

Rīga Stradiņš University
Academic Regulations III

Academic Regulations for Doctoral Studies

Issued in accordance with Section 15¹, Clause 3, Sub-Clause c and Clause 6 of the
Law on Higher Education Institutions

1. General Provisions

- 1.1. Rīga Stradiņš University Academic Regulations III - Academic Regulations for Doctoral Studies (hereinafter - the Regulations) shall determine the procedure of studies for doctoral study programmes.
- 1.2. Doctoral studies at Rīga Stradiņš University (hereinafter - RSU) involve independent work of a doctoral student supervised by a supervisor of the doctoral thesis and academic staff for obtaining a doctoral degree.

2. Terms used

- 2.1. **Academic leave** – a study break from active studies for a semester or academic year due to medical indications, social reasons, family reasons or the birth of a child, maintaining the status of a student. Academic leave is granted only to the students who make good academic progress and who have paid their tuition fees.
- 2.2. **Academic year** - the period of study at a higher education institution, divided into two semesters: autumn semester (October to February) and spring semester (March to September, with August being a free month).
- 2.3. **Academic integrity** - a set of core values inherent in each representative of RSU staff, including students, which includes honesty, ethics, trust and fairness and is the basis for decision-making and undertaking of activities in studies, research and academic environment.
- 2.4. **Academic failure** – failure to fulfil the academic commitments of the doctoral student provided for in the study course and/or failure to pass examinations, including failure to defend scientific research work.

- 2.5. **Remote study** - a part of the full-time education process in which students learn using information and communication technologies without being physically present in the same room or training site as the lecturer. In the process of remote studies, the lecturer conducts online lectures and classes, including seminars; prepares and places study material in the *e-learning environment*, which the student learns remotely; prepares descriptions for the assignments of the student's remote independent work, organises remote studies using online communication, and evaluates the outcome of the student's independent work.
- 2.6. **Study programme** - a form of doctoral study organisation with specific requirements, the successful completion of which allows a doctoral student to obtain a proof of successful completion of the doctoral study programme and to become a candidate for a doctoral degree.
- 2.7. **Director of the study programme** - a person approved by the Senate decision who is responsible for the development and implementation of the doctoral study programme.
- 2.8. **Doctoral student's plan / report on the accomplishments during the year of study** - an individual study record document completed by a doctoral student on the scientific, research and pedagogical activities planned for the year of study, which specifies the assignments to be carried out during the doctoral study year, as well as provides an overview of the accomplished scientific, study and pedagogical work in the respective year of study.
- 2.9. **E-grades** - an electronic register of a student's progress in the e-learning environment.
- 2.10. **E-learning environment** - an electronic online learning environment where the materials necessary for studies are available and where RSU provides access to the materials necessary for studies, students submit coursework intended for the study course and the teaching staff post assessment of students' coursework.
- 2.11. **Exclusion/withdrawal** - removal of a student from the list of RSU students in accordance with the procedures provided for in RSU Internal Rules and Regulations for Studies.
- 2.12. **Hybrid learning** - a form of full-time studies in which part of students learn face-to-face, but another part remotely. For example, in a class where a lecturer works with students in an auditorium, some students engage in discussions and other activities via video conferencing.
- 2.13. **Matriculation** – enrolment of a person who has fulfilled admission requirements in the list of RSU students.

- 2.14. **Credit point (CP)** - a unit of study accounting corresponding to a student's 40 academic hours of work in contact with the course lecturer and carrying out independent work within the course. During the year of study, 44 credit points must be obtained in full-time studies, which correspond to 66 points of *European Credit Transfer System* (ECTS). During the year of study, less than 44 credit points must be obtained in part-time studies and less than 40 academic hours per week must be given.
- 2.15. **Lecture** – a form of organisation of studies, in which a lecturer outlines the theoretical material of the study course. The lecture is a source of information for studies, the means of promoting the doctoral student's cognitive activity. The lecture can be delivered also as a video lecture.
- 2.16. **Class** – a form of organisation of studies, in which doctoral students under the guidance of academic staff broaden their theoretical knowledge acquired during lectures and independently, as well as acquire relevant practical skills. In remote studies, classes may be conducted via video conferencing.
- 2.17. **Plagiarism** - presenting ideas borrowed from other sources without due reference to those sources, further conveying ideas expressed or written by another person as their own, without giving a precise and correctly worded reference to the author and source concerned, or repeating their own ideas that were previously made public without acknowledging the original source (self-plagiarism).
- 2.18. **Student portal “MyRSU”** - a portal where each RSU student using a personalised username and password can obtain information about their assessment, view their individualised timetables, access library databases, keep track of their financial liabilities, read personalised news, write and submit applications and submissions, as well as access the e-learning environment, e-mail assigned by RSU and e-services.
- 2.19. **Year of study** – a period of study at a higher education institution for implementation of specific part of the study programme (for example, the first year of study).
- 2.20. **Study course description (Form No M-3)** - a document which defines the prerequisites for the commencement of the course, defines the aim of the study course and the learning outcomes to be achieved, outlines the course content required to achieve the learning outcomes, describes the independent work of the student and defines the criteria for the assessment of the learning outcomes, the type and form of the examination.
- 2.21. **Study course** - an outline of a system of knowledge, skills and competence, organised at a certain level and scope, which is relevant to the study programme and for the achievement of which learning outcomes are defined and credit points are awarded.

- 2.22. **Study programme plan** (Form No D-1) - an annual study programme plan approved at the meeting of the Council of Deans.
- 2.23. **Research integrity** - a set of principles, professional, legal and ethical obligations that ensure good and responsible research practice.
- 2.24. **Supervisor of doctoral thesis** - Doctor Habilitus or Doctor of Science (PhD or analogue), who takes an active part in scientific research work in the field or sub-field of science, as evidenced by publications and expert status in the database of the Latvian Council of Science. The status of expert of the Latvian Council of Science must be active for the entire duration of the doctoral thesis supervision (an interval of up to twelve months between the expiry and the revalidation of the expert status is allowed). Foreign supervisors must have publications that comply with the requirements of the legislation on the granting of the right of expert in the field of science. The supervisor of the doctoral thesis shall be approved by a decree of the Vice-Rector for Science.
- 2.25. **Doctoral thesis** - independently produced scientific work in cooperation with the supervisor of the doctoral thesis, which contains the results of original scientific research and provides new findings in the relevant field or sub-field of science. The research may be conducted in collaboration with a partner institution. The doctoral thesis may be a dissertation, a collection of scientific articles or a monograph.
- 2.26. **Assessment sheet** - an electronic document in the e-learning environment, in which the lecturer enters the assessment and date of the examination. Assessment sheets shall be submitted electronically.
- 2.27. **Partner institution** - a research institution (university, higher education institution, scientific institute, higher education institution or state agency - scientific institute) or other institution (archive, library, company, state agency, state institution), which is not a department of RSU and which is able to provide material and technical equipment or information base for the development of the doctoral thesis and with which a contract is usually concluded.

3. Types and methods of knowledge assessment

- 3.1. Assessment of knowledge, skills and competence of doctoral students depending on the specific character of the study course may be organised by using various assessment methods.
- 3.2. **Test work** - a written or computer-based test of knowledge during lectures, classes and seminars.

- 3.3. **Report** - a written account prepared by a doctoral student in accordance with the requirements set out in the description of the study course and in relation to the topic of the doctoral thesis.
- 3.4. **Test** – is taken upon completion of the study course or a significant section of the study course. A test is organised in a similar way to the examination; assessment in it is “pass” or “fail”.
- 3.5. **Examination** - a type of assessment of knowledge and skills for the study course (or parts thereof), in which the knowledge assessment is given in marks using a 10-point grading scale.
- 3.6. Various assessment techniques may be used during examinations and tests:
 - 3.6.1. written;
 - 3.6.2. oral;
 - 3.6.3. computer-based;
 - 3.6.4. combined forms (for example, written and oral)
- 3.7. **Doctoral examination in the field / sub-field** - a type of assessment of knowledge and skills in the respective field / sub-field, in which a doctoral student is working on his/her doctoral thesis. The knowledge is assessed by the Doctoral Examination Board of the relevant field/sub-field.
- 3.8. **Doctoral examination in a foreign language** - a type of assessment of knowledge and skills in a foreign language about the topic of the doctoral thesis, that is assessed by the members of the relevant field/sub-field and foreign language committee.
- 3.9. The doctoral student can acquaint themselves with the assessment on the student portal (My RSU).
- 3.10. After the announcement / publication of the assessment in the e-learning environment, the doctoral student shall have the right to request and to receive an explanation for the mistakes made.

4. Knowledge assessment system

- 4.1. A 10-point grading scale is used for the assessment of knowledge and skills of doctoral students in compliance with the national standard for higher education:
 - 4.1.1. with distinction (10) – knowledge, skills and competence exceed the requirements of the study programme, study module or the study course and they testify to the ability to carry out independent research and deep understanding of problems;

- 4.1.2. excellent (9) – knowledge, skills and competence fully comply with the requirements set for the study programme, study module or the study course; the ability to use the acquired knowledge independently;
 - 4.1.3. very good (8) – the requirements of the study programme, study module or the study course are completely met, but there is insufficient understanding on certain issues to use the knowledge independently for addressing more complex problems;
 - 4.1.4. good (7) – in general the requirements of the study programme, study module or the study course are met but sometimes the inability to use the acquired knowledge independently is detected;
 - 4.1.5. almost good (6) – the requirements of the study programme, study module or the study course are met, but there is a lack of deep understanding of the problem and inability to use the acquired knowledge;
 - 4.1.6. satisfactory (5) – in total, the study programme, the study module or the study course is acquired but there is insufficient knowledge of certain issues and inability to use the acquired knowledge;
 - 4.1.7. almost satisfactory (4) – in total, the study programme, the study module or the study course is acquired, however, there is insufficient understanding of some basic concepts and there are considerable difficulties in practical application of the acquired knowledge;
 - 4.1.8. weak (3) – the knowledge is superficial and incomplete; the student is unable to use it in specific situations;
 - 4.1.9. poor (2) – there is superficial knowledge of only some issues; most of the study programme, study module and the study course are not acquired;
 - 4.1.10. very poor (1) – there is no understanding of the fundamentals of the course and there is almost no knowledge of the study programme, study module or the study course.
- 4.2. If a doctoral student fails to attend the examination, the doctoral student shall not get the assessment, and the lecturer shall record the fact of absence by entering “no-show” in the section of the e-assessment provided for this purpose.
 - 4.3. A doctoral student is successful if he/she has received the assessment “almost satisfactory” (4 points) or higher. The assessment “almost satisfactory” (4 points) shall be given when at least 55 % of the amount of learning outcomes is acquired.
 - 4.4. A 10-point grading system shall not be used for assessment of the test.

- 4.5. The lecturer may assess the achievement of learning outcomes in examinations and tests (for example, computer-based tests and similar) as a percentage aligning it with a 10-point grading scale:
- 4.5.1. from 96 % to 100 % - with distinction (10);
 - 4.5.2. from 85 % to 95 % - excellent (9);
 - 4.5.3. from 75 % to 84 % - very good (8);
 - 4.5.4. from 70 % to 74 % - good (7);
 - 4.5.5. from 65% to 69% - almost good (6);
 - 4.5.6. from 60% to 64% - satisfactory (5);
 - 4.5.7. from 55 % to 59 % - almost satisfactory (4);
 - 4.5.8. from 40 % to 54 % - weak (3);
 - 4.5.9. from 20 % to 39 % - poor (2);
 - 4.5.10. from 0 % to 19 % - very poor (1).
- 4.6. The test is passed and the doctoral student shall get the assessment “pass” if his/her knowledge, skills and competence correspond to the assessment “almost satisfactory” (4 points) and above. If in the test the doctoral student’s knowledge, skills and competence do not correspond to such a level, they get the assessment “fail”.
- 4.7. The principles of academic integrity and research integrity, as well as the types of breaches of academic integrity, and the consequences are determined by RSU Academic Integrity Policy, the guidelines for observing academic integrity and the guidelines for electronic examinations set by the departments.
- 4.8. The University shall be entitled to check any work submitted by a doctoral student by various methods for detecting breaches of academic integrity, in particular, by methods of verifying the originality of the content and by detecting copyright (for example, applying the automated systems in use at RSU). If information about the facts indicating a possible breach of academic integrity is received, the check may be repeated for the already assessed doctoral student's work and also for the work after exclusion of the doctoral student from the doctoral study programme.
- 4.9. If the lecturer or the doctoral thesis supervisor finds possible plagiarism or other breach of academic integrity in the doctoral student's work or action, the doctoral student shall be required to provide explanations no later than within three working days (failure to provide explanations shall not constitute an obstacle to further action). The lecturer or the doctoral thesis supervisor shall evaluate the student’s explanations (if provided) in five working days and shall act in one of the following ways:

- 4.9.1. if no breach of academic integrity has been found, the student shall be allowed to continue the examination and shall be given an assessment corresponding to the content of the work;
 - 4.9.2. if a breach of academic integrity is detected in the mid-semester examination, the student shall lose one attempt at taking the examination and the assessment “very poor” (1 point) shall be given;
 - 4.9.3. if a breach of academic integrity is detected in the final examination, the doctoral student shall be denied the opportunity to take the final examination and the assessment “very poor” (1 point) shall be given, and the Head of the academic department and the Dean of the Department of Doctoral Studies shall be notified of initiating disciplinary proceedings;
 - 4.9.4. if a breach of academic integrity is found in the doctoral student’s work that has already been assessed, the initial assessment of the work shall be amended and the assessment “very poor” (1 point) shall be given, and the Head of the academic department and the Dean of the Department of Doctoral Studies shall be notified of initiating disciplinary proceedings. Where such an amendment has been made to the assessment of a mid-semester examination, which has been a prerequisite for taking the final examination or has cumulatively produced an assessment for the final examination, the right of the student to take the final examination or to obtain a cumulative assessment for the final examination shall be reviewed accordingly and the assessment of that examination shall also be changed.
- 4.10. In the event of a breach of academic integrity in the final examination or in the re-take of the mid-semester examination, the Dean shall, within five working days of receipt of the information specified in sub-paragraphs 4.9.2 to 4.9.4 of the Regulations from the lecturer or the doctoral thesis supervisor, decide whether to initiate disciplinary proceedings (sub-paragraphs 4.9.2 to 4.9.4 of the Regulations) or refuse to initiate disciplinary proceedings (sub-paragraph 4.9.2 of the Regulations). The doctoral student shall be informed of the decision taken within one working day.
- 4.11. In the event of a breach of academic integrity, the lecturer shall have the right to set special rules for the repeated examination, if such is provided, by informing the doctoral student thereof.
- 4.12. The final assessment of the doctoral student’s work (including, the assessment for the final examination, if the breach of academic integrity is established after the

assessment for the final examination has been given) shall be determined within the framework of the disciplinary proceedings.

- 4.13. If the breach concerns two or more doctoral students (students), the assessment of all the involved doctoral students' work shall be reviewed accordingly and the conduct of the doctoral students shall be evaluated.
- 4.14. If information is received indicating a possible serious breach of academic integrity during doctoral studies and the person is no longer a doctoral student at RSU but is not yet a candidate for a doctoral degree, the matter shall be examined by a committee (collegial body) established in accordance with the procedure laid down in RSU internal laws and regulations. The Rector shall make a decision in the case on the basis of the committee's opinion (recommendation) in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Law and the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

5. Organisation of studies

- 5.1. Studies in doctoral study programmes shall be conducted in the official language or in a foreign language in accordance with a licensed or accredited study programme. Studies shall be organised in accordance with the study programme plan for the relevant year of study in the respective academic year within which the scientific research part is completed according to the individual study plan of each doctoral student.
- 5.2. Attendance of classes and lectures, and taking examinations in all the study courses shall be compulsory.
- 5.3. Upon starting each study course, the teaching staff of the academic department shall acquaint doctoral students with the content of the study course and the list of literature required for its completion, the assignments to be completed and the requirements, as well as the type and methods of knowledge and skill assessment. The mode of delivery of the study course (face-to-face, remote learning, hybrid learning) shall be specified in the e-learning environment.
- 5.4. The doctoral student must complete all the examinations prescribed in the description of the study course within the time schedule and time limit laid down in the timetable of lectures, seminars and classes, as well as in accordance with their individual study plan.
- 5.5. If a doctoral student has not participated in one of the classes, the lecturer shall have the right to include additional questions regarding the topics of the missed classes in the examination as prescribed in the description of the study course.

- 5.6. The written work of doctoral students shall be checked and evaluated by the academic staff not later than within 5 (five) working days after submission of the work. The doctoral student's answer in oral examinations shall be assessed within 5 (five) working days. The assessments shall be entered in the e-grades by filling in the electronic assessment sheet, and published on the student portal within 10 (ten) working days of the assessment.
- 5.7. During oral examinations the doctoral student's answers must be recorded and kept for at least 11 (eleven) working days, but in the event of an appeal, until the date on which the final decision takes effect.
- 5.8. Absence from classes and lectures where knowledge, skills and competence are tested, shall be equivalent to the first attempt at the examination, except in the cases referred to in paragraphs 5.9 and 5.10 when a doctoral student retains the opportunity to take the examination twice.
- 5.9. If a doctoral student previously plans not to attend a class for valid reasons, for example, to participate in events defending the honour of the University or the country (scientific conferences, seminars, exchange visits, etc.), the doctoral student shall submit documents supporting the absence through MyRSU in a timely manner before the planned absence.
- 5.10. The doctoral student shall inform the lecturer of the respective class, the Director of the study programme and the Dean about the reasons for the previously unplanned absence within 5 (five) working days after returning to studies by submitting a document confirming incapacity for work in case of illness or a written explanation in case of any other valid reason.
- 5.11. The Director of the study programme and the Dean shall evaluate the documents regarding non-attendance of classes within 5 (five) working days after receipt thereof and shall provide the information regarding the evaluation results to the doctoral student and the academic department. The Dean or the Director of the study programme shall be entitled to request the doctoral student to provide additional oral and written information; and the doctoral student shall be obliged to provide such information.
- 5.12. If during the year of study, a doctoral student has not attended classes, regardless of the reason, for two consecutive months or longer, the Council of Deans shall decide on the possibility of continuing studies or granting the academic leave upon the Dean's proposal.

- 5.13. If a doctoral student has not attended classes due to illness or any other valid reason, and in the opinion of the Director of the study programme, it is possible to continue the studies according to the approved doctoral student's plan / report on the accomplishments during the year of study, the Director of the study programme shall inform the Dean thereof.
- 5.14. If a doctoral student has not attended classes and the number or content of the classes is so significant that it is not possible to continue studies in this study course according to the approved doctoral student's plan for the respective year of study or if a semester examination is failed twice, the academic department shall inform the Director of the study programme and the Dean about it. The Dean shall evaluate the situation (reasons for non-attendance, the amount and failure in examinations) and the possibilities for continuing studies.
- 5.15. A doctoral student may temporarily suspend studies due to illness or any other valid reason, and then continue them. Suspension of doctoral studies (the academic leave) shall be registered by a decree of the Vice-Rector for Science regarding the issues of the study process. The total period of academic leaves for a doctoral student must not exceed two years. During the academic leave, the status of a doctoral student and the place in the study programme shall be maintained, however, neither scholarship is given nor study and student loans are granted, as well as a doctoral student shall not have the right to request and receive doctoral study grants.
- 5.16. As part of the doctoral thesis development, the doctoral student shall submit a plan and reports on the research activities carried out during the year of study. The doctoral student shall draw up and submit electronically to the student portal documents supporting the research activity, together with a report on the research activity in the prescribed format and the doctoral student's plan/report on the accomplishments during the year of study:
- 5.16.1. Within the first month of the first year of study, the doctoral student, in cooperation with the doctoral thesis supervisor(s), shall draw up and electronically submit a doctoral plan for the first year of study;
- 5.16.2. At the end of each year of study, but not later than two weeks before the meeting of the Committee for evaluation of research activity of the respective study programme, the doctoral student shall draw up and electronically submit to the student portal a doctoral student plan / report on the accomplishments during the year of study and a report on research activity;

- 5.16.3. At the end of the last year of study, but not later than two weeks before the meeting of the Committee for evaluation of research activity of the respective study programme, the doctoral student shall draw up and submit electronically to the student portal a doctoral student plan / report on the accomplishments during the year of study and a report on research activity.
- 5.17. Director of the study programme shall do the following:
- 5.17.1. In cooperation with the doctoral thesis supervisor or both supervisors, supervise the work of the doctoral student during the year of study, be involved in the planning and organisation of the study process, support and advise doctoral students on issues related to the development of the doctoral thesis;
 - 5.17.2. For the first-year doctoral students, review and approve or reject the doctoral student's plan within one week from the moment the doctoral student's plan is received for review. If necessary, instructs the doctoral student, in cooperation with the doctoral thesis supervisor or both supervisors, to update it within one month. The doctoral student's plan for the first year of study shall enter into force after it has been approved by the Director of the study programme;
 - 5.17.3. At the end of each year of study, but no later than two weeks before the meeting of the Committee for evaluation of research activity of the respective study programme, review the doctoral student's plan/report on the accomplishments during the year of study, review the study plan for the following year of study, instructing refinement if necessary, and refer the doctoral student for evaluation of his/her research results to the meeting of the Committee for evaluation of research activity of the respective study programme;
 - 5.17.4. At the end of the last year of study, evaluate the report on the accomplishments during the year of study and the report on the research activity, and if the reports are appropriate for the successful completion of the programme, refer the doctoral student for evaluation of his/her research results to the meeting of the Committee for evaluation of research activity of the respective study programme;
 - 5.17.5. If the doctoral student has an academic failure and it is not possible to settle the academic failure during the remaining period of studies, the Director of

the study programme shall propose to the Dean of the Department of Doctoral Studies to exclude the doctoral student from the list of RSU students.

5.18. Supervisor of the doctoral thesis shall do the following:

- 5.18.1. Advise the doctoral student on the development of the study and research plan and approve the study and research plan submitted by the doctoral student for each year of study;
- 5.18.2. Provide the doctoral student with the necessary support in the implementation of the plan and continuously monitor the implementation of the doctoral student's plan and the progress of the doctoral thesis;
- 5.18.3. Advise the doctoral student on the issues related to the development of the doctoral thesis;
- 5.18.4. Advise the doctoral student on the preparation and publication of scientific articles in international peer-reviewed editions;
- 5.18.5. Participate in the meeting evaluating the doctoral student's research activity and express his/her opinion on the doctoral student's scientific research work.

5.19. The part of the study programme for the respective year of study shall be considered to be completed if the requirements of the doctoral student's plan for the year of study have been fulfilled, including the completion of all the study courses within the prescribed amount of credit points (CP), and positive assessment of the Committee for evaluation of research activity has been received.

5.20. A doctoral student who has completed the plan for the study programme of the relevant year of study shall be transferred to the following year of study by a decree on the issues of the study process, taking into account the plan approved by the Director of the study programme.

5.21. A doctoral student who has partially completed the plan for the study programme of the relevant year of study, may on a case-by-case basis, be transferred to the following year of study by a decree of the Vice-Rector for Science regarding the issues of the study process, provided that certain academic assignments are completed by a specified deadline. The Dean of the Department of Doctoral Studies shall make a recommendation for the transfer to the following year of study. If the doctoral student fails to fulfil this condition, the doctoral student shall be excluded from the list of students due to academic failure.

5.22. A doctoral student, who has obtained a certificate regarding the successful completion of RSU doctoral study programme, shall be entitled to receive a doctoral candidate card in accordance with the procedure prescribed by RSU. The card shall be valid for five

years from the date of exclusion. The card of the candidate for a doctoral degree shall be used in the cases specified by RSU laws and regulations.

- 5.23. The personal file of a RSU doctoral student with study documents shall be handed over to RSU Archives after the exclusion.

6. Evaluating the results of research work

- 6.1. At the end of each year of study, the evaluation of the results of doctoral students' scientific research shall be organised according to the doctoral student's plan / report on the accomplishments during the year of study. The doctoral student shall present and defend the progress and results of the scientific research activities carried out in accordance with the approved plan in accordance with the procedures and deadlines set by the Department of Doctoral Studies. Defence of the results of the research work shall be equivalent to an oral test.
- 6.2. The Committee for evaluation of research activity of the respective study programme shall evaluate the doctoral students' research progress and the results of their scientific research work and shall award the credit points. The composition of each Committee shall be approved by the decree of the Vice-Rector for Science on the basis of a proposal from the Director of the relevant study programme. The Committee shall consist of at least four members who are RSU employees, professionals of the respective field with a doctoral degree, and a Secretary of the Committee (without voting rights) also shall be appointed. The Committee shall have a quorum if more than a half of the Committee members, including the Chairperson of the Committee or a Deputy Chairperson, participate in the meeting. The Committee shall take its decisions by a simple majority. In the event of a tied vote, the Chairperson of the Committee (or, in his/her absence, the Deputy Chairperson) shall have the casting vote. If a member of the Committee is also a supervisor of the doctoral thesis of the respective doctoral student, he/she shall not participate in the decision taking regarding that doctoral student.
- 6.3. The doctoral student shall present the progress and results of his/her research activity by an oral speech (up to 10 minutes) and shall answer the questions posed by the Committee (up to 10 minutes) without preparation time.
- 6.4. The meetings for the evaluation of research activity may be recorded by audio or video recording. The doctoral student shall be notified before the recording that the meeting is being recorded. The audio or video recording shall be stored on RSU server for 1 (one) month, and access to the recording shall be granted to a member of staff designated

by RSU Department of Doctoral Studies for the preparation of the minutes of the meeting. If an appeal is received following the evaluation of research activity, the audio or video recording may be used in the appeal process and the recording shall be retained until a final decision on the case is made. After the specified deadline, the recording shall be permanently deleted and no further processing of this data shall take place.

- 6.5. The Committee shall decide on the compliance of the research progress and the results of the doctoral student's research work with the doctoral student's plan, including the adequacy of scientific publications, the existence of a permit issued by an Ethics Committee, a competent public administration institution or a patent holder (if the doctoral thesis is related to personal data, medical treatment, state secret, patent of another person, etc.) and shall give an assessment "pass" or "fail".
- 6.6. In case of a 'pass' assessment, the Committee shall award the doctoral student all the credit points for the scientific research work provided for in the study programme plan in the relevant year of study, and shall give binding guidelines for the further research work of the doctoral student in the individual study plan for the following year of study.
- 6.7. In the event of a 'fail' assessment, the Committee shall not award the doctoral student the credit points for the scientific research work provided for in the study programme plan in the relevant year of study.
- 6.8. A member of the Committee shall refrain from giving assessment if the member of the Committee is the doctoral thesis supervisor or advisor of the doctoral student.
- 6.9. In order to recognise **the four-year** doctoral study programme as successfully completed, the doctoral student must have completed all the courses required for the doctoral study programme and must have carried out research and scientific activity (related to the topic of the doctoral thesis) during the doctoral studies, which meets at least one of the following criteria:
 - 6.9.1. **Two double-blind peer-reviewed scientific publications** in scholarly journals or conference proceedings indexed in *SCOPUS* or *Web of Science* database, or included in the *ERIX+* database;
 - 6.9.2. **One double-blind peer-reviewed scientific publication** in a scholarly journal or conference proceedings indexed in *SCOPUS* or *Web of Science* database, or included in the *ERIX+* database and **a peer-reviewed scientific monograph** on one research topic or problem, and containing a bibliography. If a peer-reviewed scientific monograph is published in Latvian, it shall contain a summary in at least one of the other official languages of the European Union or, if a peer-reviewed scientific monograph is published in a language other than the official

language of the European Union, it shall contain a summary in at least one of the official languages of the European Union.

6.10. In order to recognise **the three-year** doctoral study programme as successfully completed, the doctoral student must have completed all the courses required for the doctoral study programme and must have carried out research activity during the doctoral studies (related to the topic of the doctoral thesis), which meets at least one of the following criteria:

6.10.1. **One double-blind peer-reviewed scientific publication** in a scientific edition or conference proceedings indexed in *SCOPUS* or *Web of Science* database, or included in the *ERIX+* database;

6.10.2. **A peer-reviewed scientific monograph** on one research topic or problem, and containing a bibliography. If a peer-reviewed scientific monograph is published in Latvian, it shall contain a summary in at least one of the other official languages of the European Union or, if a peer-reviewed scientific monograph is published in a language other than the official language of the European Union, it shall contain a summary in at least one of the official languages of the European Union.

6.11. A doctoral student, who was excluded at the end of the last year of study due to the academic failure in relation to the scientific research work outstanding in the respective year of study, but who has fully completed the remaining doctoral study programme in accordance with the study programme plan, shall have the right to resume their studies within two years of the date of exclusion and do only the defence of the results of the research activity by covering the expense for the work of the Committee for evaluation of the research activity. If there have been changes to the content of the study programme during that period, the Director of the relevant doctoral study programme shall determine the part of the study programme to be studied in addition.

7. Organising and taking examinations and tests

7.1. The academic department shall organise the examination of doctoral students' knowledge.

7.2. The academic department shall inform the doctoral student about the times of taking examinations not later than 5 (five) working days before the examination.

7.3. A doctoral student shall have the right to negotiate with the lecturer of the study course the postponement of the time or date of an examination once within the year of study

in each academic department not later than 3 (three) working days before the examination or theoretical test.

- 7.4. If a doctoral student, regardless of the reason, fails to arrive at the examination or the test at the specified time, “no show” shall be written on the assessment sheet.
- 7.5. At least two weeks before the examination, doctoral students shall receive instructions from the academic department on the type and method of the examination. Doctoral students shall be informed about additional teaching aids which may be used.
- 7.6. Doctoral students being examined, examiners, the Rector, Vice-Rectors, the Dean of the Department of Doctoral Studies, the Director of the study programme, the supervisor/-s of the doctoral thesis, professionals and RSU employees invited by the Head of the academic department shall be allowed to participate in the examination.
- 7.7. The duration of a written and computer-based examination shall be determined by the academic department.
- 7.8. The doctoral student shall have not less than 30 minutes for preparing their answer in the oral part of the examination.
- 7.9. Duration of oral examining of each doctoral student shall not exceed 30 minutes in any examination.
- 7.10. If there are several separate questions in the examination, the doctoral student shall have the right to answer them in the order he/she wishes.
- 7.11. Any examination and test or defence may be taken no more than twice.
- 7.12. A doctoral student, who has not obtained a pass mark in an examination or a test, may re-sit the examination within the year of study.
- 7.13. The doctoral student shall agree with the lecturer of the relevant study course on the time for re-sitting the examination.
- 7.14. If a doctoral student fails to pass the examinations prescribed in the study programme plan by the end of the year of study, the Director of the study programme and the Dean shall, on a case-by-case basis (reasons for non-attendance), propose that the doctoral student is granted an academic leave or is excluded.

8. Lodging and considering appeals

- 8.1. The doctoral student shall have the right to request, by lodging an appeal, that the correlation between the answer to the examination question in the study course examination and the doctoral student’s answers to the question is considered, but in case of the evaluation of the results of research work, the correlation between the results

of the scientific research work intended in the individual study plan, the results presented and the assessment is considered.

- 8.2. An appeal against the assessment of the doctoral examination in the field / sub-field and a foreign language may be lodged until the end of the following working day from the moment when the assessment is published on the student portal. An appeal against the assessment in any other examination or against the evaluation of the results of the scientific research work may be lodged within 3 (three) working days from the date of publication of the assessment on the student portal.
- 8.3. An appeal against the assessment of the doctoral examination must be addressed to the Chairperson of the Doctoral Examination Board.
- 8.4. If the appeal concerns the last possible time of taking the examination, it must be addressed to the Dean of the Department of Doctoral Studies. If in this case the Dean as a representative of the academic staff, has made the assessment, the appeal must be addressed to the Vice-Rector for Science.
- 8.5. An appeal against the evaluation of the results of the scientific research work and the assessment of the final examination of the study course must be addressed to the Dean of the Department of Doctoral Studies.
- 8.6. The appeal **shall be lodged** with the Student Services which shall do the following:
 - 8.6.1. Forward the appeal to the addressee for consideration;
 - 8.6.2. If the appeal is addressed to the Dean or Vice-Rector for Science, they shall inform the academic department about the appeal received, which:
 - 8.6.2.1. Sends the necessary information to the addressee of the appeal (audio recording, explanations, the student's work, etc.);
 - 8.6.2.2. Informs the lecturer, who evaluated the examination, about the appeal received and about the possibility to submit the explanation about the assessment.
- 8.7. The appeal shall be considered by the Appeal Commission which is set up and convened by the recipient of the appeal (except in the case of the evaluation of the results of the scientific research work). The Appeal Commission shall be composed of the person to whom the appeal is addressed and of experts invited by him/her according to the content of the appeal (except persons who assessed the examination). The Chairperson of the Appeal Commission shall be the recipient of the appeal. The Appeal Commission shall be composed of at least three persons. In case of the evaluation of the results of the scientific research work, the Dean of the Department of Doctoral Studies shall establish and chair the Appeal Commission. The supervisor of the

doctoral student's doctoral thesis (at least one - if two supervisors have been approved for the doctoral student) shall also be invited to the meeting of the Commission. The supervisor of the doctoral thesis shall have no voting rights and his/her absence from the meeting shall not constitute an obstacle to the consideration of the case.

- 8.8. The Chairperson of the Appeal Commission shall inform the appellant and the lecturer who has assessed the examination about the time and place of the meeting of the Appeal Commission, as well as about the rights to participate in the meeting and provide explanations. The appellant and the lecturer who assessed the examination should preferably be present at the meeting of the Appeal Commission.
- 8.9. Having considered the appeal, the Appeal Commission shall satisfy or reject the request included in the appeal.
- 8.10. If the content of the appeal received shows that there have been obvious irregularities in the way the examination was administered, the recipient of the appeal may cancel the assessment and ask to retake the examination without establishing the Appeal Commission.
- 8.11. The appeal shall be considered as soon as possible (but within no more than 10 working days from the receipt). The Chairperson of the Appeal Commission shall notify the applicant in writing of the results of the consideration.

9. Final provisions

- 9.1. These Regulations shall be applicable in so far as external rules and regulations do not prescribe otherwise.
- 9.2. Matters that are not covered by the Regulations, or disputes shall be dealt with by decisions of the Head of the Department, Director of the study programme or the Dean of the Department of Doctoral Studies in compliance with RSU Internal Rules and Regulations for Studies or other RSU internal laws and regulations.
- 9.3. The requirement of 44 credit points of full-time study per year of study as prescribed in the paragraph 2.14 of these Regulations shall apply to students enrolled in a four-year doctoral study programme. Students enrolled in a three-year doctoral study programme shall be required to complete 40 credit points of full-time study per year of study, equivalent to 60 ECTS points.
- 9.4. These Regulations shall come into force on the following day after the approval at RSU Senate.

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AGREED:
at the meeting of Rīga Stradiņš University
Council of Deans
on 20 June 2022,
Minutes No 4-SD.1-2/23/2022

THIS DOCUMENT IS ELECTRONICALLY SIGNED WITH A SECURE ELECTRONIC
SIGNATURE AND CONTAINS A TIME STAMP