

Doctoral Charter

Université Paris Sciences et Lettres

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1. Introduction

Preparing a PhD at Université Paris Sciences et Lettres (PSL) and one of its Schools depends first and foremost¹ on a mutual agreement between the PhD candidate and the thesis supervisor. This agreement covers both the subject matter and the working conditions required to carry out the research. The thesis supervisor and the PhD candidate therefore have rights and responsibilities.

This charter sets out these reciprocal commitments by recalling the code of ethics that underpins applicable regulations as well as proven practices throughout the diversity of disciplines at Université PSL. The purpose of this charter is to guarantee high-quality scientific research.

This charter covers the preparation of a doctoral dissertation within the framework of a Doctoral School accredited or co-accredited by PSL. Such accreditation must comply with assessment and academic training conditions applicable to the Doctoral School where the student is registered. Furthermore, the doctoral training is part of the general framework of the PSL doctoral policy, coordinated and implemented by the PSL Doctoral College, which brings together all doctoral schools co-accredited by PSL as well as its doctoral programs. The PSL Doctoral College contributes to sharing best-practices and promoting PSL doctoral programs.

When registering for the first year of a doctoral program, the PhD candidate signs this charter along with the thesis supervisor and the director of the Research Unit in compliance with the principles set out below and the code of ethics that governs the research field.²

Students working under a PhD joint-supervision have the same rights and must meet the same conditions set out in the agreement.

This charter was drafted in agreement with the Decree dated 26 August 2022, amending the Decree of 25 May 2016, specifying the national framework for training and the conditions for the awarding of a doctoral degree (NOR (French standard): MENS1611139A) and sets out the conditions established within the framework of the PSL Doctoral College.

In compliance with this charter, an individual training agreement, signed by all the parties involved when a PhD candidate first registers, sets out the conditions for each PhD. This agreement may be amended if necessary at every re-registration.

¹ This agreement assumes that the PhD candidate's host laboratory, to which the thesis supervisor is attached, is able to admit the PhD candidate. This matter is not addressed here, nor are relations with the PhD candidate's doctoral school.

² See "[A guide for promoting Ethical and Responsible Research](https://comite-ethique.cnrs.fr/guide-pratique/)" <https://comite-ethique.cnrs.fr/guide-pratique/>, by the CNRS Ethical Committee.

2. General organization of the doctoral dissertation

2.1. The dissertation, a step forward in a personal project and a professional career

Preparing a doctoral dissertation means training *for* and *through* research. The goals and standards required must be clearly defined, as part of a personal life project and a professional career. This implies clearly defining the objectives and the specific means to achieve them.

The management team (Doctoral School, Research Unit or Team, doctoral program) informs the candidate of possible funding opportunities to finance their dissertation (doctoral contract, corporate financing including CIFRE agreements, financing by regional government, associations, etc.).

Once registered with a Doctoral School, the student must comply with its regulations and obligations, particularly regarding courses, conferences, seminars, etc. Information on these activities is distributed by the Doctoral School and, if applicable, by the head of the doctoral program involved.

The PhD candidate should receive information about academic and non-academic opportunities in their field. The Doctoral School and the host research unit or team provide the student with national statistics on the future of young doctoral graduates and information about the professional careers of graduates from the host research laboratory.

The PhD candidate should work on specifying their desired professional career as soon as possible. Students must care about life after their PhD and manage their doctoral work in such a way as to open up future opportunities. The doctoral staff are there to help the candidate clarify their career ambitions, to study feasibility, to advise, and to help the student through administrative processes. Depending on the discipline and the research center, it could be useful to offer an array of additional training programs such as teaching experience, a corporate internship for a few weeks, working in a laboratory abroad, *etc.*

2.2. Topic and feasibility of the dissertation

Registration for doctoral studies specifies the doctoral dissertation topic and its context, the host unit (research laboratory, research team) and, when applicable, the PSL doctoral program to which it is attached.

The topic of the doctoral dissertation should lead to an original and informative body of work, which will be feasible in the allotted time frame. The choice of topic is agreed upon between the candidate and the thesis supervisor at the time of registration. The adviser has been chosen because of recognized expertise in the relevant research field, and should help the student uncovering the innovative nature of the doctoral topic in a scientific context and verifying its relevance. The director must also ensure that the student demonstrates a spirit of innovation.

Those supervising the doctoral dissertation must define and provide the means necessary to accomplishing the work. To do so, the PhD candidate must be fully part of the host research laboratory, with access to the resources required for such research, (e.g. documentary resources, equipment,

computer, technology, documentation, access to seminars, colloquia and conferences, the presentation of their work in seminars, conferences and colloquia, etc.). Finally, members of the host team must require the student to respect a certain number of rules related to scientific ethics and the collective environment they all share. The PhD candidate is actively involved in the life of the host laboratory, but cannot be assigned tasks that would interfere with the progress of the doctoral dissertation.

The PhD candidate makes a commitment to a given time frame and pace of work and must inform the thesis supervisor of the progress made and any difficulties encountered. All PhD candidates must demonstrate initiative in carrying out their research work.

2.3. Supervision and monitoring of the dissertation

The PhD candidate is entitled to personal supervision by the PhD supervisor, who shall agree to devoting a significant amount of time to that purpose. Regular and frequent scheduled meetings are necessary, to be set out in the initial agreement and maintained throughout the doctoral work.

The PhD candidate agrees to submitting as many progress reports as necessary to the thesis supervisor, and to making presentations of the dissertation work in internal seminars or outside the host institution. The thesis supervisor mobilizes to follow the progress of the work on a regular basis and to consider new directions for the dissertation in light of its intermediary results. Up to completion of the dissertation, the director must inform the student of any positive observations, objections or criticism of the work.

An individual monitoring committee for the PhD candidate ensures that the program is running as it should, in agreement with the doctoral charter and the training agreement.

The PhD candidate's individual monitoring committee ensures that the student is supported throughout the duration of the PhD degree. It must meet before the student registers in second year and then before each further registration until the end of the PhD.

Interviews by the individual monitoring committee are organized following three distinct stages: presentation of progress in the doctoral work and discussions, interview with the student without the thesis supervisor, interview with the thesis supervisor without the student.

During the interview with the student, the committee reviews the conditions of the training program and progress made in the student's research. During this same interview, the committee especially focuses on identifying any form of conflict, discrimination, sexist behavior or moral and sexual harassment. It makes recommendations and sends a report of the interview to the Director of the Doctoral School, the PhD candidate and the thesis supervisor.

If any problems arise, the PhD candidate's individual monitoring committee immediately informs the Doctoral School, which takes any necessary measure related to the student's situation and the progress of their PhD.

The composition, organization and functioning of this committee are established by the Board of the Doctoral School, which ensures that the composition of the individual monitoring committee remains constant as much as possible throughout the student's doctoral studies. The student's individual monitoring committee includes at least one member who is a specialist in the discipline or is connected with the area of study of the dissertation. Whenever possible, the individual monitoring committee includes a member from outside the institution (Université PSL). It also includes a non-specialist member from outside the field of research of the dissertation work. Members of this committee do not participate

in supervising the PhD candidate's work. The Doctoral School ensures that the student is consulted about the composition of their individual monitoring committee before it gathers.

2.4. Length of the dissertation

A doctoral dissertation is a research process subject to a schedule with fixed deadlines, in agreement with the format of all doctoral studies, their legal provisions and in the interest of the PhD candidates themselves. Specifically, working on a dissertation requires the student to re-register for their doctoral studies every year at the university. This renewal must comply with assigned deadlines, exceptions being made only for duly documented reasons.

The regulatory time allotted for completing a doctoral dissertation¹ is three years full-time equivalent spent on research. In other cases, the allotted time may be no more than six years. On submission of a justified request by the student, an annual extension may exceptionally be granted by the director of the institution, following the PhD supervisor's demand and after approval by the monitoring committee and the director of the Doctoral School.

2.5. Publication and promotion of the dissertation

The quality and impact of the dissertation is measured by publications, patents and industry reports based on the work, whether this is the dissertation itself or articles published during or after preparing the PhD manuscript. The PhD candidate's position among the co-authors should reflect their investment in the work, provided that this is compatible with practices specific to each discipline. Rules relating to publication and intellectual property are those of the host laboratory or, if not, the institution where the dissertation is being prepared.

As authors, PhD candidates have sole responsibility for the content of their dissertation. In particular, candidates must make sure that they have all necessary permissions to reproduce extracts from works they did not produce themselves in their manuscript. Such permission must be sought from authors or publishers. As an exception to this rule, only short quotations, as defined in the French Intellectual Property Code, shall be authorized, provided that the name of the author and the source are credited.

2.6. Scientific integrity

Université PSL supports the production of research work by PhD candidates that complies with the principles of scientific integrity and the ethics of research. PhD candidates have access to a training course on the principles and requirements of research ethics and scientific integrity, which they are bound to respect throughout their doctoral studies. Université PSL, Doctoral School directors, PhD supervisors, Research Unit directors and everyone involved in supervising or contributing to the work of a PhD candidate agree to support this commitment.

¹ Article 14 of the Decree of 25 May 2016

2.7. Doctoral oath

After a successful dissertation defense, the new Doctor swears an oath, individually agreeing to respect the principles and requirements of scientific integrity in their future career, in whatever sector or field of activity. The doctoral oath may be taken in French and/or English. The report on the dissertation defense will specify whether the Doctor has taken the oath and will include the following wording, for example: “Mr/Ms... has taken the oath - YES/NO”

The wording of the doctoral oath on scientific integrity is as follows:

"In the presence of my peers. With the completion of my doctorate in [field], in my quest for knowledge, I have carried out demanding research, demonstrated intellectual rigor, ethical reflection, and respect for the principles of research integrity. As I pursue my professional career, whatever my chosen field, I pledge to the greatest of my ability, to continue to maintain integrity in my relationship to knowledge, to my methods and to my results”.

2.8. After the dissertation defense

The diploma or recognition of the diploma will not be issued until the final version of the dissertation manuscript and all documents relating to the defense and the dissemination of the dissertation have been submitted digitally.

To provide future PhD candidates with information on job opportunities, PhD graduates agree to respond to all requests for information about their professional careers over several years (and for at least 5 years after obtaining their doctoral degree). This information is to be transmitted mainly by responding to survey questionnaires sent by the Doctoral School or the Doctoral College, which implies that any change of postal or electronic address is communicated.

2.9. Mediation procedures

In the event of a conflict between the PhD candidate and the PhD supervisor on the one hand, or the PhD candidate and the Directors of the host laboratory on the other hand, a mediator shall be appointed by the director of the Doctoral School (if it is monodisciplinary) or by the head of the doctoral program (if it is multidisciplinary). The Doctoral School Board may be called upon by the director of the Doctoral School:

- if the conflict persists after the mediation;
- if the mediator deems it necessary;
- in the event of a conflict between the PhD candidate and the head of the doctoral program involved, or the director of the Doctoral School.

If the Doctoral School Board considers that, due to its position, it cannot guarantee the necessary neutrality, it submits the case to the PSL Doctoral College Board, which sets up an *ad hoc* commission.

Should such mediation fail, the PhD candidate or one of the other signatories to this charter can request a ruling from the head of the institution where the doctoral work is carried out.

3. Respective commitments of the parties involved in the doctoral dissertation

In view of the principles set out in this charter, the different parties involved commit to the following undertakings.

3.1. Fighting discrimination, harassment and sexual and gender-based violence

The PhD candidate agrees to take a course on sexual and gender-based violence.

If the thesis supervisor has not already received training in these subjects, they undertake a course aimed at preventing all forms of discrimination, harassment and sexual and gender-based violence.

If the Doctoral School is made aware of acts of violence, discrimination, moral or sexual harassment or sexist behavior, it will immediately report to the PSL helpline against harassment and violence.

3.2. Thesis supervisor

The thesis supervisor informs the PhD candidate of the number of dissertations currently under their supervision. As mentioned above, the supervisor provides personal and appropriate guidance and agrees to regularly scheduled meetings with their PhD candidate. The adviser may have to correct the student's work in order to channel it in a more scientifically favorable direction. Should the student be authorized to embark on a doctoral dissertation work without funding, the adviser must support the student in seeking financial backing. The PhD supervisor must inform the PhD candidate of the resources available for their dissertation work and must support the PhD candidate in the dissemination of their research work (publications, attendance of conferences, etc.).

3.3. PhD candidate

The PhD candidate must comply with all rules, particularly those referring to ethics, all charters and health and safety instructions of the host laboratory. The PhD candidate must submit as many progress reports as necessary to the thesis supervisor. All PhD candidates have an obligation to inform their PhD supervisor on the progress made in the dissertation work and any difficulties encountered. They must demonstrate initiative in their research work.

The PhD candidate also agrees to present the doctoral dissertation work in seminars at the host research laboratory and the doctoral school, or outside the institution where the dissertation is being prepared,

and particularly at venues within the scope of PSL. PhD candidates must participate actively in the life and activities of the host research laboratory. They must also comply with the organization of the doctoral school, particularly regarding any courses that are offered, and, if applicable, the organization of the doctoral program with which they are registered.

3.4. Director of the host Research Unit

The director of the host research unit guarantees that the material means and access to resources will be made available to the PhD candidate. They agree to integrate the student into the host unit from the start, by ensuring the appropriate facilities to carry out their research work, insofar as the laboratory has the necessary means. The director undertakes to inform the student about the life and activities of the research unit.

3.5. Head of the Doctoral Program

In the case of a multidisciplinary doctoral school, the head of the doctoral course of study (program or major) guarantees the quality and relevance of the doctoral training offered to the PhD candidate. He/She informs the PhD candidate of the content and methods used in this course and act as a key intermediary for the PhD candidate throughout their doctoral studies.

3.6. Director of the Doctoral School

The director of the Doctoral School oversees compliance with the rules that govern the doctorate, recruiting conditions and monitoring of the PhD candidate. The director implements a doctoral training plan and carries out career monitoring of doctors graduating from the school. The internal regulations of the doctoral school can be seen to complement this charter and set out conditions for the supervision and funding of the dissertation, monitoring methods and essentials for the dissertation defense.

Agreement

The undersigned hereby declares having full knowledge of the provisions contained in the Doctoral Charter, implemented within the Université Paris Sciences et Lettres (PSL), pursuant to the Decree of 25 May 2016, amended by the Decree of 26 August 2022, specifying the national framework for training and the conditions for the awarding of a national PhD degree, approved by the PSL Board of Directors on December 15, 2022.

They hereby undertake to comply with the provisions herein.

Paris, on

PhD candidate
Doctoral School:

Last name, first name, signature

Thesis supervisor

Last name, first name, signature

Director of Research Unit

Last name, first name, signature:

President of Université PSL

Alain FUCHS

