



**Provision of the Dean No. 62
on the Organisation of Study in the Doctoral Study Programmes
at Faculty of Science USB,
13.3.2015,
in the wording of September 15th 2022**

This provision arises from the valid wording of Act 111/1998 Coll. on Institutions of Higher Education and Amendments and Supplements to Some Other Acts (hereinafter the Act) and from the Study and Examination Code of the University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice and specifies the conditions of study at FSci USB.

Management of study programmes and students

(1) The Specialist Board

Study in Doctoral study programmes takes place under the guidance of the supervisor and in accordance with the student's individual study plan (ISP). The professional level of the doctoral study programme is the responsibility of the **Specialist Board (SB)**, whose members are to be appointed and dismissed by the Dean after approval by the Scientific Board of the faculty for no longer than the period of validity of the accreditation of the given study programme. Necessary changes or additions to the members of the SB during its term of office are usually proposed by its chair; a change of more than a third of the members of the SB is also subject to the approval of the Internal Evaluation Board (IEB) of USB.

The SB is to have at least five members. These may be professors and associate professors or experts in the field (with an academic degree of CSc. or Ph.D. at a minimum), who have been creatively active in the previous five years in the relevant field. At least two members should work outside the faculty or the institutions participating in the implementation of the given Doctoral study programme. Any institution accredited to carry out such a Doctoral study programme (hereinafter, an institution with extended accreditation) is to have a representative on the SB.

The Specialist Board is to:

- a) prepare the admissions procedure for the study programme within its scope of responsibilities and propose to the Dean the composition of the admission board;
- b) initiate and coordinate a programme of lectures, seminars, and other forms of study;
- c) determine the requirements for ISPs of students and the requirements for their theses in the given study programme;
- d) propose non-habilitated staff to the Scientific Board for approval as potential supervisors and members of the examination boards;
- e) monitor the success of supervisors and take such evaluation into account when matching new doctoral students with individual supervisors;
- f) propose to the Dean supervisors for specific Doctoral students and, in the case of external supervisors, faculty guarantors;
- g) approve the topics of theses or changes to them;



- h) approve ISPs and any changes to them;
- i) inspect and approve student literature reviews on thesis topics;
- j) discuss the annual evaluation of students' studies and monitor the progress of implementing their ISPs at least once a year;
- k) submit proposals to the Dean for scholarships in specific cases (see Provision of the Dean D58);
- l) propose to the Dean any withdrawal of scholarships and the subsequent termination of the student's study, in the event of a serious non-fulfillment of an ISP (Evaluation C in the Statement of the SB to the Annual Report of the Doctoral Student);
- m) determine the requirements for State Doctoral Examinations;
- n) propose the composition of commissions for State Doctoral Examinations and thesis defences.

The Chair of the SB is to be the guarantor of the Doctoral study programme. Only an associate professor or professor appointed in a field that corresponds to the given study programme or a closely related programme and who has engaged in scientific activity in the given field in the previous five years can be a guarantor. The guarantor must have a full-time job at FSci USB. One academic staff member may be the guarantor of a maximum of one master's and one doctoral study programme comprising the same, close, or related content in the Czech language. The guarantor may also be the guarantor of a study programme of the same content conducted in English.

Any proposal for a change of study programme guarantor is to be submitted to the Dean together with a justification by the SB or the IEB. If the Dean does not agree to the proposal of the SB, the reasons must be explained to the SB. If the Dean agrees to the proposal, this is to be relayed immediately to the Deputy Chair of the IEB. The matter will be discussed at the next sitting of the IEB. If the Dean does not agree with the IEB's proposal to change the guarantor of the study programme, the Rector's Collegium will discuss the Dean's reasoning and make a final decision. The guarantor is to be appointed by the Dean after approval by the IEB.

The Chair of the SB is to:

- a) be responsible for the activities of the Specialist Board,
- b) be responsible for the preparation of documents needed for the accreditation of the study programme and the evaluation of the quality of educational activities,
- c) communicate the provisions of the Faculty / University concerning doctoral studies to the supervisors, especially external ones,
- d) discuss with the student if they so request the adjustment of their ISP (see Point 10), in the event that they are or are to become a parent.

(2) Supervisor

Supervisors, supervisor–specialists, or faculty guarantors are entrusted with supervising students during their doctoral studies. The **supervisor** may be a Professor, Associate Professor, Doctor of Science, or other expert. If the potential supervisor has not been habilitated or does not have the title of Doctor of Science (DrSc. or DSc.), the SB is to submit a proposal to the Scientific Board in time for their inclusion in the list of supervisors for the given Doctoral study programme. The requirements regarding their professional qualities are similar to the Faculty's requirements for applicants for habilitation (the form for a proposal for inclusion among the supervisors is on the faculty website, under *Documents/Forms/For employees*). If a non-habilitated professional has already been approved by the Scientific Board for the training of Doctoral students in another programme, the Chair of the SB, who wants the person concerned to train students in the



programme, is to send the SB's decision (with the date of the approval) to the Research Office for registration.

Doctoral studies are, in essence, individual studies, the fulfillment of which is determined partly by the professional relationship between the student and the supervisor. The applicant registers with a specific supervisor, usually with a particular thesis topic in mind. The supervisor is to be proposed to the Dean by the SB according to the entrance examination protocol. The maximum number of qualification theses supervised by one supervisor at one time is determined by the Provision of the Dean D84. If the supervisor is not an employee of FSci USB, the **faculty guarantor** is to take on some of the supervisor's duties (especially in matters of an administrative nature).

The supervisor is:

- a) to provide the applicant with relevant information on the subject of their thesis before the admissions procedure begins, so the applicant can present it to the Admissions Board in the form of a Doctoral thesis project;
- b) to participate in the student's admissions procedure;
- c) to propose specialist-supervisors (or consultants) and the topic of the thesis;
- d) to be responsible for the quality of the thesis topic and the professional guidance of the student;
- e) to prepare, together with the student, an ISP and, in the event of study during parenthood, to participate in the adjustment of the ISP;
- f) to monitor the course of study and scientific work of the student, provide them with consultation, recommend relevant literature, teach them how to perform when they present their findings in public, teach them how to access financial resources to support their project, help them establish professional contacts at home and abroad, and teach them how to pass on their knowledge to other students;
- g) to be responsible for the student's involvement in research work and, together with the training institution, for the adequate material and financial support of their research work;
- h) to evaluate the student's progress each semester and, on the basis of this evaluation, award them a credit for the subject Doctoral Practice, and participate in the student's annual presentation at departmental seminars or doctoral conferences;
- i) to regularly evaluate the student's compliance with their ISP and report this evaluation to the SB within the framework of the Student's Annual Report, or propose that the SB terminates the student's study in the event of persistent non-compliance.

For serious reasons, the SB may propose to the Dean a change of supervisor; this will be conditional upon the student having so far fulfilled their study obligations according to their ISP. When looking for a new supervisor, the SB is to take into account the student's proposal for a new supervisor, as well as the original topic of the thesis, the year of study, and the statement of the original supervisor. If a suitable supervisor can be found who is willing to take over the student's training (either in the original topic of the thesis or a new one), the Dean is to appoint them.

A **specialist supervisor** is a top-level specialist within a given area who, due to their professional knowledge or methodological and technical capabilities, can to guide the student within a certain area of subject or time period of Doctoral studies. They cannot replace the supervisor's primary responsibility for the specialist aspect of the student's studies.

Admissions Procedure



(3) Conditions of the Admission Procedure

The conditions of the **admission procedure** for Doctoral study programmes are announced annually by the Dean's Decision published on the Faculty's website. Applicants with a university degree in the Master's Degree Programme may be admitted to study in the Doctoral Study Programme. The applicant is to be accepted to study only after providing evidence of their previous education. Documents issued by a foreign university must be verified. The required verification methods for individual countries are determined by the Provision of the Rector R350.

Applications, including the required attachments, are to be submitted during a specified period electronically via IS STAG. They must contain the name of the study programme and the proposal of the supervisor under whom the applicant has agreed to conduct their thesis. The form of study is either full-time or combined (i.e., while the student is employed and the student's thesis topic is not part of their job description). The SB may specify the requirements for applicants via IS STAG (in the study programme information section). Foreign applicants (with the exception of those from the Slovak Republic) are admitted primarily to English study programmes; if they demonstrate knowledge of Czech at level B2 at least (see the Provision of the Dean D80), they may be accepted into Czech study programmes. If the proposed supervisor is not an employee of FSci USB, the SB is to propose – before the commencement of the admissions procedure - a faculty guarantor who must agree to fulfill this function. At least one week before the set date of the entrance examination, the candidate must send an electronic draft of their thesis project (prepared in cooperation with their prospective supervisor) to the Chair of the SB.

(4) The Admission Board and the Entrance Examination

The **Admission Board** (AB) is to have at least three members (at least one of whom is to be a member of the SB) and is to be appointed by the Dean. If the potential supervisor of a candidate is an employee of an institution with extended accreditation, a representative of the given institution is to be a member of the AB. The Chair of the AB is usually the Chair of the SB. At least three members of the AB must be present at the **entrance examination**. The prospective supervisor is to participate in the meetings of the committee but does not have the right to vote. The content of the entrance examination is to include assessment of the applicant's proposal and creative work, their prerequisites for independent scientific and research activities, their ideas about their thesis project, including previous discussions with their supervisor, and their knowledge of the field. The examination may also include verification of the applicant's language skills. The AB is also to assess the technical and financial (grant) support for the chosen topic. The AB may stipulate that the candidate, who has been recommended to the Dean for doctoral study, complete up to five courses to supplement their knowledge of previous studies and vocational courses relating to the narrower focus of their thesis. The list of compulsory and optional courses for individual study programmes is to be found on the Faculty website.

In the protocol kept for the course of the entrance examination, the AB is to specify the supervisor and eventually also the faculty guarantor, the focus of the doctoral thesis, and whether other institutions with extended accreditation for the given study programme are to participate in student's training. If the focus of the thesis requires it, a supervisor–specialist (consultant) may be proposed, usually on the supervisor's recommendation. The Chair of the AB is to ensure the signature of the head of the given department and the faculty guarantor if proposed, and in the event of the thesis being prepared at a institution with extended accreditation, the signature of the director of the given institution. If more than one candidate participates in the admissions procedure



for a given study programme, the AB is to determine, based on the admissions procedure results, the order they are to be admitted if only a limited number of doctoral positions offered. The Dean is to make the final decision.

The training institution is to be either FSci USB or the institute of the Czech Academy of Sciences, to which the accreditation of the student's Doctoral study programme is extended and which registered the student for training during the admission procedure (as confirmed by the Director's signature on the protocol). If the future supervisor is not an employee of either FSci USB or an institute of the Czech Academy of Sciences with extended accreditation for the given field, the training institution is to be FSci USB, albeit the supervisor is to be responsible for the financial support of the student above the standard scholarship.

Study conditions, study obligations

(5) Commencement and Changes in the Form of Study

Applicants admitted to study are to enroll before the set date. The basis for enrolment is the protocol of the admissions procedure and the Dean's decision on admission to study. The **standard and maximum study period** for Doctoral study programmes is four years and six years, respectively. Any interruption in these periods of study (a maximum of two years) is not to be included in this period, and a period of study interruption during a recognised period of parenthood is not to be included in the total period of study interruption. After reaching the maximum period of interruption, the student is to re-enrol. If they fail to do so and do not request an alternative date for re-enrolment within five days of the expiry of the maximum interruption period, their study is to be terminated. In justified cases, the Dean may allow the maximum study time to be exceeded.

During their study, the student may request or the SB may recommend a **change in the form of study** (if their study programme is accredited in several forms). The Dean is to decide on the application after receiving the opinion of the supervisor and the SB. The student may also apply for **admission to another Doctoral programme**. As a rule, the application should include an application for recognition of subjects, examinations, or other study obligations. It must include the consent of the Chair of the SB of the field to which the applicant wishes to be admitted or the courses they are proposing to study to supplement their original ISP. The Dean may recognise subjects, examinations, or other study obligations in the decision and may also decide to shorten the maximum study period for the new programme. The Department of Student Affairs is to pass on the decision of the Dean to the Chair of the SB of the field the student is leaving. The student is to acknowledge that by transferring to another study programme, the period of study in the previous, duly incompleting one, is included in the total time spent in their doctoral study. The previous course of studies will therefore be considered unsuccessful.

(6) Individual study plan

Within **2 months of the beginning of the course of studies**, the student is to submit an electronic draft of the Individual Study Plan Form for a Student of Doctoral Study Programme XY and required appendices to the SB through the Department of Student Affairs. They will have developed this with the proposed supervisor based on the conclusions of the admissions procedure. The ISP is to include:



- a) a list of courses set and recommended by the AB (or the Chair of the SB of the new study programme, if the student change their study programme), including the expected semester/year of completion, in addition to compulsory language courses and subjects listed in Point 8;
- b) a general schedule of the work on the thesis topic;
- c) a detailed plan for the first year of study (i.e., courses planned and a description of the work to be carried out, or possibly an internship at another institution).

The thesis project proposal that the student used during the admissions procedure will be attached. The SB is to discuss the ISP and the Chair is to inform the student within three weeks of receipt whether it approves the ISP in its current form or requests its supplementation. The student must submit the revised ISP to the SB within 30 days of the date of the request to revise. The approved ISP is to be sent by the Chair of the SB to the student and the Department of Student Affairs (to record the fulfillment of the student's duties and to deposit the ISP in the student's file).

The ISP approved by the SB is binding on the student; its modification (e.g., any time shifts in the completion of courses, internships and appearances at conferences, minor adjustments to the objectives of the thesis, and so on) may be made by the student in the annual report. It is possible to ask the SB in writing for larger changes (e.g., to the assigned courses) with the consent of the supervisor no later than the end of the seventh semester of study; more substantial alterations, for instance in the objectives or topic of the thesis can be made at any time: these are subject to approval by the SB. Changes to the ISP as a result of parenthood are addressed in Point 10. After the SB approves the ISP, the Dean is to appoint a supervisor and a specialist supervisor and faculty guarantor, if these are proposed by the SB.

The elaboration of a **thesis containing classified information** on the basis of valid legal regulations or on the basis of an agreement within the framework of contractual cooperation with partners of USB or the institution where the student works on a thesis is possible with the Dean's consent (application form is to be found at <https://www.prf.jcu.cz/en/faculty/documents/forms> and there in the *For students* section). If the elaboration of the thesis contains classified information and no consent has been given to its inclusion, the Dean may, based on the proposal of the Chair of the SB of the programme in which the student is studying, give at least half a year before the expected submission of the thesis additional consent for its defence. If this consent is not granted, the student is obliged to rewrite their thesis before submitting it for defence absent the classified information.

(7) Subjects Under Study

The student is to enrol in the subjects determined by their ISP and English language courses according to their periodicity and mandatory prerequisites and the schedule of their study so that they complete them in the **standard period of study. Enrolment on courses** for individual semesters (within the dates given by the academic calendar) is **mandatory**. This is carried out via IS STAG by the student. The student has to be enrolled at least on the Doctoral Practice course in each semester. The only exceptions are internships and conferences, which the student can apply for immediately before they take place. A student planning to interrupt their studies does not enrol, but is to inform the Department of Student Affairs of their decision in writing before the enrolment deadline. If the student is unable to enrol for the subjects electronically (e.g. due to a stay abroad with limited access to the Internet), they are to arrange in advance their enrolment for the required courses with the Department of Student Affairs. If the student does not enrol within the deadline, fails to explain their failure to do so within five days, and does not request a change in the enrolment deadline, they will



not meet the study programme requirements and their studies may be terminated. Students are to be notified if courses are not to be run (e.g., because of a lack of interest) at least three days before the start of the period of further enrolment amendments. They will be sent an email containing a link to the list of open courses published on the faculty website.

As part of **further enrolment amendments**, the student may request the following changes free of charge:

- a) cancellation of enrolment in a subject that will not be offered;
- b) cancellation of enrolment on a course whose schedule has been modified or created after the deadline for compulsory enrolment;
- c) cancellation of enrolment, if the enrolment conflicts with the rules and conditions for the study plans of the given programme (especially subsequent and prerequisite subjects),
- d) enrolment in a different subject or more subjects, if the capacity of the scheduled event allows it: if the capacity of the scheduled event is exhausted, the student must obtain the consent of the subject guarantor for additional enrolment above the original capacity.

If the student wishes to make a change in their enrolments, they are to deliver to the Department of Student Affairs (in person or by email sent from their school email account) a signed Enrolment Sheet B printed from IS STAG with the changes listed. If the student does not deliver this document by the end of the further enrolment amendments period, the enrolment made via IS STAG is to be considered complete and binding. The student may request later changes to their enrolments after paying the fee: (a) by the end of the third teaching week at the Department of Student Affairs (though enrolment in a new subject is subject to the consent of the guarantor); and (b) in exceptional cases by application to the Vice-Dean for Doctoral Studies (the consent of the guarantor of the respective subject is also required) from the fourth week onwards. Within the scope of changes in enrolment, it is not permitted to cancel enrolment for already realised subjects with block teaching. The fees for changes in registration are set out in the Provision of the Dean D69 on the Setting of Fees for Discretionary Administrative Services. Cancellation of a course that is part of a student's ISP does not release the student from the obligation to complete this course by the end of the standard study period. Students are to be informed in advance about enrolment dates and further enrolment amendments via an e-mail notification sent by the Department of Student Affairs to the Doctoral students' mailing list.

(8) Other Duties

The duties of a doctoral student also include:

- individual work on their thesis, for which the student enrolls for each semester of study as subject XXX¹ 800 "**Doctoral Thesis, Practical Part**". Completion is confirmed each semester by the awarding of a credit by the supervisor;
- completion of the course XXX¹ 806 "**Literature Review**" **no later than in the second semester** of study. If the student enrolls in July - August or December - January, they are to enrol in the course in the third semester of study. In cases of enrolment outside the normal deadlines (i.e. November, March - June), the course is always enrolled in for the second semester of study with

¹ the code of the department to which the Doctoral student belongs



the possibility of submitting a free application for an extension of the research submission deadline (i.e., a postponement in the check for the fulfillment of obligations for the given semester up to a maximum of one year from the beginning of the study). The literature review presents an overview of current knowledge on the topic of the thesis. It includes a critical analysis and synthesis of this information, a setting out and justification of the goals of the thesis, and the methodology by which these are to be achieved. The requirements for the literature review's minimum scope are set by the SB in IS STAG. The student is to submit the review (after approval by the supervisor) in electronic form no later than the end of the tenth month from the beginning of the study to the Chair of the SB. If necessary, within one month of the student's submission, the Chair of the SB is to ask the student to supplement or revise the review. The credit for the fulfillment of the subject "Literature Review" is awarded by the Chair of the SB and as such expresses the SB's approval of its quality. Chair of the SB sends the approved version of the review to the Department of Student Affairs for archiving. If a credit is not granted, the student is to enrol in the course in the following semester and their scholarship is reduced until the credit is granted. (See Provision of the Dean D58 on the Amount of Scholarships for the Doctoral Study Programmes);

- an **annual** presentation of their results and information on their progress at a department seminar (or, with the prior approval of the SB, at a seminar of the institution with extended accreditation for the given programme). In the first year of study, the student is to present a critical analysis of the issues relating to the topic of their thesis with a methodology proposal and a thesis development schedule. Credit for the fulfilment of the course XXX¹ 805 "**Doctoral Seminar**" is to be awarded by the Chair of the SB;
- submission of an **annual report on the progress of their study** for the previous academic year (including the supervisor's statement on the student's work) **by 31 October**. All students studying continuously for more than 4 months as of 31 October are obliged to submit an annual report. In the report, the student is to state their activities relating directly to their thesis, while other activities are to be clearly distinguished by detailing them in the section "Other Scientific Activities". A student who interrupts their studies more than 4 months after the submission of the previous annual report shall submit a Partial Report (on the annual report form) regarding the fulfillment of their obligations during this period;
- **pedagogical activity, at least 42 hours during the standard period of study** in total (by the end of the fourth year of study). The obligation of pedagogical work applies only to full-time students in Czech study programmes. Pedagogical activity is considered to be:
 - a) participation in teaching courses at USB. The student is to be listed amongst the lecturers/instructors of the course on IS STAG as leading exercises, lecturing on the topics assigned by the course guarantor, and teaching online. The number of hours taught may be increased by a maximum of one half for preparation, if the student has carried this out at the time;
 - b) supervision of a bachelor's or master's dissertation. The doctoral student is to be listed on IS STAG as the supervisor. Twenty-one hours per semester of supervision of a qualifying dissertation is to be assigned;
 - c) supervision of a student project at an international summer school. The doctoral student is to be listed as a project leader in published materials from the summer school. A maximum of 20 hours is to be assigned for the supervision of one project;



- d) active participation in the provision of professional content for excursions and field-work. Only those hours spent by the student explaining and demonstrating are counted, to increase by a maximum of one-half again for preparation if the student carried this out at the time;
- e) review of a Bachelor's thesis (6-8 hours for each one), SGA projects (1.5-2 hours for each one), or a SOČ thesis as a part of the admissions procedure (1.5-2 hours for each one);
- f) supervision of an SOČ thesis – the doctoral student is to be listed on the submitted work as the supervisor of the thesis (a maximum of 15 hours per SOČ thesis is to be assigned),
- g) lecturing at student research competitions ("olympiads"), special events for talented high school students (Week of the Contemporary Biology, MOLBIB, etc.), or at the FSci USB Open Day or the Institute of the Czech Academy of Science (if it is the student's training institution).

One hour of teaching practice is considered to be 45 minutes of direct teaching or 60 minutes of other activities. The student is entitled to reimbursement for pedagogical work from the Faculty. They may apply for this at the end of the examination period for the previous semester; they are to submit a completed Application for Reimbursement form to the Department of Student Affairs; the Department of Student Affairs is to ensure the agreement of the responsible persons that the reported hours were taught. The staff of the Department of Student Affairs are to record the hours taught required to fulfill the student's pedagogical obligations. If the student has fulfilled their pedagogical obligations according to Point (g) above or has already been reimbursed, they are to obtain a certificate of lessons from the person guaranteeing the event and submit it to the Department of Student Affairs;

- personal **presentation of their results** at an international conference (i.e., a conference where the language of the meeting is English or, with the approval of the SB, another world language other than Czech or Slovak), registered as study subject XXX¹ 907 "**Conference Presentation (in foreign language)**" at least **once during the standard time of study**. Credit for fulfillment – the student is to submit a copy of the poster or copies from the collection of abstracts – is awarded by the Chair of the SB. The student may apply to the Faculty for a financial contribution to participate in the conference²;
- **completion of an internship** at a renowned foreign scientific institution. The recommended total length of the internship abroad is 3 months, the minimum total length is 1 month. It is possible to complete the internship as several separate stays, each lasting at least two weeks. Depending on the length of stay, the student enrolls in courses FBI 801 – 803 "**Internship abroad for doctoral students I., II. or III.**" (The duration of the internship is, respectively, 2 to 4 weeks, 1 to 3 months, or more than 3 months). It is also possible to recognise as an internship field work abroad with an important foreign researcher, during which the student learns new methods, or techniques of subsequent processing of samples and data. Credit is awarded by the Vice-Dean for Doctoral Studies upon confirmation from the visited institution or employee that states the length of stay and the nature of the internship. The student can apply to the Faculty for a financial contribution towards an internship abroad²;

² Students are to be informed of financial support options each year.



- **publication** of at least some of the **results** of the thesis (i.e., verifiable confirmation of acceptance of the manuscript by the editors of a scientific journal, and so on). Publication requirements are set out below (Point 13);
- **listing the affiliation to the Faculty/University** on all published output in connection with the thesis;
- evaluating the completed courses in the **Student Evaluation of Study**.

Students studying the majority of their Doctoral studies in combined form have the same obligations as full-time students, with the exception of pedagogical activities. Students studying in English have the same obligations as students studying in Czech, again with the exception of pedagogical activities. A student who transfers from full-time to part-time study later at the end of the second year will have completed a proportion of the compulsory pedagogical practice.

The Department of Student Affairs is to **check the fulfillment of study obligations** at the beginning of each academic year and for students who began their studies at the beginning of the summer semester after the end of the first year of study using data registered in IS STAG. The awarding of a credit for the Doctoral Thesis, Practical Part course is checked by the Department of Student Affairs at the end of each semester. It is in the student's interest to deliver the required documents proving the fulfillment of non-teaching courses (e.g., the presentation of results at an international conference or internship abroad) to the Chair of the SB and the Vice-Dean for Doctoral Studies and to check (via IS STAG) that their credits and examination results are properly recorded. (See Provision of the Dean D89 on the Recording of Study Results).

If the students do not exercise their right to dispute the evaluation assigned by the teachers via IS STAG within 14 days from the end of the examination period, they will be considered to have agreed with the evaluation. If a student does not complete a course (i.e., they receive a "fail" or do not obtain a credit), they may re-enrol. However, a subject listed in the ISP as mandatory may only be repeated once; a second failure will lead to termination of their study. For the English exam, special rules apply; please see the provision of the Vice-Dean P3. Students from selected English-speaking countries (i.e., the United Kingdom, the United States, English-speaking parts of Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the Bahamas, Barbados, and Jamaica) are exempt from the English examination if they provide a graduate diploma from a respective university of that country.

The SB may in exceptional cases allow a student to perform some of their duties to a more limited extent; the student must apply in writing for such permission to the SB through the Department of Student Affairs, stating their reasons and including an opinion from their supervisor. After the application has been discussed by the SB, the Chair is to communicate the board's opinion to the student through the Department of Student Affairs. Requests and the granting or refusal of exceptions are archived by the Department of Student Affairs.

The **period of examination validity** within a particular study is not limited. In the case of repeated studies or studies on another programme, the Dean may recognise examinations that were passed previously and any credits if no more than 5 years have elapsed since the completion/termination of previous doctoral studies at FSci USB. The student is to attach to the application for recognition of previously completed courses a consent of their guarantors or, in the case of the State Doctoral Examination, and provided they study in the same field, the statement of the Chair of the SB.



(9) Scholarships

Full-time students may be awarded a **basic scholarship** for the standard period of study, the amount of which is to be set according to the fulfillment of study obligations and determined by Provision of the Dean D58 on the Amount of Scholarships for Doctoral Students. The student's supervisor may apply to the Dean for an increase in the scholarship if they satisfy the conditions; the application form is on the Faculty' website, *Documents / Forms / For employees*). All previous unsuccessful studies in accredited doctoral programmes are included in the completed period of study. Failure to fulfill the aforementioned obligations is penalised by a reduction in the scholarship (see Provision of the Dean D58); repeated failure to fulfill obligations may be a reason for the termination of studies.

Concurrence of study and child care

(10) Child care

During maternity or parental leave (hereinafter referred to as the "recognised period of parenthood", or RPP), the student may

- a) interrupt their study at any time. The RPP is not then included in the total study interruption period),
- b) continue studying. In this case, they have a right
 - to extend the deadlines for fulfilling study obligations, as well as for fulfilling the requirements for advancement to the next semester or year, by the duration of maternity leave (up to 28 weeks for one child and up to 37 weeks for multiple children, starting 6 weeks before the expected date of childbirth, or 22 or 31 weeks after childbirth respectively);
 - to extend the deadlines for fulfilling study obligations throughout the entire RPP.

These rights are to be applied in the form of modifications to the ISP. The adjustment of the ISP is to take place on the basis of a written request from the student, which is to be submitted to the Department of Student Affairs, usually before the start of the RPP but no later than 4 weeks after its start or 4 weeks after re-enrolment after study interruption. The Department of Student Affairs shall forward the request to the chair of the SB without delay. The ISP is to be modified within 4 weeks of receiving the request by the Chair of the SB in agreement with the student, their supervisor, or the Vice-Dean for Doctoral studies. To be valid, the adjustment of the ISP must be confirmed at least by the signatures of the student and the Chair of the SB. One copy of the modified ISP is to be received by the student, one by the Chair of the SB, and one is to be archived in the Department of Student Affairs (in the student's file). An adjustment may be made for the entire RPP or made gradually for each academic year (in which case the student must request a new ISP adjustment at least 4 weeks before the end of the foregoing academic year). The adjusted ISP is a binding study schedule for a defined period, according to which the fulfillment of study obligations is monitored.

The documents needed to register an RPP are specified in the Provision of the Rector R246. The Dean is to issue the student with a decision to interrupt study during the RPP if they request so along with a statement that they take note of the RPP in the event of the student only reporting the beginning of parenthood without the need to interrupt or change their ISP. The SB is responsible for approving changes to the ISP.



The State Doctoral Examination

(11) Registration for the Examination

After fulfilling their pedagogical duties, presenting their findings at an international conference, completing the courses set out in their ISP, and passing an English exam, the student may apply for the **State Doctoral Examination** – by submitting a completed application form for the State Doctoral Examination to the Department of Student Affairs. The first attempt at the State Doctoral Examination always precedes the defence of the thesis. In the case of "fail" grade, the examination may be repeated (once), 2 months at the earliest and within 1 year at the latest; a possible interruption of studies or the equivalent of maternity leave is not included in this period. The student must successfully pass the examination no later than 1 year after the end of the standard study period.

(12) The State Doctoral Examination Board and Examination Procedure

The SB is to propose the members and the Chair of the State Doctoral Examination Board (hereinafter SDEB). Only Professors, Associate Professors, and experts approved by the Scientific Board may be members of the SDEB. The SDEB is to have five to nine members. At least two members are not to be employees of FSci USB. If the SB proposes an expert without a habilitation or the title of Doctor of Science as a member of the SDEB, it is obliged to submit a written justification of its proposal to the Scientific Board for approval. A supervisor and a consultant may also be appointed members of the SDEB. According to the dispositions of the Chair of the SB (or the Chair of the SDEB), the Department of Student Affairs is to inform the members of the SDEB about their appointments and the student (no later than 3 weeks before the examination) regarding the composition of the SDEB and the date and place of the examination.

The State Doctoral Examination is a comprehensive examination of the student's knowledge, their ability to acquire a deep knowledge of the issues they deal with in their thesis (as well as its broader context), and their ability to evaluate and use the relevant information creatively. The student may request that the SB specifies the scope of requirements and focus of the examination.

For Czech doctoral programmes, the examination is conducted in Czech, and for English programmes in English. An alternative language is only possible if the student is acquainted with this fact at least 14 days before the examination date and gives their written consent. The course of the State Doctoral Examination and the announcement of the result are to be public. The participation of at least five members of the SDEB is required. The SDEB decides on the result of the examination by secret ballot. The examination is to be classified as a "passed" or "fail" - the former if an absolute majority of the present members of the SDEB vote for it. In the event of an equal vote, the opinion of the Chair of the SDEB is decisive. In all other cases, the resulting classification is to be a "fail".

If student resits, at least half of the members of the SDEB are to be replaced. The student is to re-register within the set deadline, and the subsequent procedure is the same as for the first examination.

If, due to a crisis or extraordinary measures, the student is not able to be physically present, the examination may take place remotely or in private if an audiovisual recording is made during the examination, which will be kept for five years. Where measures allow, the student is to be present with at least one member of the SDEB (usually the Chair); the other members may be present online. The Chair of the SB is responsible for ensuring that the recording is made and submitted to the Department of Student Affairs and that a secret vote is conducted. The minutes shall state the form



of the examination (in person or partly or entirely online); whether all appointed members of the SDEB took part (and, in the case of a hybrid form, how many were present in person and how many online); the tool used for voting; the course of the examination itself (i.e., the questions); and the result. In the case of an online examination, a screenshot with a list of remotely connected participants and a screenshot with the voting results are to be attached to the record.

The Thesis and its Defence

(13) Content of the Thesis

The thesis may be written in Czech or English, or another language if approved by the SB. It can take the form of (a) an annotated set of at least three publications or manuscripts of which the student is (co-)author, or (b) a manuscript containing all the results of the research, supplemented by the publications created during the study. The first form is preferred.

In both cases, the thesis must contain a joint introduction (e.g., a literature review) and a summary of the results with conclusions evaluating the impact of the thesis on the further development of the field. The minimum scope of these sections (excluding the list of publications and captions to figures and tables) is to be 10 standard pages and not be a copy of the abstracts or conclusions taken from individual publications. At least part of the thesis must be accepted for publication or published in a journal that has reached an impact factor (IF) of at least 0.5 in the last 4 years. The applicant must be the first author of at least one published paper (or a paper accepted for publication) that is part of the thesis. It is not permissible for two Doctoral students to have the same publication as the only first-author publication with a so-called shared primary authorship. If a publication used as a *rigorous thesis* is included in the doctoral thesis, it is not to be included amongst the publications used to meet the minimum requirements (one as first-author and one in a journal with an IF of at least 0.5). The SB may specify stricter requirements for the given field regarding the scope of the introduction and summary or the number of included publications and minimum IF, but at the same time, it is to take into account the maximum allowed length of study.

(14) Submission of the Thesis

Before printing the thesis, the student is to submit a manuscript of the prepared thesis in PDF format to the Chair of the SB to be checked for fulfillment of the research quality requirements of the SB for theses in the given field. It is up to the Chair of the SB whether they will carry out the inspection themselves or with other members of the SB. They are to communicate their opinion to the student no later than one month after receiving the manuscript and, in the case of a positive opinion, give their consent (in writing or by e-mail) to submit the thesis. If the thesis is to be published in a series of theses supported by the Faculty, the student is then to send it to the Vice-Dean for Doctoral Studies to be checked regarding formal requirements. Detailed information on the formal requirements for the thesis and on the procedure for its submission are to be found in the Decision of the Vice-Dean P6.

The Department of Student Affairs is to inform the Chair of the SB of whether the student has fulfilled all study obligations. The Department of Student Affairs is not to take any further steps regarding the thesis defence until all the required materials have been submitted in the required number of copies and until the Specialist Board has given its consent to the defence.



(15) Thesis Defence Board and Reviewers

The Chair of the SB is to propose in writing to the Dean the members of the **Thesis Defence Board** (hereinafter TDB) and two, exceptionally three, thesis reviewers (for non-faculty experts whose degrees, addresses, and e-mail addresses will be provided). The TDB is to have at least five members. At least two members of the SB of the doctoral study programme and one employee of the institution with extended accreditation (if the institution was the student's training institution) must be amongst the members of the TDB. At least three members of the TDB are not to be employees of the USB. In the case of experts without habilitation or professorship, the Chair of the SB shall submit to the Dean a written justification of their nomination. **Reviewers** may be members of the TDB. At least two reviewers are not to be from USB or from the institution at which the student worked on their thesis. The supervisor, consultant, or co-authors of the publication that is part of the thesis may not be reviewers or members of the TDB. The cover letter to the reviewers specifies the requirements for a thesis in the given field (provided by the Chair of the SB): information on the deadline for sending the reviewer's report to the Department of Student Affairs (at least 7 days before the defence) and a request for a statement as to whether the reviewer recommends the thesis for defence.

If the Chair of the SB is the supervisor of the defending student, they are to entrust the proposal of the TDB members and the reviewers to another member of the SB. Based on the proposal of the SB, in cooperation with the TDB, the Dean is to determine the place and time of the defence. The thesis must be made available to the reviewers at least 5 weeks before the defence. If a reviewer is not willing to work with the electronic version of the thesis, the date of the defence must be adjusted (i.e., to take place at least 6 weeks from the submission of copies of the thesis to the Department of Student Affairs). The defence must take place within 4 months of the submission of the thesis and all of the necessary documents if the student meets all of the study requirements.

(16) Organisation of the Thesis Defence

The Department of Student Affairs is responsible for the administration of the defence of the thesis. This includes the registration of all necessary documents; the distribution of appointment letters; an invitation to the supervisor, supervisor–specialist, and faculty guarantor; the distribution of the thesis, cover letter, and curriculum vitae of the applicant to the reviewers; an announcement of the defence date to selected faculties and institutes of the Czech Academy of Sciences; publication of information about the location where the thesis will be available for public viewing before the defence – at least 1 week before the thesis defence – and of the place and time of the defence on the Faculty website; making the reviews available to the applicant and the Chair of the TDB no later than 6 days before the defence; placing the electronic version of the full text of the thesis on the Faculty website; sending information about access to the thesis together with the invitation to the defence to members of the TDB and additional administrative actions at the discretion of the Chair of the TDB. In the event of the deferred publication of the full text of the thesis, the Department of Student Affairs is to prepare one printed version of the thesis or use one copy of the thesis published in the Dissertation Series to comply with §47b Article 4 of the Act to be available for inspection in the final 5 working days before the defence at the Department of Student Affairs. If the defence takes place partly or entirely online, the Chair of the SB or an employee authorised by them shall ensure a connection for the members of the TDB, reviewers, and the public, and the tool for the secret ballot of the members of the TDB. Organisationally and technically (e.g., regarding a room and other requisites), the defence is managed by the appropriate Department according to the affiliation of the



SB and in cooperation with the SB and the TDB. It is inadmissible that refreshments during the defence be provided or financed by the student.

(17) Testimonials and Language of the Thesis Defence

The student must receive the reviewer's reports no later than 6 calendar days before the date of the defence. If they do not, they have the right to withdraw – in which case they must inform the Chair of the TDB in writing no later than 48 hours before the scheduled start of the defence. In English study programmes, the defence is to take place in English, in Czech study programmes, in Czech. If a member of the TDB or a reviewer is a foreigner, the Chair of the TDB may decide to organize the defence in English. They must then inform the student of their decision at least 14 days before the defence.

(18) Steps in the Thesis Defence

The defence of the thesis is to be public and in the presence of the TDB, which is appointed by the Dean. At least five members of the TDB and at least one reviewer must participate in the defence (in person or remotely). The supervisor or the Chair of the TDB is to introduce the candidate. The student is to have a maximum of 30 minutes to present their thesis. The supervisor and all the reviewers are to comment on the thesis; the candidate may respond to their comments individually or jointly. If a reviewer is not present at the defence in person or remotely – the presence of reviewers is desirable and expected, particularly if they have expressed a negative opinion of the thesis), the review is to be read by the Chair of the TDB or an authorised board member. If written statements have been received from other persons, they are to be presented by the Chair.

The TDB is to hear and assess the student's presentation, the reviewers' opinions, and the discussion between the student and the reviewers and the student and the other participants in the discussion. This is to be followed by a closed meeting of the TDB, which may be attended without the right to vote by the supervisor, supervisor-specialist, faculty guarantor of the student, and reviewers, even if they are not members of the TDB. The TDB is to decide on the outcome of the defence by secret ballot.

The thesis defence is classified as "passed" or "failed". The former applies if more than half vote for it. In the event of equal voting, the opinion of the Chair of the TDB is decisive. In all other cases, the resulting classification is to be a "fail". If the TDB has arrived at a "fail" classification and determined that the work needs to be reworked or supplemented, it must specify its requirements in writing at the same meeting. The TDB shall decide on these requirements by a majority of the members present. If the student is awarded a "pass" despite the fundamental reservations of one of the reviewers, the Chair of the TDB is obliged to document in detail the answers of the candidate and the course of the defence. The progress of the defence and all required documents are added to IS STAG by the Chair of the TDB or a record-keeper authorised by them.

If some members of the TDB participate in the defence remotely, the Chair of the TDB is to attach to the minutes of the defence a screenshot with a list of remotely connected participants and a screenshot with the voting results, indicating in the minutes which tool was used for voting. In the event that the defence cannot be public (neither presentational nor as online transmission) for serious reasons (§95c of the Act), the Chair of the SB is to ensure that the audiovisual recording is acquired and submitted to the Department of Student Affairs for archiving for 5 years.

Exceptionally high-quality graduates may be nominated by the Chair of the TDB or the Chair of the SB for the Dean's Award.



(19) Repetition of the Defence

In the case of a "fail" mark, the the thesis can be defended once again, 6 months at the earliest and 12 months at the latest after the reworking of the thesis in light of the comments of the reviewers and the written instructions of the Chair of the TDB, but without exceeding the maximum study time. In the case of a second defence, the student may request a change of reviewers or of the composition of the TDB. Otherwise, the second defence is to proceed in the same way as the first.

(20) Degree Award

Within 1 month of the completion of the Doctoral study programme, the student is to receive a diploma confirming the award of the "Doctor" (Ph.D.) degree in the Czech language (for study programmes accredited in the Czech language) or in the English language (for study programmes accredited in the English language). Along with the diploma, a Diploma Supplement is to be issued in Czech and English. This may be delivered to the graduate at the FSci USB graduation ceremony.

This document replaces the Provision of the Dean No. 62 of 13 March 2015 and takes effect on September 15th 2022.

This provision was approved by the Senate of the FSci USB on 3.9.2022.

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