



## FRAMEWORK FOR THE COMPOSITION OF THE EXAMINING COMMITTEES

The composition of the three-member and the five-member committees is based on the Rules of Postgraduate Studies and on the Quality Assurance Requirements for Doctoral Thesis.

### 1. Three-Member Examining Committee:

A PhD student presents his/her thesis proposal before a three member committee. The committee is appointed by the Departmental Council, is proposed by the Research Supervisor and the Postgraduate Programmes Committee of the Department, and is chaired by the Research Supervisor. The three member committee is composed of:

- 1.1 the Research Supervisor of the doctoral student (Chairperson of the Committee)
- 1.2 one member from the departmental academic staff
- 1.3 one member from the departmental academic staff, or from another department of the University of Cyprus in a related discipline or from another university or research centre.
- 1.4 faculty members who participate in the Committee may be serving at any academic rank provided that at least one faculty member is serving at the rank of Associate Professor or Professor.

The presentation of the thesis proposal is done two to four semesters after the success in comprehensive exam.

The proposal is evaluated with a Pass/Fail grade. In case of failure in the presentation of the thesis proposal, the PhD student is allowed to repeat it for one more time. Presentation of the thesis proposal is not evaluated with an Incomplete grade.

### 2. Five-Member Examining Committee:

A PhD student defends his/her dissertation before a five-member examining committee. The committee is appointed by the Departmental Council, is proposed by the Research Supervisor and the Postgraduate Programmes Committee of the Department, and is composed of:

- 2.1 three members from the departmental academic staff, one of whom is the student's Research Supervisor
- 2.2 one member from another university or research centre
- 2.3 one member from another Department of the University of Cyprus in a related discipline or from another university or research centre
- 2.4 the Chair of the Committee is a member of the faculty of the Department, but not the Research Supervisor.
- 2.5 faculty members who participate in the Committee may be serving at any academic rank provided that at least one faculty member is serving at the rank of Associate Professor or Professor.

**3. Clarifications regarding the composition of the Examining Committees:**

- 3.1 The faculty members of the University of Cyprus participating in either the three-member or the five-member committee should serve at the academic rank of Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor or Lecturer.
- 3.2 Professor Emeriti of the University of Cyprus are entitled to participate in the Examining Committees.
- 3.3 Faculty members who participate in the Committee may be serving at any academic rank provided that at least one faculty member is serving at the rank of Associate Professor or Professor.
- 3.4 Postgraduate Research Assistants, Special Teaching Staff or other members of staff who are PhD holders, are not entitled to participate in the evaluation committees.
- 3.5 Replacement of an internal member of the Examining committee with a Visiting professor of the Department relevant to the subject of the thesis is allowed.
- 3.6 All external members of the examining committee must come from areas directly related to the subject of the thesis.
- 3.7 Any conflict of interest between the student and the external examiners must be avoided.
- 3.8 The external members of the Examining committees should serve at an academic rank in either a University Institution in Cyprus or abroad or in a Research Centre.
- 3.9 External members who do not serve in an academic position in a University Institution are allowed to participate in the examining committees, provided that they come from

areas directly related to the subject of the thesis. The Supervisor of the doctoral student submits a request for approval through the Departmental Board.

**3.10** All internal members of the committee as well as at least one external member must be physical present in the meeting of the committee. With the approval of the Dean of the Graduate School, the two external members might take part in the meeting via teleconference or Skype.

**3.11** If an external evaluator is not physically present in the meeting of the committee, he/she must submit an independent written report with preliminary comments on the content of the thesis with an original signature. In this case, the method of participation of the evaluator is clearly defined in the final report submitted by the Examining committee and signed by all other evaluators who were physical present at the meeting.

#### **4. Quality Assurance Requirements for Doctoral Thesis**

A PhD thesis must satisfy the following basic conditions:

- It must make use of an extensive bibliography and a comprehensive and in-depth reference to international research which is relevant to the subject of the thesis. Thus, the findings and conclusions of the thesis must be correlated to what has been achieved so far in the relevant scientific field.
- It must make an explicit reference to the scientific contribution of the thesis, especially as regards the advancement of the field on the basis of the research conducted. Therefore, an explicit reference to the originality of the thesis is required.
- It must provide an important and original contribution to scientific knowledge. A doctoral thesis must have a theoretical foundation and its conclusions and findings must have an impact on the broader scientific field.
- The scientific contribution and originality of the thesis must be presented briefly but clearly in the thesis abstract and analyzed to a greater extent in the main part of the thesis.

The following conditions apply to the procedures of a doctoral programme:

- The student submits a research proposal in writing, in which he/she states explicitly what he/she believes are the original aspects and the scientific contribution of the proposed work. The proposal is evaluated by a three-member committee who submits a structured evaluation report stating both the points of agreement and the points of disagreement with the positions supported by the doctoral student. The evaluation report is submitted to the Departmental Board as an information item.
- The thesis is submitted for evaluation only after the approval of the Research Supervisor of the student.

- The five-member examining committee is composed of the Research Supervisor, another two members from the Department's faculty, one external member from another university or research centre and one external member from another Department of the University of Cyprus or from another university or research centre. All external members of the examining committee must come from areas directly related to the subject of the thesis. Any conflict of interest between the student and the external examiners must be avoided.
- Following internal rules, the Department may request from all members of the examining committee to submit to the Chair of the examining committee an independent written report with preliminary comments on the content of the thesis. The independent preliminary reports are then communicated to all other members of the examining committee prior to the thesis examination and are annexed to the final report submitted by the examining committee. The submission of a preliminary report by the Research Supervisor is optional. The examining committee decides by majority whether the doctoral student will be given the opportunity to defend his/her PhD thesis before the examining committee.
- The examining committee addresses its report to the Senate of the University of Cyprus. It should be noted that the examining committee does not decide on awarding or not a PhD title, but only makes a recommendation to the Senate, which is the appropriate body for making the final decision. The report must always be substantiated convincingly. Especially in the case of a positive recommendation, it must analyze the importance and originality of the research conducted as well as the scientific contribution the thesis makes to the particular field.
- The report of the examining committee must identify publishable material contained in the thesis, as well as suggest the type of publication (e.g. journal article, monograph). Reference must also be made to publications already produced from the thesis, in which case both a list of these and the actual text(s) must be attached to the final report.

The Chair of the Department submits to the Dean of the Graduate School the following documents: the final report of the five-member examining committee (with any attachments), the filled-out Form for the Submission of PhD Documents, the Thesis Submission Receipt from the University Library, and one hard copy of the PhD thesis. The Dean of the Graduate School checks all supporting documents, verifies that the procedure followed is in accordance with University regulations and forwards all supporting documentation to the Rector's Council for preliminary approval. The Rectors' Council submits a brief proposal to the Senate regarding the awarding or not of the title of Doctor of Philosophy. The Rectors' Council brief proposal is accompanied by the report of the examining committee and an abstract of the thesis. The Rector's Council informs the Senate of any special circumstances regarding the thesis and/or the procedure.

**5. Financial Compensation of the External Members of the Examining Committees, i.e. members from Universities from countries other than Cyprus:**

The external members of the Examining Committees that come from countries other than Cyprus, receive a flat-rate compensation (honorarium) of equal to €150, a subsistence allowance, the cost of an airline ticket of up to €600 maximum for trips from European countries and up to €1.000 maximum from trips from non-European countries. The maximum length of stay covered by the University of Cyprus is three (3) nights.

If due to extraordinary circumstances, external members are not able to participate in the meeting of the committee scheduled in Cyprus or take part in the meeting through teleconferencing, may be compensated for any expenses incurred, once they justify the extraordinary circumstances. If these external members have submitted an independent written report with preliminary comments on the content of the thesis which is annexed to the final report submitted by the examining committee, are compensated with an honorarium of €150.

**24.11.2021**

**AS/VAR**