



## **REGULATION ON DOCTORAL STUDIES OF THE UCAM Catholic University of Murcia Course 2019/20**

### **Explanatory memorandum**

The Organic Law 6/2001, of 21 December, on Universities, modified by the Organic Law 4/2007, of 12 April, defines the structure of the university teachings in three cycles: Bachelor's Degree, Master's Degree and PhD. According to the mentioned Law, the doctoral studies shall be organised and carried out in compliance with the statutes of the universities, and with the criteria established by the Government for obtaining the PhD, prior report of the University Council.

The Royal Decree 99/2011, of 28 January, regulates the official PhD teachings and it constitutes a necessary complement to ensure the complete organisation of the official university teachings established by the Royal Decree 1393/2007, of 29 October, modified by the Royal Decree 861/2010, of 2 July. Therefore, its objective is to regulate the organisation of the doctoral studies corresponding to the third cycle of the official university teachings that lead to obtaining the PhD, which has an official nature and is valid in the entire national territory.

A fundamental task of the universities is to define and implement official PhD teachings that allow the training of Doctors, who act as main actors of society in the creation, transfer and adaptation of research, development and innovation to allow the process of change of the productive model towards a sustainable economy. Doctors must play an essential role in all the institutions involved in the innovation of research, so that they can lead the transfer of knowledge towards the well-being of society.

## Article 1. Object

This regulation aims at developing the structure of the doctoral studies of the UCAM Catholic University of Murcia of Murcia, in compliance with the **Royal Decree 99/2011, of 28** January, which regulates the official doctoral teachings, following the guidelines issued by the European Higher Education Area and in compliance with article 37 of the Organic Law 6/2001, of 21 December, on Universities, modified by the Organic Law 4/2007, of 12 April.

## Article 2. Definitions

1. The term **PhD** refers to the third cycle of official university studies, which leads to obtaining the competences and abilities related to the scientific investigation of quality.
2. The **doctoral programme** is a mixture of activities that lead to obtaining the competences and abilities necessary to obtain the PhD. Such programme aims at the development of the different training aspects of the doctoral student and it establishes the procedures and the research areas for the development of the doctoral thesis.
3. The **doctoral student** is the one who, after proving that he/she meets the requirements established in this Royal Decree, has been admitted to a doctoral programme and has registered in it.
4. The **Doctorate School** is the unit created by various universities and possibly in collaboration with other bodies, centres, institutions and entities with activities of research, development and innovation, both national and foreign, whose fundamental objective it the organisation, in its field, of the management of the PhD, in one or various branches of knowledge or with an interdisciplinary nature.
5. The **document of activities** of the doctoral student is the individual record of control of such activities,



that shall be regularly checked by the tutor and the thesis director and shall be assessed by the academic commission responsible for the doctoral programme.

6. The **Thesis Director** is the one who is ultimately responsible for the set of research tasks of the doctoral student.
7. The **tutor** is responsible for the adaptation of the training and of the research activity to the principles of the programme and, when applicable, of the Doctorate Schools.
8. The **academic commission** of each programme is responsible for its definition, update, quality and coordination, as well as for the development of the research and training and for the authorisation for the submission of the thesis of each doctoral student of the programme.

### **Article 3. Structure of the university teachings**

The university teachings that lead to obtaining official diplomas that are valid on the national territory are structured into three cycles, which are, respectively, the Bachelor's degree, the Master's degree and the PhD, in compliance with article 37 of the Organic Law 6/2001, of 21 December, on Universities, modified by the Organic Law 4/2007, of 12 April.

a) The Bachelor's degree constitutes the first cycle of the university teachings, and it leads to obtaining a general training and other abilities that seek to train the student for exercising professional activities.

b) The Master's degree constitutes the second cycle of the university teachings. Its aim is the acquisition, for the student, of an advanced training, specialised or multidisciplinary, oriented towards the academic or professional experience or towards promoting the beginning of research tasks.



c) The PhD represents the third cycle of the university teaching and its aim is to provide an advanced training to the student in research techniques. The PhD can include courses, seminars or other activities oriented towards the research training, as well as the elaboration and presentation of the corresponding doctoral thesis, which consists in an original research work.

#### **Article 4. Doctoral studies.**

As exposed in article 3 of the Royal Decree 99/2011, doctoral studies must be organised through programmes, and the final objective is the elaboration and defence of a doctoral thesis that includes original research results.

Hence, the *doctoral programme* is a mixture of activities that lead to obtaining the competences and abilities necessary to obtain the PhD. Such programme aims at the development of the different training aspects of the PhD and it establishes the procedures and the research areas for the development of the doctoral thesis.

The duration of the doctoral studies shall be regulated in compliance with article 3 of the R.D. 99/2011. It shall have a maximum duration of three years, for full-time students, counting from the admission of the doctoral student to the programme until the presentation of the doctoral thesis. If after the above mentioned three-year period the request for submitting the thesis has not been made yet, the commission responsible for the programme can authorise a one-year extension of the deadline, which can be exceptionally extended for one year more, in compliance with the conditions established in the corresponding doctoral programme.

Notwithstanding the above mentioned, and prior authorisation of the academic commission in charge of the programme, it is possible to take doctoral studies as a part-time student. In this case, such studies can have a maximum duration of five years since the admission to the programme until the presentation of the doctoral thesis. To make doctoral studies as a part-time student, it shall be necessary to present an employment contract in each re-registration. In case of part-time studies, the extension can be authorised for two years

more and, exceptionally, it can be extended for another year.

For the calculation of the previous periods, the sick leaves, pregnancy leaves and any other cause foreseen by the regulation in force shall not be kept into account. Likewise, the doctoral student can request a temporal leave from the programme for a maximum period of one year, which can be extended for one year more. Such request must be justified and addressed to the academic commission responsible for the programme, which shall give a resolution to the request of the doctoral student.

If during the doctoral studies a modification of the dedication (part-time/full-time) takes place, the commission of the programme will establish the maximum duration for their development, prior request of the doctoral student.

#### **Article 5. Structure of the doctoral programmes.**

Each doctoral programme of the Catholic University shall be organised, defined and coordinated by the corresponding academic commission and it shall be constituted for the training specified in article 8 of this regulation, in compliance with the research areas recognised by the *Official Register of Groups and Areas of the UCAM*. Every year, the Research Vice-Chancellorship shall open a call for the inclusion of new areas in the above mentioned register, as established by the research groups regulation of the University.

The following aspects shall be perfectly defined in each doctoral programme:

- Research areas, which shall include the investigation plans for the realisation of the doctoral thesis. Such areas must have an adequate research activity, proved through research projects, scientific production and technology transfer.



- Relation of doctors proposed as tutors and doctoral thesis directors, linked to each area of investigation, according to the criteria defined in article 7 of this regulation.
- Maximum number of doctoral students (and, therefore, of theses) admitted in each research area.

The doctoral programmes of the Catholic University can count on the collaboration, expressed through an agreement, of other bodies, centres, institutions and entities with activities of research, development and innovation, public or private, national or foreign.

#### **Article 6. Characteristics and composition of the academic commission of the doctoral programmes**

The academic commission of each doctoral programme is responsible for the definition, update, quality and coordination of the programme. It shall also ensure the development of the research and training of the doctoral students. Likewise, it shall authorise the submission of the doctoral theses and be responsible for the organisation, definition and coordination of the training and research activities of the corresponding doctoral programme, with the supervision of the Research Vice-Chancellorship and the approbation of the Doctoral Commission of the University.

The academic commission shall be composed by a minimum of 5 doctors, of whom 20% can be researchers of other bodies and institutions concerned. In such commission, the representation of the official masters in fields of knowledge related to the programme of the UCAM and of each department involved in such programme shall be ensured.

The members of the commission (president, secretary and the other members) shall be proposed by the Research Vice-Chancellorship and approved by the Governing Council, based on their merits, mainly in research. The president shall be the coordinator of the doctoral programme and he/she shall be appointed by the President of the UCAM among the researchers of the programme that have experience directing at least two doctoral theses and can justify the



possession of at least two research activity periods recognised or equivalent merits.

## **Article 7. Tutors and thesis directors**

7.1 Each doctoral student is assigned a tutor and, at least, a director, who shall have the functions described in articles 11 and 12 of the R.D. 99/2011. After the admission to the doctoral programme, the corresponding academic commission shall assign to each doctoral student a tutor among the doctors of the University that have proved research experience. The tutor shall ensure the interaction of the doctoral student with such commission and his/her integral training. Likewise, the tutor shall be responsible for the recording and follow-up of the training activities in the *doctoral student's document of activities*.

7.2 Within a **maximum period of six months** since the registration, the academic commission in charge of the programme shall assign to each doctoral student a director of doctoral thesis which might coincide or not with the tutor mentioned in the section above. The director can be any Spanish or foreign doctor, with proven research activity, independent from the university, centre or institution in which he provides his/her services. The thesis can be co-directed by other doctors, up to a maximum of three, when academic reasons concur, on the motion of the director and with the authorisation of the academic commission. Such authorisation can be subsequently revoked if, according to the academic commission, the co-direction is not beneficial for the development of the thesis.

In order to be a director of thesis in the UCAM, it is necessary to have a proven post-doctoral research experience of at least two years. Doctors who do not meet this requirement can only correct the theses.

The director of the doctoral thesis is responsible for the coherence and adequacy of the formation activities, for the impact of the topic of the doctoral thesis on its field and for its newness, and for the Research Plan.



The academic commission, prior consultation with the director and/or the doctoral student, can modify the appointment of the tutor and/or director of thesis in any moment of the doctoral studies, as long as justified reasons concur and the Doctoral Commission authorises it.

The tutor guidance of the doctoral student and the direction of the thesis are recognised as a part of the teaching and research dedication of the teachers.

### **Article 8. Training activities**

To ensure the competences that the doctoral student must acquire, established in article 5 of the R.D. 99/2011, the doctoral programmes of the UCAM offer both cross and specific training, although the essential activity is research.

In all the doctoral programmes a cross training shall be provided, which corresponds to the Module of Research Methodology, whose organisation, content and procedures of evaluation and control are specified in Annex 1. The doctoral student must obligatorily attend and pass this module during the first year of doctoral studies in order to avoid being excluded from the programme.

This training can also be included in the content of the official postgraduate master's degrees, in which case it is recognised and shall not be passed again. The cross training can also be recognised if the doctoral student proves to have a research training level or an equivalent experience, after presenting the related documents and receiving the acceptance by the academic commission.

Each doctoral programme shall offer a specific training in its area of knowledge through:

- Scientific seminars.
- Specialised courses in scientific methodology and analytic techniques.
- Series of conferences.



- Organisation and participation in congresses.
- Other specific activities of the area.

As established in article 4.2 of the R.D. 99/2011, the organisation of this training and the procedures for its control shall be defined by each academic commission and included in the verification report of the doctoral programme.

All the training activities carried out by the doctoral student shall be included in the document of activities mentioned in article 2.5 of the R.D. 99/2011.

The mobility criteria and implementations shall be defined for each doctoral programme based on its characteristics.

#### **Article 9. Doctoral teachings teachers.**

All the teachers of a doctoral programme must be doctors, notwithstanding the possible collaboration, in certain specific activities, of other persons and professionals, by virtue of their relevant qualification in the corresponding field of knowledge.

#### **Article 10. Proposals of doctoral programmes**

The departments are the bodies responsible for making the proposals for doctoral programmes.

To make a proposal of a doctoral programme, it is necessary to submit a report to the doctoral secretariat of the Research Vice-Chancellorship, with the content requested for the verification of the doctoral programmes described in Annex 1 of the R.D. 99/2011.

The programmes shall be assessed by the Planning and Accreditation Commission (CPA) of the UCAM and their verification and implementation shall be approved by the Governing Council.



### **Article 11. Doctorate school**

The UCAM can create one or various doctoral schools, as established by article 9, of the R.D. 99/2011, with the intention of organising, within its field of management, the proper teaching and activities of the PhD, in one or various branches of knowledge of with and interdisciplinary nature. Its creation shall be notified to the Ministry of Education through the Directorate of University policy, for its inscription in the Registry of Universities, Centres and Degrees (RUCT), regulated by the Royal Decree 1509/2008, of 12 September.

### **Article 12. Access to doctoral teachings**

The requirements to access the PhD are established by article 6 of the R.D. 99/2011. In general, for the access to an official doctoral programme it will be necessary to have the official Spanish Bachelor's degree (or equivalent) and Master's degree.

The requests for access shall be presented to the academic commission of the corresponding programme, which will issue a technical report. The request shall be processed with the modality established in the norms and instructions of admission and registration.

### **Article 13. Admission and registration to doctoral teachings**

The applicants can access any doctoral programme taught in the UCAM Catholic University of Murcia and scientifically related to their university curriculum vitae, as long as they meet the prerequisites and have the merits requested for their admission.

For the admission to a doctoral programme, the corresponding academic commission shall establish the requirements and the necessary criteria, which shall be included in the report of verification of the programme.

In case of students with special educative needs caused by disability, the adequate services of support and advice shall be made available for them,



which will value the need for possible curricular adaptations or alternative studies.

The Doctoral Commission shall decide the admission to a doctoral programme, prior report of the academic commission of the corresponding programme. The doctoral secretariat of the Vice-Chancellorship of Research establishes annually the calendar and the instructions for the admission request and the formalisation of the registration in the doctoral programmes. The admission and exclusion shall be communicated in a personalised way to the applicants.

The applicants who have been excluded will have 10 calendar days, starting from the reception of the communication, to present the corresponding recourse before the Doctoral commission of the UCAM Catholic University of Murcia, which will have 30 calendar days to reply.

The admitted students shall formalise the registration by following the indications provided by the doctoral secretariat. The registration is automatically renewed for each academic year, and the corresponding payment document is generated for its formalisation. In case of joint doctoral programmes, the agreement will determine the modality to carry out such registration.

Those who have a four or more years degree (*Licenciatura*), the Architects or Engineers who have the Diploma of Advanced Studies, obtained in compliance with the Royal Decree 778/1998, of 30 April, or those who have reached the research competence regulated in the Royal Decree 185/1985, of 23 April, can be admitted to the doctoral programmes. If they have passed partially or totally the training period of doctoral programmes regulated by the above mentioned royal decrees, the students must obtain a Master's Degree to be admitted, and the previous training can be recognised.

#### **Article 14. Supervision and follow-up of the doctoral student: personalised document of activities**

Each doctoral programme shall to determine the activities that the doctoral students shall carry out annually. In general,



these activities are foreseen by article 8 of this norm.

Once registered to the programme, the personalised document of activities for the individualised control register will be originated for each student in electronic form. In it, the tutor shall record and verify the activities developed by the doctoral student.

Such document shall be supervised by the tutor and the director of the thesis, and it shall be annually assessed by the academic commission in charge of the doctoral programme together with the report that the tutor and the director shall issue for this purpose.

After the assessment, the academic commission shall issue a report to the Vice-Chancellorship of Research, with the global mark given to the activities developed which will be a “pass” or a “fail”. The positive assessment is a requirement necessary to continue the programme. In case of negative assessment, which shall be duly justified, the doctoral student shall be assessed again within six months. In case of a new negative assessment, the doctoral student shall leave the programme permanently.

#### **Article 15. Research plan. Assessment and follow-up.**

Before the end of the first academic year, the doctoral student shall present, with the approval of the director, a research plan that shall include the methodology to use and the goals to reach, as well as the means and the temporal planning to fulfil it. This research plan shall be presented to the doctoral secretariat and addressed to the academic commission of the programme.

Such plan must belong to one of the research areas proposed by the doctoral programme. The student is the owner of the topic and title of the proposed thesis as long as he/she continues formalising the registration annually. Furthermore, this will grant to the student the right to academic protection, and the use of the resources necessary for the development of his/her work and to all the rights of participation that belong to the students of official doctoral studies.



The Research Plan must include:

- Information of the doctoral student, the director or directors.
- Title of the doctoral thesis.
- Department in charge.
- Problem posed or summary of the project.
- Scientific objectives pursued.
- Antecedents and status of the topic.
- Methodology and work plan foreseen with the estimated schedule.
- Original contribution that it would imply for the corresponding scientific field and interest of the project.
- Bibliographical review and publications made in the field.

The research plan must count with the authorisation of the corresponding Ethical Committee; in case the academic commission considers it necessary.

The request of registration shall be addressed to the academic commission (in the corresponding standardised form) accompanied by the research plan, approved by the director of the thesis, who accepts the direction of the work, as well as the fulfilment of the requirements needed to be a director of thesis.

The corresponding academic commission shall decide on the admission of the research plan and it shall communicate it to the Research Vice-Chancellorship for its registration in the Registry of Plans of Research of the UCAM.

The title of the research plan shall appear on the record of the student, and it shall be registered with the date of entrance in the book of Registry of Research Plans of the doctoral secretariat.



The Research plan can be improved and detailed during his/her stay in the programme and any change must be authorised by the tutor and the director. Any substantial modification obliges the doctoral student to request the expressed authorization of the academic commission, by detailing the modifications and changes.

The requests for total or partial modification of the research plan, including the one related to the modification of inclusion of a director shall be made through a request addressed to the doctoral secretariat. In the requests for modification of director, the acceptance of the new director proposed shall be included, as well as of the previous.

Every year, the academic commission of the programme shall evaluate the execution of the research plan together with the document of activities and the report that the director shall issue for such purpose. The positive assessment is a requirement necessary to continue the programme. In case of negative assessment, which will be duly justified, the doctoral student shall be assessed again within six months, and he/she will have to elaborate a new research plan. In case of a new negative assessment, the doctoral student shall leave the programme permanently.

The Catholic University establishes the functions of supervision of the doctoral student through a documentary commitment signed by the university, the doctoral student, his/her tutor and his/her director in the established way. This commitment shall be sealed as soon as possible after the admission, and it shall include a procedure to solve conflicts and it shall contemplate the aspects related to the rights of intellectual or industrial property that can emerge in the field of the doctoral programmes.

The University shall establish the mechanisms of assessment and follow-up, the elaboration of the thesis throughout time and the procedures foreseen in case of conflict, as well as aspects that affect the field of the intellectual property, in agreement with the things established in the previous paragraph.

### **Article 16. Submission procedure. Submission procedure.**

The doctoral thesis shall consist in an original research work elaborated by the candidate in any field of knowledge, which must prepare the doctoral student for the autonomous work in the field of research, development and innovation.

After its elaboration, the doctoral student can start the procedures for its submission and assessment. To do so, it is necessary to deliver three samples with simple binding to the doctoral secretariat, accompanied by:

- a) Report of the director (or directors) of the thesis which authorises its presentation. This document must be included in the Thesis and shall be bound behind the cover.
- b) Report of activities of the doctoral student, signed by the tutor and director of the Thesis only in case of verified programmes in compliance with R.D. 99/2011.
- c) Curriculum vitae of the doctoral student.
- d) Document of proposal of the assessment tribunal and authorisation for the submission of the doctoral thesis, elaborated by the director of the theses, which shall specify:
  - Name, surnames and university of origin, or research centre or the two doctors who carry out the external assessment.
  - Name, surnames and university of origin or research centre of five members with PhD who will compose the assessing tribunal, of which two must belong to the UCAM. The doctors who do not belong to the UCAM shall present the curriculum vitae together with a sworn translation that certifies that the data specified are true.

This documents shall be presented to the academic commission of the programme, that will carry out the following functions:

- Approval of the submission



- Appointment of external evaluators
- Proposal of a tribunal for its approval by the Doctoral Commission.

Once authorised the submission, the doctoral secretariat will transfer to the doctoral student the adequate communication of it. The samples shall be left to the doctoral secretariat during fifteen calendar days so that they can be examined by any doctor who, where applicable, can submit in the written form the considerations that he considers adequate to the Doctoral Commission.

For the counting of the deadlines of the actions related to the submission and the public exposition, the holiday periods of Christmas, Easter and August shall not be kept into account.

If during the period of the submission period no objection is made against the thesis, the doctoral secretariat shall communicate to the doctoral student that he/she can print the final version of his work, and deliver six samples bounded in compliance with the style established by the UCAM as well as the .pdf file.

Likewise, the doctoral student should agree with his/her thesis director/s a date for the defence of the thesis, that he/she will have to communicate to the doctoral secretariat for its approval by the Doctoral commission.

If during the submission period some objections to the thesis are presented, the doctoral commission shall give a resolution to them.

The doctoral commission, after seeing the texts issued by the external evaluators and after consulting the corresponding academic commission shall decide if he/she passes or not the defence. This shall be notified to the concerned person, to the director of the thesis and to the corresponding department.

After the authorisation of the defence of the thesis, the doctoral student shall have paid all the corresponding registrations and he/she shall have paid the tax established for the reading and defence of the doctoral thesis.



## **Article 17. Doctoral thesis modalities.**

### *17.1 Conventional style.*

The thesis can be developed and, where applicable, defended, in the habitual languages of the scientific communication in its field of knowledge, by following the norms, the format and the binding style established by the doctoral commission. The thesis shall obligatorily include a short summary (1 or 2 pages) of the work in Spanish and in English.

### *17.2 Compendiums of publication style.*

The doctoral thesis will be composed by a set of research works published by the doctoral student and related to the registered Research Plan.

For this modality of presentation, the following cases will be accepted:

1<sup>o</sup>) **A minimum of three articles** published or accepted by a journal in the field of specialisation (based on its impact) placed among the first two quartiles of the report of the ***Journal Citation Reports (SCI and/or SSCI)***. The doctoral student shall be the first author of at least two of the articles. Two of the publications may have been accepted for publication during the three years before the beginning of the doctoral studies. At least one of them must be subsequent to the inscription to the Research plan.

2<sup>o</sup>) In case the works are published or accepted in journals indexed in other databases of the field (DICE, IN- RECS, IN-RECJ), the Thesis shall include a minimum of five articles related to the first quartile. Two of the articles may have been accepted for publication during the three years before the beginning of the doctoral studies. At least one of them must be subsequent to the inscription to the Research plan. The doctoral student shall be the first author of at least three of the articles.

3<sup>o</sup>) A book, or three chapters of a book, in which the doctoral student shall be the first author. Two of the chapter may have been accepted for publication



during the three years before the beginning of the doctoral studies. At least one of them must be subsequent to the inscription to the Research plan. The book must have been published after the registration to the Research Plan. A report of two specialists, external to the UCAM Catholic University of Murcia and selected by the corresponding academic commission, will be required. The report shall specify the importance of the publisher, the mechanisms to select original texts and the specific value of the work. Its quality must be demonstrated with the number of citations, the prestige of the publisher, the editors, the collection in which the work is published, the reviews in the specialised scientific journals, the length and the translation to other languages. The books and chapters of books must have the ISBN and they must have been published by specialised publishers with prestige, that can grant a rigorous process of selection and assessment of the original works.

To submit the doctoral thesis as a compendium of publications, the doctoral student shall present the following documents apart from the ones required in article 16.

- Report of the director/s of the thesis, which must reflect all the quality signs of the work, as well as the impact of the journal or the position it holds in the field. All the quality parameters alleged must be duly justified and proved.
- Copy of the articles, of the chapters of books, of the book or of the books that will compose the doctoral thesis, which can be published or accepted for publication and must necessarily include the name and attribution of the author and of all the other authors, as the case may be; as well as the complete reference of the journal or publisher where the works have been published or accepted for publication, in which case a proof of the acceptance by the editor-in-chief or publisher must be presented.
- Written permission of the co-authors of the works, so that the doctoral student can present them as a part of his/her doctoral thesis.

- Renunciation of the co-authors of the works who do not have a PhD to present them as a part of another doctoral thesis.

The Doctoral Commission, after studying the documents presented by the doctoral student, decides if it accepts the defence of the thesis in this format or not.

The thesis as a compendium of publication must meet certain formal and stylistic requirements that, in general, are the following:

- An initial page that specifies that the thesis is a compendium of previously published or accepted works, that shall include the complete references of the articles that compose the body of the thesis.
- Authorisation of the director for the presentation of the thesis in this modality.
- A general introduction and a general ground for the compendium of publications, which justified their thematic unity.
- A global summary of the results obtained, with a discussion of them. Likely, the conclusions to which it led shall be included.
- Between the introduction and the summary, or eventually as an annex, a complete copy of the works (which can be published or accepted for publication) shall be included.
- Lastly, the thesis shall include an appendix which shall include all the data related to the quality of the included publications.

Under no circumstances some of the co-authors of the research works that compose the thesis can be a part of the Tribunal.

### **Article 18. Tribunal for the reading of the doctoral thesis**

The tribunals are composed by five full members and two substitutes (which can be the external evaluators). In case the thesis is related to more than one subject or scientific, technical or artistic area of knowledge, the participation to the tribunal for the reading of specialists in the different subjects or areas of reference must be granted. The following requirements must be met:

1. All the members must have a PhD and at least 2 years of demonstrated post-doctoral research experience. In any case, the tribunal shall be composed by a majority of members external to the University and to the institution that collaborate to the doctoral programme. In no case the Director/s of the Thesis can be a part of the Tribunal.
2. Within fifteen calendar days starting from the approval of the date of reading by the Doctoral Commission, the doctoral secretary shall deliver to each member of the tribunal the corresponding appointment, a copy of the thesis that must be judged, the *curriculum vitae* of the doctoral student and the form for the assessment of the thesis, which shall be delivered, completely filled, during the reading.

The Doctoral Commission shall ensure, whenever possible, that the functions of secretary of the tribunal are attributed to one of the professors with a PhD who is members of the faculty of the UCAM.

### **Article 19. Reading of the doctoral thesis.**

The doctoral thesis will be evaluated in a public act, which will consist in the exposition and defence, by the doctoral student, of the research work carried out before the members of the tribunal.

The Tribunal will gather before the act of reading of the doctoral thesis, with the presence of its five full members or of their substitutes. The minutes of constitution ceremony must be drawn up.



As an exceptional situation, the constitution of a doctoral thesis tribunal with four members will be permitted, in case of justified absence of some of the proposed members due to events of force majeure and the impossibility of an immediate substitution.

The defence of the doctoral thesis consists in the oral exposition by the doctoral student of the content of the thesis, with special emphasis on his/her original contributions.

The members of the tribunal must express their opinion on the thesis presented and pose as many questions and objections as they consider necessary, to which the doctoral student shall respond. Furthermore, the tribunal shall have the document of formative activities of the doctoral student. This follow-up document shall not give rise to a quantitative mark, but it shall constitute a tool of qualitative assessment that will complete the assessment of the doctoral thesis.

Likewise, the doctors present in the public ceremony can raise questions or objections, to which the doctoral student shall respond in the time and manner specified by the President of the Tribunal.

After the defence of the thesis, the tribunal shall issue a report and the global mark given to the thesis will be a “pass” or a “fail”. The tribunal can propose the «*cum laude*» mention for the thesis if the secret vote is expressed like this unanimously. The University will set up the specific mechanisms for the implementation of the final concession of such mention, by granting that the counting of the votes for such concession is realised in a different session than the one corresponding to the defence of the doctoral thesis.

Both the Presidency of the tribunal and the order of the intervention will be made inversely to the seniority of the members of the tribunal in their corresponding categories and, alternatively, in the PhD. The Chancellor of the UCAM will preside over all the tribunals that she is a part of.



## **Article 20. Submission and archive of doctoral theses.**

Once approved the doctoral thesis, the University will archive it (in the Doctoral Secretariat) and it will send a copy of it, as well as the necessary information, to the Ministry of Education and Science. The thesis will become a part of the institutional repertoire of the University.

In exceptional circumstances established by the academic commission of the programme, such as the participation of companies in the doctoral programme, the existence of agreements of confidentiality or the possibility to generate patents on the content of the thesis, the university will prepare procedures to ensure the non-public nature of such aspects.

## **Article 21. Issue and effects of the doctoral degree.**

The tribunal will communicate the mark of the defended thesis to the Doctoral Secretariat for the issue of the doctoral degree.

The doctoral degree will be issued on behalf of the Kings, by the Chancellor of the UCAM Catholic University of Murcia, after verifying the compliance with the **Royal Decree 99/2011** and with the specific norms approved by the Governing Council.

The doctoral degree will include the mention "Doctor by the UCAM Catholic University of Murcia". Likewise, the material issue of the degree will include information on the doctoral programme made, in compliance with the Royal Decree 1002/2010, of 5 August, on the issuing of official university degrees.

Once the doctoral Thesis is approved, the concerned person can request the issue of the doctoral degree to the doctoral secretariat by presenting the following documents:

- Request of doctoral degree.
- Attested photocopy of ID or passport.



- Proof of tax payment of the degree validated by the financial body.
- Attested photocopy of the degree with which the student accessed the doctoral programme and date of publication in the BOE of the study plan of the same.

### **Article 22. Extraordinary prizes.**

The doctoral theses with sufficient merits can obtain an Extraordinary PhD Prize according to the norms established in the Regulation on Concession of Extraordinary PhD Prizes of the UCAM Catholic University of Murcia (agreement 06/11/2007).

### **Article 23. International mention in the doctoral degree**

The doctoral degree can include, in its obverse, the mention «International PhD», if the circumstances specified in article 15 of the Royal Decree 99/2011 concur.

The defence of the thesis must be done in the UCAM or, in case of joint doctoral programmes, in any of the participating universities or according to the terms specified in the collaboration agreements.

### **Article 24. Doctoral commission.**

Nature.

The Doctoral Commission of the UCAM Catholic University of Murcia is a collegial body of the same, to which the coordination and assessment of the doctoral studies is entrusted.

Composition.



The Doctoral Commission of the UCAM Catholic University of Murcia is composed by the Chancellor (who will act as president), the Vice-Chancellor of Research and a member that represents each of the Departments of the UCAM. A member selected by the Commission itself will act as secretary.

### Competences

1. To approve the training activities of the doctoral programmes, proposed by the academic commissions of the programmes.
2. To resolve the transfers and to decide on the admission of students to the doctoral programmes.
3. To decide on the admission by reading the doctoral theses.
4. To approve the tribunals in charge of judging the doctoral theses.
5. To authorise, if applicable, the public defence of the thesis, after seeing the corresponding reports of the external evaluators.
6. To establish the style, format and the binding of the doctoral theses, in their different modalities.
7. To propose, for its approval in the Governing Council, the regulation for the concession of Extraordinary PhD Prizes or other honorary mentions.
8. Any other competence specified by the Law, by the Statutes and by the Governing Council of the UCAM Catholic University of Murcia.

(Guadalupe) Murcia, 25 November 2011.  
The President of the University  
José Luis Mendoza Pérez