis is not written in Spanish, it must include an abstract (and, where appropriate, conclusions) in that language, of at least five thousand words.
5. Theses may be submitted as a monograph or as a compendium of publications.

### Article 25. Theses by compendium of publications

1. A set of works published by the doctoral student directly related to the subject of the doctoral thesis may be submitted for evaluation as a doctoral thesis.
2. Theses presented as a compendium of publications will be governed by the Thesis Regulations for Compendium of Publications, which must be approved by the Academic Governing Committee and published on the UNIE University website. To this end, they must consist of: a general introduction presenting the work and justifying the thematic unity of the work to form a thesis; an overall summary of the results and discussion of these results -if applicable-; the final conclusions of the thesis and a copy of the work that forms an integral part of the thesis. The quality of the publications will be assessed by the Academic Committee of the programme. The requirements regarding the indexing of publications in each of the programmes must be known to the doctoral students at the beginning of their doctoral training.

In the case of unpublished work, letters of acceptance of the work must be provided. In order to assess the quality of these works, the criteria established by the Comisión Nacional Evaluadora de la Actividad Investigadora -CNEAI- for the evaluation of the six-year research periods will be taken as a reference. The merits to be evaluated will vary according to the area of knowledge.

### Article 26. International recognition of the doctoral degree

If a doctoral student wishes to obtain the title of "International Doctor", the following requirements must be met:

- a) During the training period, the PhD student must have spent a minimum of three months outside Spain, in a prestigious higher education institution or research centre, studying or carrying out research work. The stay and the activities must have been



endorsed by the thesis supervisor and authorised by the programme's Academic Committee, and must have been approved by the programme's Academic Committee; also, they, will be included in the PhD student's Activity Document. This stay does not have to be in a consecutive period of time, nor does it have to be carried out in the same centre or institution.

- b) Part of the doctoral thesis, at least the abstract (not less than 5,000 words in length) and the conclusions, must be written and presented in one of the languages customary for scientific communication in its field of study, other than any of the official languages in Spain. This rule shall not apply when the stays, reports and experts come from a Spanish-speaking country.
- c) At least two experts with accredited research experience, belonging to a non-Spanish higher education institution or research institute, must have given a positive report on the thesis prior to the reading of the thesis.
- d) An expert from a non-Spanish higher education institution or research centre, with a doctoral degree and accredited research experience, should form part of the thesis examining board. This expert must be different from the person in charge of the stay mentioned in section a. and of the reports mentioned in section c.
- e) The defence of the thesis must take place at the university to which the PhD student is affiliated. Doctoral students who wish to apply for the award of the title of "International Doctor" must state this circumstance when applying for authorisation to deposit the doctoral thesis. It should be noted that this mention is compatible with the title of doctor under the co-supervision scheme, given that the two are complementary. As for the language in which the thesis is defended, in this case, see the considerations established in this respect in section 9 of Article 33 of these Regulations.

## **Article 27. Doctoral theses in co-supervision with foreign universities**

- 1. A co-supervised doctoral thesis is understood to be one in which there is joint supervision between a thesis supervisor belonging to UNIE University and another(s) belonging to one (or more) foreign university(ies). As indicated in Article 13.5 of these Regulations, the Academic Committee may exceptionally authorise that a thesis may be co-directed by three supervisors, when the programmes are developed in international collaboration. The thesis will be carried out at the institutions involved and its ultimate aim will be to obtain a doctoral degree from the universities participating in the agreement that supports it.
- 2. The co-supervision procedure must meet the following requirements:
  - a) Each thesis co-supervision shall be carried out within the framework of a specific agreement between the universities concerned, signed between their rectors, in accordance with the principle of reciprocity. Under this agreement, each institution shall recognise the validity of the doctoral thesis defended within this framework and undertake to award the doctoral degree.
  - b) The doctoral student will enrol at each of the signatory universities. The payment of the fees will be governed by the provisions of the corresponding Collaboration Agreement.
  - c) The admission requirements for the doctoral programme will be those required by the signatory universities.
  - d) The doctoral student will have at least one thesis supervisor at each of the universities participating in the co-supervision.
  - e) During the training period required to obtain the PhD degree, the doctoral student must have spent a minimum of six months at each of the institutions with which the co-supervision agreement is established, carrying out research work, either in a

- single period or over several periods. The stays and activities will be reflected in the co-supervision agreement.
- f) The thesis must be written in a language accepted at one of the universities. In any case, it must include the summary and conclusions written in one of the usual languages for scientific communication in your field of knowledge.
  - g) Once the thesis has been prepared, the PhD student will deposit the thesis at the universities concerned.
  - h) The thesis will be subject to a single defence at any of the universities involved. This provision shall be the subject of a clause in the signed agreement. Payment of the public reading fees shall be made at the university where the thesis defence takes place.
  - i) The examining board before which the thesis is to be defended will be appointed by mutual agreement between the Universities, and its composition will follow the regulations of the University where the defence takes place, always ensuring that the minimum requirements demanded by R.D. 99/2011 are met.
  - j) The archiving and dissemination of the thesis will be carried out in the Universities concerned, in accordance with the specific procedures of each one.
3. The Academic Committee of each doctoral programme will be responsible for the authorisation, monitoring and control of doctoral theses under co-supervision, in accordance with the regulations in force.

## **Article 28. Industrial doctorate**

1. The mention of "Industrial Doctorate" will be awarded if the following circumstances are met:
  - a) The thesis has developed a research project of industrial, commercial, social or cultural interest of an entity, public or private company, or public administration. Universities, public research organisations (national or regional) and university hospitals are excluded. On an exceptional basis, this mention can be made at any of these institutions, except universities, provided that the content of the thesis is eminently applied. The direct relationship between the doctoral thesis and the work carried out by the doctoral student in the institution or company must be formalised in a scientific and technical report that must be approved by the university.
  - b) An agreement has been signed between the entity, company or public administration and the university for the academic development of the doctoral thesis, which will establish, as a minimum, the obligations of the parties and the industrial property rights that may arise.
  - c) The doctoral student has been employed by the entity, company or public administration where the research project is carried out for at least one year during the development of the thesis, a substantial part of which must be carried out in the entity, company or public administration.
2. The doctoral student will have a thesis supervisor appointed by the university and a person in charge appointed by the institution, company or public administration, who may, where appropriate, be the thesis Supervisor in accordance with the provisions of this Royal Decree. Under no circumstances may the person in charge appointed by the company form part of the thesis examining board.

## **Article 29. Application and authorisation of the processing of the submission of the thesis**

1. Once the research plan has been completed, the doctoral student will send the doctoral thesis in PDF format to the Academic Committee of the doctoral programme, requesting its authorisation to continue with the processing of the thesis. Optionally, the doctoral programme may request a report on the suitability and quality of the research work carried out. Potential candidates must be external to UNIE University and have accredited research experience. These evaluators may not coincide with the members proposed to act as members or substitutes of the thesis committee, nor may they be co-authors of the contributions that support the thesis in the case of opting for the compendium of publications modality. In the event that the document is submitted for assessment by such experts, their acceptance will be sought so that they can produce a detailed report on the thesis within a period of one month.
2. In addition to the electronic copy of the thesis, the application must be accompanied by the following documents:
  - a) A favourable report from the directors of the doctoral thesis, ratified by the thesis tutor, if applicable.
  - b) A list of six experts - with a suggestion of a full and substitute panel by the thesis supervisor - who may form part of the panel responsible for judging the thesis, in which the research experience of the proposed members must be specified. This proposal must comply with the requirements established by current legislation on gender equality.
  - c) The curriculum vitae of the doctoral student, a summary of the thesis and the Activities Document in electronic format.
  - d) The complementary documents established by these regulations for theses presented as a compendium of publications, mention of "International Doctor", co-supervision of doctoral theses, industrial doctorate and theses subject to data protection processes.
  - e) The authorisations, permits, licences or reports that are mandatory, respecting, where appropriate, anonymity.
3. All processing shall be carried out electronically.
4. The Academic Committee shall ensure that doctoral theses comply with the quality control requirements of the doctoral programme. To this end, the doctoral programme may establish minimum requirements for the quality and impact of a thesis in order to authorise its defence, as well as the need to obtain a favourable report from national or international experts external to the doctoral programme, as indicated in the first section of this provision. Likewise, from that moment onwards, the body responsible for registering the thesis shall simultaneously proceed to evaluate matches with the electronic anti-plagiarism tools at its disposal and shall send the corresponding report to the Management Committee.
5. Within a maximum period of thirty working days following the application, the Academic Committee will make a formal assessment of the doctoral thesis, recommending, where appropriate, the modifications it deems necessary or authorising, if necessary, its processing.
6. In addition to compliance with the requirements established in the quality control of the doctoral programme, in general, authorisation for processing is subject to the thesis meeting one of the following indications of quality:
  - a) Scientific production derived from the thesis. An indication of the quality of the thesis will be considered to be the obtaining of results published in at least one

international journal with an impact index included in the Journal Citation Reports - WOS-/Scimago Journal Ranking-Scopus-. In those areas in which this criterion is not applicable, the equivalence that the criteria established by the National Commission for the Evaluation of Research Activity for the scientific fields in question will be taken into account. In publications, the number of authors of each publication and the position that the PhD student occupies in them will be taken into account, depending on the area.

- b) Internationalisation of the thesis. The thesis, in addition to complying with the legal requirements for it to be presented and defended as a thesis with a mention of "International Doctorate", must include scientific contributions, not necessarily included in the previous section.
- c) Industrial theses. The theses that aspire to the "Industrial Doctorate" Mention must fulfil the requirements determined in these Regulations.

### **Article 30. Deposit and public exhibition of the doctoral thesis**

1. Once the thesis has been accepted for processing, it will be deposited in an electronic registry service set up for this purpose for a period of fifteen calendar days from the day following authorisation by the Academic Committee.
2. During this time, any doctoral student may examine the thesis in deposit, after submitting an electronic request addressed to the programme's Academic Committee. For this review, which will be recorded, a videoconference session will be set up, in which the director of the thesis will act as moderator, so that only the moderator will handle the PDF document, which will be shown without the possibility of copying or downloading it for the guest. Any allegations or observations on the defence of the doctoral thesis will be addressed to the Steering Committee of the Doctoral School.
3. The University's website will publicise the theses that are in deposit at any given time, indicating their title, author, supervisor and the doctoral programme in which they have been written.
4. When the existence of the principle of confidentiality and protection of patients' rights, confidentiality agreements with companies, or the possibility of generating patents or property registers, governed by the existence of the confidentiality that protects the medical act, confidentiality agreements with companies that require it and the existence of patents or property registers in process, the Academic Committee of the doctoral programme, with the prior approval of the Steering Committee of the School for Doctoral Studies, will set up procedures to respect the conditions of publication of results contemplated in the aforementioned confidentiality agreements with companies, or derived from the possibility of generating patents or property registers.
5. If observations are received on a thesis during the public exhibition period, they will be communicated to the programme's Academic Committee, the thesis supervisor and the PhD student so that, in view of their content, they may express their opinion in writing on the need to continue or halt the process, with a period of seven days from the end of the deposit period. In any case, the doctoral student may send a report to the Doctoral School's Steering Committee in which he/she responds to the observations made on the thesis.

### **Article 31. Registration of the defence of the doctoral thesis**

Once authorisation for the defence of the doctoral thesis has been obtained from the Governing Board of the Doctoral School, the doctoral student will register for the defence of the thesis.

## **Article 32. Appointment and composition of the doctoral thesis examining board**

1. Once the defence of the doctoral thesis has been authorised by the Governing Board of the Doctoral School, the Academic Committee of the programme will propose, for appointment by the Committee, the members of the examining board that will assess the doctoral thesis, following a proposal by the thesis supervisor and, where appropriate, endorsed by the tutor. This proposal shall be accompanied by the acceptance to form part of the panel and the justification of the corresponding merits. The Academic Committee will ask the president of the thesis examining board to determine the date and time of the presentation and defence of the thesis.
2. The thesis examining board will be made up of three members (chairperson, secretary and member) and three substitutes, who must meet the following requirements:
  - a) All members of the examining board must hold a doctoral degree and have accredited research experience in the subject to which the thesis refers or in another subject related to it. Accredited research experience will be considered as having fulfilled any of the requirements for supervising doctoral theses, except in the case of doctors linked to companies, who may participate in thesis tribunals provided that their professional activity is related to R+D+i.
  - b) The majority of the selection board must be made up of members from outside UNIE University. The rules of equality must be complied with, and no two members may be from the same institution.
  - c) Neither the thesis supervisors nor the tutor may form part of the examining board, unless the thesis is presented within the framework of bilateral co-supervision agreements with foreign universities and the agreement signed for this purpose so indicates.
3. In the event that the PhD student applies for the international mention of the PhD degree, at least one of the members of the examining board must belong to a non-Spanish higher education institution or research centre, and must accredit that he/she occupies a stable position or job; furthermore, this person must be different from the person responsible for the student's stay.

## **Article 33. Thesis defence ceremony**

1. Once the doctoral thesis has been submitted to the members of the examining board by the doctoral student, the defence of the thesis will be held, convened by its President, within a maximum period of three months from the end of the public exhibition process. This period may be extended by the Steering Committee of the Doctoral School in duly accredited exceptional circumstances.
2. The President of the examining board will decide the date and time of the thesis defence after consulting with the other members and substitutes.
3. The Secretary of the examining board must notify the thesis defence date to the Steering Committee of the Doctoral School by means of a written document submitted electronically to the University's General Registry at least fifteen calendar days prior to the date of the defence. The date and time of the defence must also be communicated to the Coordinator of the doctoral programme, the doctoral student, the thesis supervisor and, where appropriate, the tutor.
4. The defence of the thesis will take place, in person, in a public session, during the academic period of the academic calendar approved by the Steering Committee.

5. UNIE University will give adequate publicity to the thesis defence event, announcing on its website, at least seven days in advance, the information regarding the date and time of the thesis defence.
6. The examining board shall be constituted prior to the defence of the doctoral thesis in the presence of its three full members or, where appropriate, their substitutes.
7. If any of the members of the examining board fail to appear on the day set for the thesis defence, the substitutes will be included. If this is not possible, the President of the panel shall suspend the reading and set a new date, after consulting the other members of the panel, the doctoral student and the coordinator of the doctoral programme, and shall inform the Steering Committee.
8. The defence of the doctoral thesis will consist of an oral presentation by the doctoral student, supported by the technical means deemed necessary for the defence of the work carried out. During the defence, the methodology, contents and conclusions must be mentioned, with special mention of the original contributions of the work.
9. When the thesis is awarded the title of "International Doctor", the PhD student must carry out part of the oral presentation (at least the description of the results and conclusions) in one of the usual languages for scientific communication in his/her field of knowledge, other than any of the official languages in Spain. This rule will not apply when the stays, reports and members of the panel come from a Spanish-speaking country, or this is unanimously agreed by the members of the panel.
10. At the end of the oral presentation, the chairperson will make an oral summary of the most relevant aspects expressed in the external reports received by the thesis, and of the PhD student's report detailing his/her response to these reports. The doctoral student will be able to respond to the aspects highlighted by the chairperson regarding the external reports and possible observations.
11. The members of the examining board must then express their assessment of the thesis presented and may formulate any questions, observations, suggestions and objections they deem appropriate, to which the doctoral candidate must respond.
12. The doctors present at the public ceremony may ask questions at the time and in the manner indicated by the President of the selection board.

## **Article 34. Assessment of the doctoral thesis**

1. After the defence and discussion of the doctoral thesis, the thesis will be graded. Each member of the examining board must draw up a reasoned assessment report that includes the evaluations of both the written work and the oral presentation and defence carried out by the doctoral student, in a standardised document that will be included in the student's electronic file.
2. The examining board will issue a report and the overall grade awarded to the thesis according to the following scale: "Fail", "Pass", "Good" and "Excellent", after a vote has been taken. In the grading, in addition to the reports and opinions of the members of the examining board, the following will be taken into consideration: the reports of experts obtained by the Academic Committee (if any), the possible observations received during the public presentation process, the reports of the doctoral student's response to each of them, as well as the information provided in the Doctoral Student's Activities Document, the latter for the purposes of qualitative assessment only.
3. The overall mark awarded by the examining board will be recorded in the minutes to be signed by all its members, who will inform the doctoral candidate of the mark obtained at the same session.
4. After the mark has been awarded, the Chairman shall close the deliberation, which shall take place in camera among the members of the selection board, and shall publicly issue

the mark, ending the public session.

5. In the event that the PhD student obtains a grade of "Excellent", a secret ballot will be held for the award of "Cum Laude". The Secretary will have previously informed the members of the examining board of this procedure.
6. Failure to cast a vote by any member of the examining board will result in the "Cum Laude" distinction not being awarded. The Secretary shall ensure that all members of the panel are informed of the provisions of this rule and shall inform the Management Committee of any incident.
7. The result of the vote count shall be recorded in the minutes by the Secretary of the court.
8. In any case, the appropriate qualification shall be stated on the front of the corresponding doctoral degree.
9. The final grade obtained will be communicated by the Secretary of the examining board to the Director, the Academic Committee of the doctoral programme and the members of the examining board, within a maximum period of five days from the date of the scrutiny. The thesis supervisor(s) will be responsible for informing the PhD student of the final grade obtained.
10. The Secretary of the examining board will be responsible for the documentation corresponding to the defence of the doctoral thesis, and must send it to the Steering Committee within a maximum period of five working days from the date of the defence.
11. In the event that the thesis qualifies for the title of "International Doctor", the Secretary shall be responsible for certifying that the requirements b. and d. of Article 23 of these Regulations have been met.

## **Article 35. Filing of the doctoral thesis**

1. Once the doctoral thesis has been approved, the University will take care of its archiving, in open electronic format, in an institutional repository and will send a copy of the thesis in electronic format, together with all the necessary complementary information, to the Ministry of Universities.
2. In exceptional circumstances, determined by the Academic Committee of the corresponding doctoral programme, such as, among others, the participation of companies in the programme, the existence of confidentiality agreements with companies or the possibility of the generation of patents on the content of the thesis, and with the prior authorisation of the Governing Board of the Doctoral School, the University will set up procedures to develop the deposit, defence and archiving of the thesis that ensure that these aspects are not made public.

## **Article 36. Extraordinary Doctorate Award**

1. The Governing Board of UNIE University is the competent body for proposing the awarding of extraordinary doctoral prizes, informing the Rector of the same for approval by the Governing Council. Likewise, the Governing Board will draw up a scale that will be used to evaluate the candidates. It will take into account, among other aspects, the following: scientific production valued, according to area, according to the CNEAI criteria; international mention; thesis defended under co-supervision; stays in prestigious research centres; participation in research projects; national and regional Research Staff Training grants; awards or recognitions obtained; national and international congresses in which they have participated; as well as other significant merits. All the merits provided by the interested parties from their enrolment in the

doctoral programme up to one year after the defence will be assessed.

2. One Extraordinary Doctorate Award may be granted for each doctorate programme regulated by R.D. 99/2011 to those theses that are particularly meritorious and have obtained the maximum grade, with one Extraordinary Award proposal for every ten doctoral theses defended or fraction thereof.
3. The panels responsible for proposing the awarding of Extraordinary Prizes shall be appointed by the Rector, at the proposal of the Governing Board. The tribunals will be made up of three doctors with permanent links to the University who have merits equivalent to those required to be a tutor on the Doctoral Programme. The directors or tutors of the doctoral theses competing for the award may not be part of them.
4. The minimum time limit for the submission of applications is 20 working days from the day following the publication of the call for applications. The selection board will have a maximum of three months from the closing date for the submission of applications to draw up its proposal, which must be justified.

## Chapter VII. Indications of academic fraud

### Article 37. Possible fraudulent activities

1. UNIE University will act with determination in cases of alleged academic fraud or deviations in research that have occurred in the preparation and presentation of doctoral theses. The latter include, among others, falsification of data, plagiarism of other people's work, as well as failure to comply with intellectual and industrial property obligations established by law.
2. The procedure for monitoring the activities described above may refer to doctoral theses submitted, as well as those defended.

## Chapter VIII - Amendment of the Regulations

### Article 38. Persons entitled and procedure

The proposal to amend these Regulations is the responsibility of the Vice-Rector for Research, who may delegate this power to the Director of the Doctoral School. Such a reform must subsequently be approved by the Governing Bodies of UNIE University.

The amendment procedure shall be in accordance with UNIE University's internal regulations.

### Additional provision

All the denominations contained in the present regulations that are carried out in the common gender shall be understood to be carried out and used indistinctly in the masculine or feminine gender, depending on the sex of the incumbent who carries them out.

### Transitional provision

Until the Doctoral School provided for in these Regulations is set up, the Doctoral Commission of UNIE University shall continue with the functions assigned to it until now.



These regulations shall enter into force on the day following their approval, and shall be published through the internal and external information systems commonly used by the University.