

## DOCTORAL THESIS CHARTER

*Approved by the Executive Board of the UNS on April 21, 1999,  
in application of the decree of September 3, 1998,  
revised version approved by the Executive Board of the UNS on January 28, 2014*

### **Preface**

The preparation of a PhD thesis is based on a voluntary agreement between the PhD student, the PhD supervisor or, if applicable, the two co-supervisors, and the director of the host laboratory. This agreement covers the choice of the PhD project and the work conditions required for the advancement of the research. The PhD supervisor (or co-supervisors) and the student therefore each have very stringent rights and duties.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In the remainder of this document, PhD "supervisor" can also refer to PhD "co-supervisors"

The purpose of this charter is to reiterate these rights and duties, to inform and hold the involved parties accountable, and in this way to allow the PhD supervisor, the director of the host laboratory, the director of the Doctoral School, and the PhD student to all be fully informed when signing the agreement, at the time of matriculation.

The principles outlined in this charter also apply for joint PhD projects with other institutions.

The content of this thesis charter is available on the website of all the Doctoral Schools as well as of the College of Doctoral Studies (CED, *Collège des Études Doctorales*). This updated version of the charter will be distributed to all researchers and teacher-researchers with accreditation to supervise research (HDR) at the university, to inform them and to allow them to provide the charter to any PhD students that they may supervise in the future.

### **Article 1: Information provided to the future PhD student**

#### ***1.1 The website of the Doctoral School***

Each Doctoral School must clearly state on its website:

- its activities (rules and regulations, composition of the administrative board, proposed training courses, and links to the university service in charge of organizing career-oriented training courses);
- the research disciplines covered by the school, and the host laboratories affiliated with it;
- basic indicators including the number of students matriculated per year and the number of thesis defenses occurring in the previous two years;
- conditions to be fulfilled regarding PhD funding;
- the different types of PhD funding that are available: doctoral contracts, private and public fellowships, CIFRE contracts, regional fellowships, funding from EPSTs (CNRS, INSERM, INRA, INRIA, ...), etc.

## ***1.2 The interview with the prospective PhD supervisor***

- In interviews preceding the initial matriculation of the student as a PhD candidate, the future PhD supervisor will inform the student about the number of other students he or she currently supervises and about the subject of their research projects, and will inform the student of the number of PhD theses defended under his or her supervision in the two previous years.

- The maximum number of PhD students that a researcher or teacher-researcher may supervise is fixed, depending on the research discipline in question, by the scientific council of the University, in accordance with the decree of August 7, 2006. This number can be found on the CED website.

- The prospective PhD supervisor will assist the student in clearly situating the PhD training in the context of his or her professional and personal plans.

- The prospective PhD supervisor will inform the future PhD student about the specific selection process for the Doctoral School (required level of grades obtained during the Master's degree, selection procedure based on application file and/or oral presentation, funding conditions by the Doctoral School and, potentially, by the host laboratory). The supervisor will assist the student in the search for funding opportunities.

## **Article 2: PhD project**

The PhD supervisor and the doctoral student will define, together, the PhD project, in line with the research areas covered in the host laboratory. If the project has previously been defined and announced in the context of the overall research strategy of the host laboratory, the supervisor must clearly present the outlines of the project during an interview with the student.

The director of the host laboratory, who will sign the PhD enrollment form, will act to guarantee that the proposed project is coherent with the overall research themes of the laboratory and with the skills available in the laboratory. If the project is proposed by the student, the supervisor may ask for modifications to be made to the proposed project to fully ensure that such coherence is present.

The PhD supervisor and the laboratory director must take into account the standard duration of a PhD thesis, i.e. three years, when evaluating the feasibility of the project.

To facilitate the initiation of the research project, the PhD supervisor will help orient the student with respect to the relevant literature.

The description of the thesis in progress through the new STEP application, which has replaced the previous central register of theses, is not subject to any particular regulations. The conditions governing the particular use of this application, which will reflect the specific practices of the research discipline in question, will be specified by the internal regulations of each Doctoral School.

## **Article 3: Duration and tracking of the PhD project**

### ***3.1 Regulatory provisions***

According to the Ministerial Decree of August 7, 2006, the time allotted for the preparation of a PhD thesis is three years. At the end of the second year, the PhD supervisor and the student should discuss a possible thesis defense date, in view of the progress and results obtained at that point.

During an annual meeting between the supervisor and the student, the student's progress will be discussed and evaluated. As a result of this discussion, an evaluation form provided by the Doctoral School must be completed. This evaluation form, whose content is freely determined by each Doctoral

School, must be submitted with each subsequent reenrollment at the university.

Extensions beyond the initial three-year limit can be granted, *on an exceptional basis and following a specific request by the student justifying the need for the extension. Extensions beyond the fourth year must remain exceptional*, justified by external professional activities of the student or of particular difficulties encountered during his or her research. Such extensions must be approved by the head of the university, acting on a proposal made by the head of the Doctoral School, based on the recommendations of the PhD supervisor, the director of the host laboratory, and the administrative board of the Doctoral School; in such cases, sufficient evidence of the progress of the PhD project must be provided.

Maternity leave or long-term sick leave will automatically extend the duration of the PhD.

In all cases, the student must reenroll in the university every year throughout the entire duration of the PhD.

### **3.2 PhD progress tracking**

- The PhD supervisor must commit to dedicating a substantial amount of his or her time to the supervision of the PhD student. At the beginning of the PhD, the student and the supervisor must agree on the principle of holding regular meetings. The supervisor will agree to monitor the student's research progress on a regular basis, and to discuss any possible new directions to be taken in light of obtained results. The supervisor will commit to reading scientific documents produced by the doctoral student and to providing guidance to help improve the writing of such documents or the scientific approach taken by the student. This will obviously include the doctoral dissertation itself. The supervisor will inform the student about the positive evaluations as well as the potential criticisms or objections that might be raised by others, in particular to help the student prepare for the thesis defense.

- The student's career plans should be discussed as early as possible, and will be addressed during a specific meeting during the third year of the PhD.

- The supervisor will advise the student regarding the choice of doctoral training courses, to identify those courses that will best help with the completion of the PhD and help him or her prepare for his or her future career.

- The PhD student will commit the time necessary for the advancement of the project and will follow an appropriate work schedule. The student will provide his or her supervisor with as many progress reports as the project requires and will present his or her work in laboratory group meetings and doctoral seminars. The student must inform his or her supervisor about the progress of his or her work and any encountered difficulties.

- The PhD student must comply with the rules and regulations of the Doctoral School that he or she is enrolled in, and in particular will participate in the training courses and seminars organized by the Doctoral school itself or on its behalf by the university's continuing education service. The student must also participate in any additional training courses recommended by the PhD supervisor. The director of the Doctoral school will provide the student with a certificate of completion for all training courses attended.

- Host laboratories are advised to put into place a permanent regulatory procedure that will allow the student to have in depth exchanges with one or more researchers in addition to the PhD supervisor (thesis advisory committee, independent faculty mentor, formal discussions in the context of an annual PhD student meeting, etc.).

- Towards the end of the PhD, the PhD supervisor and the director of the Doctoral School will inform the student about the thesis defense procedure and about the different steps and deadlines to be taken into account when organizing the defense.

#### **Article 4: The student's status in the host laboratory**

The PhD student will be a full member of the host laboratory. He/she will officially be a “temporary member of the laboratory” and will have access to the same resources as permanent teacher-researchers and researchers to be able to complete his or her research project (equipment and other resources, computers, documentation and access to the literature, participation in seminars and conferences, presentation of his or her work at scientific meetings), to the extent possible given the available financial and physical resources of the laboratory and according to conditions for resource attribution defined by the internal rules and regulations of the laboratory.

PhD students will be represented by at least one elected member of the administrative board of the host laboratory.

The PhD student must adhere to the internal regulations of the laboratory and respect all rules related to the collective life of the laboratory and the ethical principles of scientific research. In particular, the student will sign and adhere to the IT charter and the anti-plagiarism charter of the University.

#### **Article 5: Intellectual property**

During the course of the PhD, the student will benefit from the scientific and technical supervision of the host laboratory and will have access to its knowledge and expertise. In this context, the student may obtain results that are subject to intellectual property law.

- A PhD student with a salary or equivalent will be subject to the legal provisions outlined for employees under the Intellectual Property Code and must comply with the policy regarding intellectual property protection of the host laboratory.

- A PhD student who does not have a salary will agree to negotiate with the University, in good faith, the conditions for the commercialization of results obtained through his or her research, if necessary in the context of a licensing agreement.

In both cases (PhD student with or without a salary), once the PhD supervisor has been informed the student will also agree to notify the commercialization or technology transfer office of the university (or, if applicable, the relevant office within the host laboratory's institution).

If the PhD student qualifies as an inventor or author as defined by the Intellectual Property Code, his or her name will be mentioned as such on the intellectual property document in question.

#### **Article 6: publication and use of the PhD work**

The PhD supervisor will encourage the student to publish the results of his or her research (on his or her own or as a co-author) and more generally to promote the dissemination of the work through participation in meetings, seminars, etc.

The PhD supervisor and/or director of the host laboratory will also commit to:

- mentioning the name of the PhD student as a co-author or contributor on all written or oral communications that are based on the work of the student, even after the thesis defense;
- advising the PhD student on the best strategy for commercializing or otherwise making use of the results of the PhD work.
- generally making use of the research results of the PhD student.

However, in view of the provisions outlined in article 5 (“Intellectual Property”), if the research results included within a potential publication or oral communication are themselves subject to intellectual property protection, it is understood that the publication or communication may be delayed for a period of time defined in agreement with the commercialization or technology transfer office of the University.

Accordingly, the PhD student will commit to:

- not publishing any results from his or her PhD work without the prior approval of the PhD supervisor,
- respecting confidentiality provisions imposed by the laboratory or contractual agreements established between the University and potential third parties (particularly in the case of externally funded PhDs).

### **Article 7: Conflict resolution procedure**

Should the above-mentioned commitments be broken repeatedly, the PhD student or supervisor may initiate a procedure for conflict resolution.

The administrative board of the appropriate Doctoral school will be advised of the request for mediation. The board will deliberate on the request, with the participation of two PhD students from laboratories other than that of the student concerned. The board will propose a solution that will allow the PhD thesis to be completed.

Should the mediation by the board be unsuccessful, the student or the supervisor can ask for arbitration by the head of the University. The solution proposed by the president, which will take into account the recommendations of the scientific council of the University, will be binding for both parties.

### **Article 8: After the PhD**

After graduation, the PhD supervisor and the director of the Doctoral school will provide the newly awarded PhD with all the information at their disposal regarding the student's future professional career.

When the PhD student has an interest in pursuing an academic career in France, the PhD supervisor or director of the Doctoral school will provide all the necessary information regarding the procedure for obtaining a "qualification" from the National University Council (CNU).

To allow future PhD students to be informed about potential career opportunities and about the career outcomes of PhD graduates from the institution, all new PhDs will keep their PhD supervisor and the Doctoral school informed about their careers for five years following the award of the PhD.

The PhD student\*: The PhD supervisor\*: The co-supervisor\*:

The laboratory director\*: The director of the Doctoral School\*:

\* Write your name, the date and sign, preceded by "Lu et approuvé" (I have read the above and hereby agree)