



SPECIFIC INSTRUCTION IS-8

regarding the

Completion and public defence of doctoral theses

This instruction is drafted in accordance with:

- Higher Education Law no. 199/2023, as amended and supplemented;
- OME No. 3020/2024 for the approval of the Framework Regulation on doctoral studies, as amended and supplemented;
- OMEC No. 3741/2025 for the approval of the Methodology regarding the analysis of the administrative procedure carried out by the institutions organizing doctoral studies with a view to awarding the doctor's degree.

I. General provisions:

1. Completion of doctoral studies is achieved by the development and public defence of the doctoral thesis before the doctoral committee.
2. The doctoral thesis is an original work, and mentioning the source for any material included in the thesis is mandatory.
3. The doctoral thesis is a public document; the name and surname of the doctoral thesis holder, the doctoral supervisor and the members of the advisory and academic integrity board, as well as the identification data of IOSUD (Institution organizing doctoral studies) are public information.
4. The doctoral student is the author of the doctoral thesis and assumes the correctness of the data and information presented in the thesis, as well as the opinions and demonstrations expressed in the thesis.
5. The doctoral supervisors are obliged to take all due care in verifying the compliance of the doctoral theses with the specific requirements of an original creation, according to the provisions of art. 14 para. (16), letter g of OME no. 3020/2024.
6. The title of the doctoral thesis may be modified with the approval of the doctoral supervisor until its completion for public defence.

II. Stages and legal deadlines for the public defence of the doctoral thesis

For the public defence of a doctoral thesis, the following stages must be completed:

A. Stages preceding the public defence

1. In order for the completed doctoral theses to enter the evaluation and public defence procedure, as defined by the legal provisions in force, their **preliminary analysis (presentation)** is necessary within a team formed by the doctoral supervisor, members of the advisory and academic integrity board and other specialists in the field from the faculty/department/research centre. The observations and proposals of the said audience as regards the structure and content of the thesis shall be mentioned in a **Preliminary analysis report** (Appendix – Preliminary Report-2024) signed by the members of the advisory and academic integrity board and the doctoral supervisor, and **the necessary appropriate changes/additions are to be operated to the doctoral thesis prior to the start of the similarity analysis procedures and the thesis defence before the advisory and academic integrity board.**

2. **The similarity analysis** (for the thesis that includes the changes/additions imposed following the preliminary analysis) shall be carried out by the doctoral student, using the Turnitin software available through the UNITBV e-learning platform (<https://elearning.unitbv.ro/login/index.php>). Following this analysis, the following documents generated by the Turnitin system shall be downloaded and saved:

- proof of uploading/verifying the doctoral thesis (Receipt_PhD student name, in pdf format);
- full similarity report (Turnitin full report_PhD student name, in pdf format – downloadable from the current view - feed-back studio module, with the following settings: exclude bibliography, exclude citations, exclude similar fragments under 8 words);

3. **Analysis and interpretation of the similarity report by the doctoral supervisor and the advisory and academic integrity board.** The doctoral supervisor, together with the members of the advisory and academic integrity board, will draw up a **Resolution** (Appendix 1a_2024) regarding the originality of the thesis, respectively the admission of the thesis for defence.

4. **Uploading the doctoral thesis** and the application to start the procedure (Appendix 2-2024) on the university's drive platform, at <https://drive.unitbv.ro/apps/dashboard/>, together with the similarity report and the resolution of the doctoral supervisor signed by the doctoral supervisor and the members of the advisory and academic integrity board. The documents shall be uploaded in a single folder named after the PhD students. Access with editing rights ("can edit") is granted to the drive to the person designated by the secretariat of the Interdisciplinary Doctoral School (SDI) (madalina.adam@unitbv.ro) and

the SDI director (mona.arhire@unitbv.ro). Uploading to the drive is announced by email to madalina.adam@unitbv.ro. Confirmation of receipt and the registration number of the application will be sent by reply to the doctoral student's message.

5. Verification and certification by the SDI secretariat of the doctoral student's fulfilment of all obligations pertaining to the training programme, the doctoral study contract, as well as the existence of supporting documents for changes to the title of the doctoral thesis; the title of the thesis to be presented before the advisory and academic integrity board is the final title that CANNOT be changed; it must also coincide with the title of the thesis for which the similarity analysis was performed, respectively the positive resolution of the doctoral supervisor regarding the originality of the work was issued. SDI issues a document, registered in the SDI record book (registration number/date), confirming the submission of the thesis in electronic format and the accompanying documents.

6. A control similarity analysis shall be carried out by SDI under conditions similar to those specified for the similarity analysis performed by the doctoral student (II.A2). If, following this verification, it is found that modifications are needed to the doctoral thesis, the doctoral student and the doctoral supervisor are officially notified by the doctoral school. After remedying the elements reported and performing a new verification of the similarities by the doctoral student, he/she resubmits the modified doctoral thesis to the SDI secretariat, together with the similarity reports and the resolution of the doctoral supervisor and the Carrying out.

7. Issuance by the SDI of the approval of the thesis defence in the advisory and academic integrity board (Appendix 1b-2024), subject to the SDI secretariat's approval regarding the entire fulfilment of the training programme and the requirements regarding the documentation of the change in the thesis title; any change during the doctoral studies to the thesis title shall be request and justified by the doctoral supervisor and approved by the Council of the Interdisciplinary Doctoral School (C-SDI). The cumulative stages 5-6 of the SDI verification cannot exceed 30 days; a minimum processing time of 10 working days will be considered in the planning of the procedural stages.

8. The thesis pre-defence before the advisory and academic integrity board; after this pre-defence, which is public, the doctoral supervisor, in accordance with the recommendation of the advisory and academic integrity board and the results of the similarity report, decides on the official submission of the thesis and the organization of the public defence. Members of the advisory and academic integrity board from other institutions in the country or abroad may participate in the pre-defence via videoconference, in which case they shall sign the minutes in electronic format. The maximum duration of the thesis evaluation in the advisory and academic integrity board is 30 days and may be extended by a maximum of 30 days in well-justified situations.

9. Following the pre-defence, the **Acceptance Report** of the doctoral supervisor and the agreement of the members of the advisory and academic integrity board is drawn up (Appendix 3-2025), which also mentions the estimated date for the public defence of the doctoral thesis.

B. Official stages of the doctoral thesis defence procedure

10. The doctoral file is officially submitted to the SDI secretariat in printed format (with original signatures) and in electronic **pdf** format (on an external memory device). The file includes the following items:

- **Request for pre-defence** (Appendix 2-2024);
- **Doctoral thesis** drafted according to the model (Appendix 5-2024), printed double-sided and compactly bound; the thesis includes the appendices (if applicable) and the **Originality Statement** (Appendix 4-2024), which needs to be filled in, signed in the original and appended at the end of the thesis as an integral part thereof; the thesis shall be submitted together with an external memory device (to include the thesis, the appendices and the Originality Statement of **in print- and copy-secured pdf format**).
- **Originality Statement** signed in the original, shall be submitted separately as well;
- **Summary** of the doctoral thesis (Appendix 6-2024); for doctoral theses written in Romanian, the summary will be in Romanian and English, and for doctoral theses written in an international language, the summary of the thesis will also be written in Romanian – only in electronic format;
- **Similarity report made by the doctoral student**;
- **Resolution of the doctoral supervisor and the advisory and academic integrity board following the analysis of the similarity report** (Appendix 1a-2024);
- **Preliminary analysis report** (according to II.A.1) (Appendix – Preliminary Report-2024);
- **Acceptance report**, following the pre-defence (Appendix 3-2024), issued by the doctoral supervisor and the advisory and academic integrity board members; the **estimated date for the public defence** shall be mentioned herein;
- **Curriculum vitae of the doctoral student**, without personal data, assumed by signature.
- **Statement regarding the preview publication** (Appendix 13-2025);
- **Report regarding the fulfilment of the CNATDCU minimum standards for granting the PhD title** (Appendix 14-2025);
- **Proof of submission of the doctoral thesis to the UNITBV Library** – only printed format - (for the issuance of this proof, a double-sided printed and compactly

bound copy of the thesis shall be submitted to the UNITBV Library). The thesis will include the appendices (if applicable) and the completed declaration of originality, signed in the original and attached at the end of it, as an integral part of the thesis. The thesis will be submitted together with an external memory device (including the thesis, the appendices and the Originality Statement in digital **pdf format secured for printing and copying**).

11. The doctoral thesis and its Appendixes will be available for public consultation for 90 calendar days, prior to the public defence, on the national platform managed by the Executive Unit for Financing Higher Education, Research, Development and Innovation (UEFISCDI), in accordance with the legal provisions in force regarding copyright.

12. Upon the SDI Secretariat's upload of the doctoral thesis and its appendices to the UEFISCDI platform, the doctoral student is considered a graduate, without this restricting their right to defend their thesis, even if the maximum contractual duration of the doctoral programme (including the duration specified in the appendices) has been exceeded.

13. During the period in which the thesis is public on the national platform, any natural or legal person may make observations regarding the existence of deviations from ethical and deontological standards, including from the perspective of the existence of plagiarism. Observations can be submitted online to the e-mail address observatii-teza-sdi@unitbv.ro, or to the university registry. The observations are recorded in a report prepared by SDI which will be sent to the Council for Doctoral Studies (CSUD) for analysis and decision with a view to validating the initiation of the procedure for the public defence of the doctoral thesis and will be part of the doctoral file.

14. If no observations have been submitted within the 90-day period in which the thesis and its Appendixes were available for public consultation on the UEFISCDI platform, SDI will send a notification to CSUD so as to validate the initiation of the public defence procedure.

15. If decision of CSUD is to validate, the procedure for the public defence of the doctoral thesis is initiated by establishing the doctoral committee.

16. If, during the stages preceding the defence of the doctoral thesis, minor material errors (writing, spelling) are identified in the content of the thesis, the doctoral student can correct them, without the need for a pre-defence in the academic integrity and advisory committee and public consultation by making the thesis transparent. Before the public defence, after the doctoral supervisor's approval, IOSUD checks the final version of the doctoral thesis with Turnitin.

17. If CSUD invalidates the initiation of the public defence procedure for the doctoral thesis, SDI receives recommendations regarding the rewriting of the doctoral thesis and the elimination of situations that do not comply with the standards of ethics and

deontology, and the doctoral student is obliged to remedy the content of the thesis within 3 months from the communication of the decision to invalidate the defence, with the resumption of the procedure for making the work transparent.

18. After CSUD validates the initiation of the public defence procedure, the doctoral supervisor submits to SDI, at least 45 days before the estimated defence date, the **proposal regarding the composition of the public defence committee of the doctoral thesis**¹ (Appendix 7-2024), accompanied by the following documents:

- Statements of the members of the defence committee regarding the non-existence of a conflict of interest with the doctoral student, respectively with his/her doctoral supervisor (if these statements have not been previously submitted) (Appendix 10-2024);

- Statement of the doctoral supervisor regarding the non-existence of a conflict of interest with the doctoral student (if it has not been previously submitted) (Appendix 11-2024);

- Curriculum vitae of each member of the public defence committee, without personal data and assumed by signature;

- updated Report regarding the fulfilment of the CNATDCU minimal standards for granting the PhD title (Appendix 14-2025), only if changes have occurred as per the initial submission;

- Scientific report of the supervisor (brief acceptance for public defence).

The proposal regarding the composition of the doctoral thesis public defence committee will be endorsed by SDI and approved by CSUD.

¹ *The doctoral committee normally consists of 5 members: the president, as a representative of IOSUD-UNITBV, the doctoral supervisor and 3 official referees, from the country or abroad, of which at least 2 being from outside IOSUD-UNITBV. The official referees are specialists in the field in which the doctoral thesis was developed, knowledgeable in the language in which the doctoral thesis is written and have not been part of the doctoral student's academic integrity and advisory board. The members of the doctoral committee have a doctorate and occupy at least the position of associate professor or scientific researcher level II or have the quality of doctoral supervisors in Romania or abroad. The addition of 1-2 members to the doctoral committee may be requested and justified by the doctoral supervisor (e.g. co-supervised doctoral thesis/ joint supervision).*

If the thesis is written in Romanian and it is considered appropriate to include (a) foreign specialist(s) (who cannot speak Romanian) in the doctoral committee, the thesis must be fully translated into an internationally spoken language accessible to the specialists concerned, so that they can analyse the doctoral thesis. Also, if the thesis is defended in a language that not all the referees know, interpretation will be provided for the respective referees.

19. After the approval of the doctoral thesis public defence committee, the doctoral student will be notified by the SDI secretariat, where he/she will submit the **application for setting the public defence date** (Appendix 8-2024). The application will be endorsed by the doctoral supervisor and the president of the defence committee. The application is registered with SDI at least 25 calendar days before the proposed date for the defence. The proposed date for the defence cannot be earlier than the previously estimated date for the public defence.

20. Proof of payment of the doctoral thesis defence fee (if applicable) must be submitted along with the application to schedule the defence date. The obligation to pay the doctoral thesis defence fee, in the amount approved by the current Academic Senate, applies to all fee-paying doctoral students enrolled during the contractual period and/or during the period of legal extensions, as specified in the contract annexes. UNITBV employees are exempt from paying the defence fee.

21. SDI prepares and posts the announcement for the public defence at least 20 calendar days before the defence date. It will necessarily include the place, date and time of the defence, the doctoral supervisor(s), as well as the place where the full text of the thesis can be consulted in printed format. The announcement of the public defence, the thesis summaries in electronic format, the scientific memorandum, the doctoral candidate's CV, the CVs of the members of the doctoral thesis public defence committee or links to them are posted on the IOSUD website, mentioning the date of posting.

22. **The doctoral thesis defence** can take place only after its evaluation by all members of the doctoral committee and obtaining their agreement on the public defence of the thesis (positive reports), which are submitted or sent in electronic format to the doctoral supervisor and to the e-mail address secretariat-sdi@unitbv.ro at least 15 days before the thesis defence. The public defence can only be held in the presence of at least 4 of the committee members, with the mandatory physical participation of the committee chair and the doctoral supervisor, the other members can also participate in an online videoconference system. The official referees who participate in the online public defence shall sign the minutes in electronic format, before the other members sign in handwriting), having the obligation to transmit the original signed analysis report to the doctoral supervisor / committee chair in a timely manner. If participation in a videoconference system is not possible either, the referee is obliged to send to the committee chair or doctoral supervisor (a) the handwritten declaration regarding the reason for non-participation in the meeting and (b) the assessment report signed in the

original. The public defence must include a session of question from the members of the doctoral committee and the public.²

23. Based on the content of the doctoral thesis and those found during the public defence, the referees' reports, the statement on the originality of the thesis, the analysis on the degree of similarity and the fulfilment of the minimum standards as per CNATDCU for the award of the doctoral degree, the doctoral committee evaluates and deliberates on the award of the doctoral degree.

24. In the event of failure to meet the minimum standards necessary for the award of the doctoral degree, the doctoral committee specify the elements that are to be restored or completed in the doctoral thesis and request a new public defence of the thesis. The second public defence of the thesis takes place before the same doctoral committee as in the case of the first defence. If the minimum standards are not met even at the second public defence, the doctoral degree will not be awarded, and the doctoral student will be expelled.

25. If the doctoral student has fulfilled all the requirements set out in the scientific research programme, as well as the minimum standards related to the field, the doctoral committee proposes the award of the doctoral degree.

26. Submission to the SDI headquarters by the doctoral supervisor, or by another member designated by the committee president, of the **public defence documents** (minutes regarding the meeting with an Appendix including the questions and answers, minutes regarding the resolution of the doctoral committee, other documents as appropriate) (Appendix 12-2024). **All documents associated with the public defence are submitted/sent to the SDI secretariat within one week from the public defence of the thesis.**

27. Completion of the Doctoral File with the necessary documents by the doctoral student, including the **Statement regarding the options for publishing the thesis** (Appendix 9-2024).

28. The proposal to award the doctoral degree issued by the doctoral committee is submitted to CNATDCU (upload on the REI platform by SDI), together with the doctoral file, within a maximum of 30 calendar days for evaluation and validation.

29. Within 30 calendar days from receiving the approval from CNATDCU (which may take up to 90 days), IOSUD-UNITBV issues the decision to award the doctoral degree, signed by the rector, and draws up and issues the doctoral degree.

² *If the members of the doctoral committee request changes to the thesis before the defence, the doctoral thesis will be resubmitted to SDI, with the requested changes, accompanied by proof of its submission to the UNITBV library, a new similarity report and the resolution of the doctoral supervisor.*

30. If CNATDCU decides that the administrative procedure carried out at IOSUD level did not comply with the legal provisions in force, the doctoral file will be sent back to IOSUD to be re-analysed and completed. It can be re-sent to CNATDCU for a new analysis after resuming stages A and B provided for above.

31. If the doctoral student does not opt for the separate publication of the thesis or some chapters thereof, the digital form of the thesis remains public and will be freely accessible on the national platform managed by UEFISCDI, including after the issuance of the decision to award the doctoral degree. The thesis will be assigned a copyright protection license.

32. If the doctoral student opts for the separate publication of the doctoral thesis or some chapters thereof, he/she receives a grace period of maximum 24 months to carry out this publication, during which the doctoral thesis, in digital format, becomes inaccessible to the public. After the grace period expires, if no notification regarding the separate publication of the thesis has been uploaded to the platform managed by UEFISCDI, the document in digital format automatically becomes freely accessible, with the assignment of a copyright protection license.

33. After the publication of the thesis or some chapters thereof, the author is obliged to notify IOSUD of this fact and to send the bibliographic indication and a link to the publication, which will then be made public on the national platform managed by UEFISCDI.

Observations:

1. For co-supervised theses, the previously indicated documents (where applicable) must be drafted/approved by both doctoral supervisors.
2. Depending on the provisions of the doctoral study contract, public defence is subject to the payment of fees, as appropriate (e.g. defence fee, tuition fee difference).
3. **On all materials prepared (abstracts, doctoral thesis, etc.) it is mandatory that the title of the doctoral thesis corresponds to the title of the thesis stated in the Order of Appointment of the Doctoral Committee.**