

Rīga Stradiņš University
Regulations on the Activities of the Promotion Councils and the
Procedure of Promotion

Issued in compliance with
Section 15, Paragraph One of the Law on Higher Education Institutions.

1. General provisions

- 1.1. Regulations on the Activities of the Promotion Councils and the Procedure of Promotion at Rīga Stradiņš University (hereinafter - the Regulations) prescribe the procedure for the establishment and operation of promotion councils, as well as the procedure for conferral of a doctoral degree at Rīga Stradiņš University (hereinafter - RSU).
- 1.2. Promotion is the defence of research work that results in the conferral of a doctoral degree in a sector of sciences.
- 1.3. An applicant for an academic degree (hereinafter - the Applicant) is a person who has independently developed a doctoral thesis and who applies for a doctoral degree after the successful completion of the doctoral study programme, or the person's academic activity is regarded as equal to the requirements of the doctoral study programme. The Applicant may be both a citizen or a non-citizen of the Republic of Latvia, as well as a national of other countries and a stateless person.
- 1.4. The sectors of sciences in which a doctoral degree is conferred in the Republic of Latvia shall be determined by the Cabinet.
- 1.5. RSU Promotion Council shall operate and promote in accordance with the Cabinet Regulations No.1001 of 27 December 2005 "Procedures and Criteria for the Conferral of a Doctoral Degree in Science (Promotion)" (hereinafter - the CR1001), other laws and regulations of the Republic of Latvia, RSU Constitution, these Regulations and other RSU internal laws and regulations.
- 1.6. These Regulation shall apply to all RSU Promotion Councils.

2. Promotion Council

- 2.1. Rights of the Promotion Council:

- 2.1.1. The Promotion Council (hereinafter - the Council) shall be a collegial body of scientists that has the right to carry out promotion in the science sectors where RSU has accredited doctoral study programmes in accordance with Cabinet Regulations No. 1000 “On Delegation of Powers to Confer the Doctoral Degree (Promotion) to Higher Education Institutions”, complying with the Cabinet Regulations No.49 of 23 January 2018 “Regulations on Sectors and Sub-sectors of Science in Latvia”.
 - 2.1.2. Promotion rights of RSU in the science sector shall be delegated by the Cabinet on the proposal of RSU and the opinion of the Latvian Council of Science (hereinafter - the LCS) if the conditions specified in the Law on Scientific Activity are fulfilled.
- 2.2. Composition of the Council
- 2.2.1. The Council shall be managed by a permanent President who has been assigned the rights of an expert of the LCS in the relevant sector or sub-sector and who has been elected as a professor, associate professor, assistant professor or a lead researcher. The President shall be appointed by a decree of RSU Vice-Rector for Science.
 - 2.2.2. The proposal regarding the composition of the Council of the respective doctoral thesis shall be prepared by the permanent President of the Council, considering the specific thematic content of the doctoral thesis. The composition of the Council, including the Vice-President and Secretary of the Council, shall be approved by a decree of RSU Vice-Rector for Science. Foreign scientists may be included in the Council if the consent of the State Scientific Qualification Commission (hereinafter - the SSQC) has been received.
 - 2.2.3. Each Council shall consist of at least five scientists who have the rights of a LCS expert in the science sector, two of them in the science sub-sector in which the doctoral thesis is being defended.
 - 2.2.4. In cases when the Council is to be established in one of the science sectors or sub-sectors where the permanent President of the Council is not appointed, as well as where the permanent President of the Promotion Council is the Supervisor of the Applicant’s doctoral thesis or is otherwise in conflict of interest, the Dean of the Department of Doctoral Studies shall propose a

President of the Council corresponding to the sector or sub-sector. The decree regarding the President of the Council shall be approved by a decree of RSU Vice-Rector for Science.

- 2.2.5. Only those members who have valid LCS expert rights on the date of convening the particular Council meeting shall be included in the Council.
- 2.2.6. Reviewers and the composition of the Council shall be determined and approved after the Applicant has submitted an application to RSU Department of Doctoral Studies regarding the organisation of the doctoral thesis discussion.
- 2.2.7. The Supervisor of the doctoral thesis, relatives of the Applicant or direct subordinates may not be included in the composition of the Council.
- 2.2.8. The Applicant shall have the right to submit to RSU justified objections regarding the composition of the Council in accordance with the procedure laid down in the CR 1001 by submitting a written application to RSU Vice-Rector for Science. In such a case, RSU Vice-Rector for Science shall consider the Applicant's application and shall instruct the President of the Council to draw up a proposal for a new composition of the Council which shall be approved by a decree of RSU Vice-Rector for Science. If the Applicant has objections to the repeatedly created composition of the Council, he or she may withdraw his or her application for defending the doctoral thesis.

2.3. Activity of the Council

- 2.3.1. The purpose of the Council is to ensure the excellence and integrity of the research work developed at RSU.
- 2.3.2. Tasks of the Council:
 - 2.3.2.1. Carry out impartial evaluation of the doctoral thesis;
 - 2.3.2.2. Evaluate the scientific novelty of the doctoral thesis;
 - 2.3.2.3. Organise the widest possible defence of the doctoral thesis;
 - 2.3.2.4. Decide on the conferral of the doctoral degree (Ph.D.) to the Applicant.

- 2.4. The President of the Council shall have the task of ensuring the functioning of the Council of the sector under his or her responsibility in accordance with the promotion procedure set by RSU and internal laws and regulations of RSU and external laws and regulations.

- 2.5. The task of the Vice-President of the Council shall be to replace the President of the Council in his/her absence.
- 2.6. The responsibility of the Secretary of the Council shall be to examine and report on the documents submitted by the Applicant and all decisions taken regarding the promotion and to acquaint the attendees of the meeting with the Curriculum Vitae of the Applicant.
- 2.7. The task of the members of the Council shall be to participate in the evaluation of the doctoral thesis.
- 2.8. The Commission shall take its decisions by open vote with a simple majority. In the event of the equality of vote, the vote of the President of the Council shall be decisive. The meeting of the Council shall have a quorum if at least half of the members of the Council having the right to vote are present.
- 2.9. Minutes of the Council meetings shall be taken and an audio recording shall be made; in the event of a remote meeting, a video recording shall also be made in compliance with the paragraph 3.5.2.
- 2.10. The support to the functioning of the Council and documentation flow shall be provided by RSU Department of Doctoral Studies.
- 2.11. The calculation and payment for the work carried out in the Council and the review of the doctoral thesis shall be carried out in accordance with the procedure specified by RSU.
- 2.12. The costs of the promotion process shall be covered by RSU from the funds allocated for the implementation of the doctoral programme. In cases where the Applicant has not completed the relevant programme or completed it more than five full calendar years ago without obtaining a degree or completed it in another higher education institution, the decision on the funds of covering the costs of the promotion process and the amount thereof shall be taken by RSU Rector.

3. Promotion

3.1. Doctoral Thesis:

- 3.1.1. The doctoral thesis shall be submitted in the official language or, upon receipt of an electronic approval of the President of the Council, in one of the official languages of the European Union, accompanied by a comprehensive translation of the summary of the doctoral thesis into the official language.

- 3.1.2. The doctoral thesis shall be drawn up in accordance with the technical design rules for the research work to be submitted to RSU Promotion Council, which shall be approved by RSU Vice-Rector for Science.
- 3.2. Discussion of the Doctoral Thesis:
 - 3.2.1. The discussion of the doctoral thesis shall be organised when the Applicant has completed the doctoral study programme with the aim to evaluate the scientific novelty of the doctoral thesis and the personal contribution of the author and to give an opinion on its further promotion for submission to the Council.
 - 3.2.2. The discussion of the doctoral thesis shall be organized by RSU Department of Doctoral Studies after the Applicant has submitted an application to the Department of Doctoral Studies with an appropriate agreement with the supervisor(s) of the doctoral thesis (or explanation regarding the absence of such agreement) and the doctoral thesis.
 - 3.2.3. RSU Department of Doctoral Studies shall evaluate the formal conformity of the submitted documents and inform the President of the relevant Council of the necessity to establish the Council in accordance with the provisions of the paragraph 2.2.3 of these Regulations, to appoint a reviewer from the Council and the Chairperson for the discussion meeting, and to agree on the department responsible for organising the discussion meeting.
 - 3.2.4. On the proposal of the President of the Council, RSU Department of Doctoral Studies shall draw up a decree regarding the composition of the Committee for the discussion of the doctoral thesis, which shall be approved by RSU Vice-Rector for Science. The Committee shall consist of at least three members with a doctoral degree, most of whom represent the department of RSU where the doctoral thesis has been developed.
 - 3.2.5. The Committee shall pass an opinion on directing work for submission to the Council, taking into consideration the scientific novelty of the doctoral thesis and personal contribution. The Committee shall be entitled to pass an opinion if at least half of the members of the Committee are present.
 - 3.2.6. In case there are two supervisors of the doctoral thesis, at least one of them must participate in the meeting. The meeting shall be open (unless the doctoral thesis contains classified information within the meaning of the Law

“On Official Secret”) and professionals of the sector concerned and other interested parties may participate in it without voting rights.

3.2.7. RSU Department of Doctoral Studies shall prepare the minutes of the discussion meeting and the extract from the minutes. An audio recording shall be made during the discussion meeting, which is stored on RSU server for one month. Only the staff of the Department of Doctoral Studies shall have access to the audio recording for organising the promotion process.

3.2.8. If the discussion meeting took place more than two years before the planned submission of the doctoral thesis, a repeated discussion meeting shall be held.

3.3. Submission of the doctoral thesis

3.3.1. To start the promotion process, the Applicant shall submit the following documents to RSU Department of Doctoral Studies:

3.3.1.1. An application with the agreement of the supervisor (s) of the doctoral thesis or an explanation regarding the absence of such agreement;

3.3.1.2. A copy of the doctoral thesis in the official language or, upon receipt of electronic acceptance from the President of the Council, in one of the official languages of the European Union;

3.3.1.3. A summary of the doctoral thesis in the official language and a foreign language;

3.3.1.4. A statement from the higher education institution on the completion of the doctoral study programme or, if the Applicant has not mastered the relevant programme, on passing the examinations in the chosen sector, sub-sector and a foreign language. For Applicants who have received a certificate of a medical practitioner in a specialty, in which the doctoral thesis has been developed, the certificate shall be considered equal to the promotion examination in the sub-sector (a valid copy of the certificate must be submitted and the original must be presented) in accordance with the accreditation documents of the study direction. The discussion of the doctoral thesis developed in another higher education institution shall be organized by RSU, if it is objectively impossible to hold the discussion in the higher education institution or research institution where the doctoral thesis has been developed.

3.3.1.5. A signed CV of the Applicant (preferably in the Europass CV format);

- 3.3.1.6. The progress of the doctoral thesis and a list of scientific publications and copies of the most important publications presenting the results of the doctoral thesis with at least two internationally double-blind peer-reviewed publications or one internationally double-blind peer-reviewed publication and a peer-reviewed scientific monograph that meet the following criteria:
- 3.3.1.6.1. A double-blind peer-reviewed scientific publication in a scientific journal or conference proceedings indexed in the SCOPUS or Web of Science database or included in the ERIH + database;
 - 3.3.1.6.2. A peer-reviewed scientific monograph on one research topic or issue, 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.
- 3.3.1.7. The extract from the minutes of the doctoral thesis discussion meeting, which certifies the discussion of the doctoral thesis, its scientific novelty and the Applicant's personal contribution (the time of the meeting - not earlier than two years before submitting the doctoral thesis for the initiation of the promotion process).
- 3.3.1.8. In case the doctoral thesis is a thematically unified set of publications in which the Applicant has co-authors or a collective monograph, it shall be accompanied by a written consent of all co-authors of the publications included in the doctoral thesis for the use of the publication in the promotion or a statement by the corresponding (main) author of these publications regarding the personal contribution of the Applicant to the preparation of the publications. Only one of the authors of the publication or monograph may present the publication or the monograph for obtaining a doctoral degree.
- 3.3.1.9. An application with a request for assessing the equivalence of the academic activity to the requirements of the doctoral study programme,

if the Applicant has not completed an accredited doctoral study programme.

3.3.2. RSU Department of Doctoral Studies shall evaluate the formal compliance of the documents with the requirements of these Regulations within five working days; and if the submitted documents comply with the requirements and the Applicant:

3.3.2.1. has completed an appropriate programme, shall hand over the work to the Council for consideration;

3.3.2.2. has not completed an appropriate programme, shall organise the assessment of equivalence between the Applicant's academic activity and the requirements of the respective doctoral study programme at the Doctoral Studies Council, taking into consideration the recommendation of the Head of the respective doctoral programme. In case of doubt, the Head of the doctoral study programme shall have the right to request additional documents or explanation from the Applicant. If a decision has been taken regarding the equivalence between the academic activity and the requirements of the programme, RSU Department of Doctoral Studies shall notify the Applicant within one week of taking the decision and prepare the Applicant's personal file. If it is decided not to recognise the equivalence between the academic activity and the requirements of the programme, RSU Department of Doctoral Studies shall notify the Applicant in writing of the reasons for refusal and shall return the documents within one week after taking the decision.

3.3.3. If deficiencies or inadequacies are identified in the submitted documents, RSU Department of Doctoral Studies shall request the Applicant in writing to submit the missing documents or documents compliant with the requirements. The Applicant shall submit the requested documents within two weeks. If the submitted documents still do not meet the requirements, RSU Department of Doctoral Studies shall return the documents to the Applicant, indicating what deficiencies have been identified. In this case, the Applicant shall have the right to resubmit the documents not earlier than after three months.

3.4. Evaluation of the doctoral thesis

- 3.4.1. The Council shall evaluate the doctoral thesis within one month in accordance with the criteria specified in the CR1001 and the requirements of these Regulations and shall decide on the acceptance of the doctoral thesis for public defence.
- 3.4.2. If the doctoral thesis does not meet the criteria of the CR1001 and the requirements of these Regulations, the Council shall take a reasoned decision on the refusal to continue the evaluation of the doctoral thesis until the inadequacies are overcome and the doctoral thesis is resubmitted to the Council.
- 3.4.3. If the doctoral thesis meets the criteria of the CR1001 and the requirements of these Regulations, the Council shall decide on the acceptance of the doctoral thesis for public defence and within 5 working days shall:
 - 3.4.3.1. Appoint reviewers for the doctoral thesis - one expert in the science sub-sector from among themselves and two experts in the science sub-sector from other research institutions;
 - 3.4.3.2. Request the Applicant to have the number of copies and electronic versions of the doctoral thesis required for the further promotion process;
 - 3.4.3.3. Inform the Applicant in writing about the composition of the Council and reviewers.
- 3.4.4. If, within one week of receipt of the information about the composition of the Council and reviewers, the Applicant has not submitted any reasoned objections to RSU, the Council shall submit the Applicant's documents for the opinion of the NSQC.
- 3.4.5. If no objections have been received from the NSQC or if the NSQC gives a positive assessment in writing prior to the deadline laid down in the CR1001, RSU Department of Doctoral Studies shall:
 - 3.4.5.1. Send the doctoral thesis and a review form to reviewers one month prior to the promotion meeting;
 - 3.4.5.2. Agree on the date of the promotion meeting with the President of the Council and the members;

- 3.4.5.3. Publish an announcement about the defence of the work in the official newspapers "Latvijas Vēstnesis" and "Zinātnes Vēstnesis", as well as on RSU website at least two weeks before the promotion meeting;
- 3.4.5.4. Send the electronic version of the doctoral thesis and the summary for placing in the electronic database of RSU Library. In accordance with the Paragraph 16.5 of the CR1001, the entire doctoral thesis or only the summary of the work shall be published on RSU website; if the doctoral thesis is a monograph or a set of publications, the supervisors and reviewers of the doctoral thesis shall also be specified on RSU website.
- 3.4.6. Reviewers shall assess the doctoral thesis in accordance with the criteria specified in the CR1001 and the requirements of these Regulations. Reviewers shall send written feedback on the doctoral thesis to RSU Department of Doctoral Studies no later than five working days before the promotion meeting. RSU Department of Doctoral Studies shall acquaint the Applicant with the feedback no later than three days before the promotion meeting.
- 3.5. Public defence of the doctoral thesis and conferral of the degree
 - 3.5.1. Public defence of the doctoral thesis shall take place in accordance with the procedure established by the CR1001, unless it is specified that the doctoral thesis contains classified information within the meaning of the law "On Official Secret".
 - 3.5.2. The promotion meeting may take place via online video conferencing (real-time video and audio transmission), if an applicant, a member of the Council or a reviewer of the thesis is in a different location and cannot attend the venue of the promotion meeting. A video recording of the meeting shall be made, which is stored on RSU server.
 - 3.5.3. All reviewers shall participate in the promotion meeting with the voting rights of the decision-maker; and the Council shall have a quorum if at least half of the Council's voting members and not less than two of the three reviewers are present.
- 3.6. In the cases specified in the paragraph 3.5.2. of the Regulations, technical support shall be provided by RSU Information Technology Department and the voting shall be ensured using technical solutions of the online platform.

- 3.7. The decision to confer or to refuse to confer the doctoral degree (Ph.D.) shall take effect after announcing the results of voting.
- 3.8. The result of voting shall be announced by the President of the Promotion Council and it shall be entered in the minutes and decision of the promotion meeting.
- 3.9. If, within one month from the adoption of the Council decision, it is contested and the objections are recognised as justified, RSU Department of Doctoral Studies shall inform the NSQC and the Applicant about what had happened and about the further action of RSU. If the objections concern the formal organisational matters of the promotion process, a repeated meeting of the Council shall be held within two months. If the complaint concerns issues regarding scientific compliance of the doctoral thesis or its development, RSU Department of Doctoral Studies shall return the doctoral thesis to the Applicant, keeping one copy. The Applicant may make corrections to the doctoral thesis, which contains insufficiently justified scientific or erroneous results and resubmit it for promotion not earlier than after one year. Doctoral theses, in which violation of scientific integrity or plagiarism has been detected, shall not be accepted for reconsideration.
- 3.10. If the Council decision is not contested, RSU Rector shall issue a decree for the issuance of a doctoral diploma on the basis of the Council decision on conferral of the doctoral degree. The diploma shall be prepared by the Department of Doctoral Studies.
- 3.11. The Applicant shall be awarded a doctoral diploma at RSU Senate meeting in accordance with the Cabinet Regulation No. 202 of 16 April 2013 "Procedures by which State-Recognised Education Documents Certifying Higher Education are Issued" no earlier than six weeks and no later than six months after the Council decision. If the Applicant is unable to attend the particular Senate meeting, he/she shall receive the diploma in RSU Department of Doctoral Studies.
- 3.12. RSU Department of Doctoral Studies shall inform RSU Human Resources Department about the promotion of RSU employees by sending a copy of the Applicant's doctoral diploma.

4. Document storage and recording of doctoral diplomas issued

- 4.1. A copy of the diploma, together with the documents submitted by the Applicant, the minutes of the promotion meeting, the decision of the NSQC, reviews of the doctoral thesis shall be filed in the Applicant's personal file, which shall be kept in

RSU Department of Doctoral Studies until it is handed over to RSU Archives for storage in accordance with the procedures specified by RSU. The audio recording or video recording of the meeting shall be stored on RSU server until the issuance of the diploma or, in case of contesting, until the date of entry into force of the final decision. After the specified deadline, the audio recording or video recording shall be permanently deleted and no further processing of this data shall take place. A certificate regarding the fact of the deletion shall be drawn up.

- 4.2. Audio recordings and video recordings shall be stored in accordance with RSU Promotion Process Description No.43 “Promotion”
- 4.3. Doctoral diplomas issued by RSU shall be registered by RSU Department of Doctoral Studies on the basis of the information included in the Council decision.
- 4.4. RSU Department of Doctoral Studies shall provide information on the statistical indicators and facts of the promotion in accordance with the procedure specified in laws and regulations.

5. Contesting and appealing decisions

- 5.1. The decisions and real action taken by RSU, the Council and the NSQC may be contested within a month in the Latvian Council of Science.
- 5.2. The decision of the Latvian Council of Science may be appealed to the court in accordance with the procedure specified in the Administrative Procedure Law.

6. Processing of personal data

- 6.1. The processing of personal data in the promotion process shall take place with the aim of ensuring the process of conferral of a doctoral degree.
- 6.2. The legal basis for the processing of personal data is Article 6 (1) (b), (c) and (f) of the Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (General Data Protection Regulation).
- 6.3. Types of personal data and categories of data subjects to be processed in the process of conferral of a doctoral degree.
 - 6.3.1. Data categories: personal identification data, gender, age, education, work experience, contact information. In the case of the Committee, the Council and reviewers, the position, the place of employment and the academic degree are required.

- 6.3.2. Subject categories: Applicant, members of the Discussion Committee and the Council, reviewers.
- 6.4. The personal data submitted in the promotion process shall be available to RSU staff involved in the organisation of the process, including members of the Promotion Council
- 6.5. Applicants shall have the rights of the data subject as set out in RSU Privacy Policy with respect to their personal data.
- 6.6. Documents submitted in paper format shall be stored in the archives in accordance with the Cabinet Regulations No. 203 and Regulations of RSU Records Management, which provide for the storage of personal files in the archives for 75 years after exclusion from RSU. Doctoral thesis and its summaries shall be available in RSU Library.

7. Final Provisions

- 7.1. Internal laws and regulations (for example, procedures, process descriptions) and forms necessary for the clarification of the activities specified in the Regulations shall be approved by the Rector's decree.
- 7.2. The Regulations shall be applied insofar as it does not conflict with the laws and regulations of the Republic of Latvia.

Chairperson of the Senate J.Gardovskis

S. Lejniece

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AGREED:
at the meeting of the Dean's Council, dated 11.05.2020,
Minutes No. 15-1/17/2020

AGREED
at the Rectorate meeting, dated 11.05.2020,
Minutes No. 5-2/19/2020