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PREAMBLE

These regulations are complemented by the *VUB Doctoral Schools Regulations* and supplementary faculty doctoral regulations.

The terms below, as used in these regulations, are defined as follows:

- Liaison Officer for Scientific Integrity: this is the point of contact who provides first-line information about the procedure to be followed in the event of, or where there is suspicion of, a breach of scientific integrity. They are the official point of contact for reports of instances or suspicion of breaches of scientific integrity and conduct the preliminary investigation.
- CDO: Doctoral Progress Monitoring Commission
- Dean: the dean of the faculty in which the doctoral candidate enrolls.
- Doctoral Programme: the educational framework for doctoral candidates which is organised by the Researcher Training & Development Office (RTDO) in collaboration with the Doctoral Schools, as set out in the *VUB Doctoral Schools Regulations*.
- EHB: Erasmushogeschool Brussel (Erasmus University College Brussels)
- EVC: previously acquired competence
- Joint PhD: a doctoral thesis which is written and defended on the joint responsibility of the VUB and one or more partner institutions, leading to a double degree or joint degree with the title of doctor, in compliance with the provisions of Article II.172. of the Higher Education Codex of 20 December 2013.
- Main institution: the institution which, in the context of a joint PhD:
 - a) funds all or the major part of the doctoral research or the institution with which the supervisor is affiliated under whose auspices the application for the external funding took place;
 - or,
 - b) is where the major part of the doctoral research took place and/or where the doctoral candidate will most often be present; or
 - c) is where the doctoral candidate was first enrolled and where they started their doctoral research.

In the event these criteria are not enough to distinguish between both partners, an institution shall be designated by mutual agreement as the main institution.

- ICDO: Interdisciplinary Doctoral Progress Monitoring Commission
- Incoming doctoral candidate: a doctoral candidate preparing a joint PhD for which the VUB is not the main institution.
- Interdisciplinary doctorate: a doctorate which extends across various professional fields and which might involve the doctoral candidate being affiliated to multiple faculties.
- KCB: Koninklijk Conservatorium Brussel (Royal Conservatory of Brussels)
- OWSA: Onderwijs- en Studenten Administratie (Education and Student Affairs)
- OZR: de Onderzoeksraad (Research Council)
- RITCS: Royal Institute for Theatre, Cinema and Sound
- RTDO: Researcher Training & Development Office
- Outgoing doctoral candidate: a doctoral candidate preparing a joint PhD for which the VUB is the main institution.
- VUB: de Vrije Universiteit Brussel (Free University Brussels)
- ZAP: Self-employed Academic Staff.

All references to persons and positions in these regulations always apply equally to women and men.

Section I. Scope of these regulations

Article 1 - General

§1. These regulations define the requirements procedure for obtaining the academic title of Doctor at the VUB.

§2. Insofar as expressly authorised in these regulations, a competent faculty body may subsequently work out the provisions of these Central Doctoral Regulations in supplementary faculty regulations which will be approved by the Education Council.

The bureau of the faculty of the Faculty of Social Sciences and Solvay Business School is the competent body authorised to subsequently work out the provisions of these Central Doctoral Regulations in supplementary faculty doctoral regulations.

The faculty additions made by the Faculty of Social Sciences and Solvay Business School are indicated in red.

Where the Central Doctoral Regulations make mention of the competent faculty body, this refers to the bureau of the faculty unless stated otherwise.

Article 2 - The academic title of Doctor

§1. The VUB confers the academic title of Doctor mentioned in Annex I to these regulations. Annex I may be amended or supplemented at any time by the Education Council in response to a reasoned proposal by the competent faculty body.

§2. The VUB may only confer the academic title of Doctor in, or in relation to, the fields or parts of the fields of study in which it has the authority to offer study programmes leading to a Master's degree, in accordance with Article II.82 of the Higher Education Codex of 20 December 2013. If, in certain fields of study or parts of fields of study, the VUB can offer only Bachelor study programmes, the title of Doctor may only be conferred in, or in relation to, those fields of study or parts of fields of study on the condition that the public defence of the doctoral thesis takes place in front of an inter-university examining panel composed in agreement with a university which can offer study programmes leading to a Master's degree, in accordance with the Higher Education Codex of 20 December 2013.

Section II. Admission for preparation of the doctoral thesis

Article 3. -Written application for admission

§1. Anyone wishing to acquire the academic title of Doctor at the VUB (including incoming and outgoing doctoral candidates) must obtain admission for preparation of the doctoral thesis. The candidates should submit an application to this end. The application file will be approved by the competent faculty body.

A certified copy of the diploma is attached to each application, unless the doctoral candidate has been granted admission to prepare for the doctoral thesis on the basis of a diploma from a Belgian institute. The latter shall submit the original of the relevant diploma at the time of enrolment.

The documents submitted, including the authenticity of the diploma, will be checked by the OWSA.

This written application comprises:

- details of the subject of the thesis
- the name of the supervisor or supervisors and the subject area or areas of the doctoral thesis
- a curriculum vitae
- a research plan
- a statement from the supervisor or supervisors accepting supervision of the candidate
- a description by the supervisor of the material resources and support to be made available for the intended research
- the choice of Doctoral School.

§2. The competent faculty body shall decide on the application for admission within a reasonable period after receiving that application. Should the competent faculty body so wish, it may ask that the (I)CDO decide on the application for admission. The choice of Doctoral School for the doctoral candidate is automatically ratified on the decision by the competent faculty body to allow admission.

§3. In the case of an interdisciplinary doctorate across faculty boundaries, the manner in which the further progress of the doctorate is to be monitored across faculty boundaries shall be recorded in writing no later than the moment the competent faculty body of the supervisor-spokesperson decides to allow admission.

§4. The file of a doctoral candidate with a diploma from a Belgian institute shall be approved by the competent faculty body of the (I)CDO. In the case of a doctoral candidate to whom admission is granted based on a non-Belgian diploma, the decision of the competent faculty body or the (I)CDO shall be put before the Vice-Rector of Education and Student Affairs for approval.

§5. A positive decision on the part of the competent faculty body, the (I)CDO or where relevant, the Vice-Rector of Education and Student Affairs, applies only to admission for preparation of the doctoral thesis and on the condition precedent of enrolment as doctoral candidate in accordance with Article 5 of these regulations.

Article 4 - The diplomas and the admission

§1. Admission for preparation of the doctoral thesis will be granted to anyone who:

1° has gained one of the following diplomas:

- a. a Master's degree or equivalent according to the provisions of the Higher Education Codex of 20 December 2013, obtained within the Flemish Community and including a degree in Polytechnic Civil Engineering or a Master's or licentiate diploma awarded by the Royal Military School in Brussels;
- b. a degree obtained outside the Flemish Community which, according to the provisions of the Higher Education Codex of 20 December 2013, is deemed to be the equivalent of a Master's degree;
- c. a Master's degree obtained within the French Community, or a diploma deemed in accordance with the decree of the French Community to be equivalent to a Master's degree obtained within the Belgian Community;
- d. a foreign diploma obtained after the successful completion of a study programme with at least 240 ECTS and deemed in accordance with a decree, a European Guideline or a bilateral agreement to be equivalent to a Master's degree;

2° has a supervisor and has chosen a subject

3° has been granted admission for preparation of the doctoral thesis in accordance with Article 3 of these regulations.

§2. In implementing Article II.184 of the Higher Education Codex, the supplementary faculty doctoral regulations for the academic title of Doctor, as mentioned in Annex 1, determine what is required of the prior education and previously obtained diplomas which admit the doctoral candidate for the preparation of the doctoral thesis.

By way of a standard:

- *a degree Master of Science in Economic Sciences grants access to the academic title of Doctor of Economic Sciences;*
- *a degree Master of Science in Applied Economic Sciences grants access to the academic title of Doctor of Business Economics;*
- *a degree Master of Science in International Business grants access to the academic title of Doctor of Business Economics;*
- *a degree Master of Science Business Engineering grants access to the academic title of Doctor of Business Economics;*
- *a degree Master of Science Business Engineering: Business and Technology grants access to the academic title of Doctor of Business Economics;*
- *a degree Master of Science in Political Sciences grants access to the academic title of Doctor of Political Science;*
- *a degree Master of Science in Political Science: European and International Governance grants access to the academic title of Doctor of Political Science;*
- *a degree Master of Science in Sociology grants access to the academic title of Doctor of Sociology;*
- *a degree Master of Science in Communication Sciences grants access to the academic title of Doctor of Media and Communication;*
- *a degree Master of Science in Communication Studies: New Media and Society in Europe grants access to the academic title of Doctor of Media and Communication Studies;*
- *a degree Master of Science in Communication Sciences grants access to the academic title of Doctor of Media and Communication Studies: Journalism Studies*

- *a degree Master of Science in Communication Studies: Journalism and Media in Europe grants access to the academic title of Doctor of Media and Communication Studies: Journalism Studies*

Deviations from these regulations are possible and may be put before the Doctoral Progress Monitoring Commission by the dean.

Article 5 - Enrolment as a doctoral candidate

§1. A doctoral candidate who has been admitted for the preparation of a doctoral thesis for the academic title of Doctor in accordance with Article 3 of these regulations must register at once as a doctoral candidate at the VUB.

§2. The enrolment should be repeated every academic year in which the doctorate is being prepared, including the academic year in which the doctoral exam is taken.

§3. Enrolment as a doctoral candidate can take place throughout the entire academic year. The administrative requirements for enrolment and the tuition fees due can be found on the OWSA website.

§4. When first enrolling, the doctoral candidate shall be assigned to one of the Doctoral Schools, as defined under Article 9 of the *VUB Doctoral Schools Regulations*.

§5. Any doctoral candidate not residing in Belgium at the time of their enrolment may request permission, in a reasoned petition to the Vice-Rector of Education and Student Affairs, to enrol remotely. Should this permission be granted, the doctoral candidate shall provide the OWSA with a certified copy of their diploma and passport or identity card in advance.

Article 6 - Deviations from diplomas and admission

§1. Should the doctoral candidate have obtained a Master's degree or equivalent diploma, the competent faculty body, should it be deemed necessary to do so, may require an additional individual assessment of the suitability of the candidate to conduct the scientific research in the discipline involved and record the results of that research in a doctoral thesis. Where appropriate, the subsequent organisation of this exam shall be specified in the supplementary faculty doctoral regulations.

§2. If the doctoral candidate has no Master's degree or equivalent diploma, the competent faculty body or the ICDO may still admit the candidate to enrolment for the preparation of a doctoral thesis, in accordance with Article II.185. of the Higher Education Codex, should the competent faculty body believe the candidate to be capable in that regard. This admission may however be made dependent on an investigation to assess the suitability of the doctoral candidate to conduct scientific research and record the findings of that research in a doctoral thesis, or for the successful completion of an exam to be determined by the competent faculty body. The subsequent organisation of this exam shall be specified in the supplementary faculty doctoral regulations.

The Doctoral Progress Monitoring Commission, as authorised under Article 9 of the supplementary faculty doctoral regulations may, on the recommendation of the supervisor of the doctoral candidate who does not have a Master's degree or an equivalent diploma, require the

*doctoral candidate to take a number of exams for which an ECTS credit should be obtained before the candidate can be admitted to enrolment for the preparation of a doctoral thesis.
In choosing the subjects for said exams, the Doctoral Progress Monitoring Commission shall take into account any hiatus in the prior knowledge of the doctoral candidate.*

Article 7 - Admission by means of a foreign diploma

§1. The holder of a final diploma from a foreign university or foreign institute of academic education other than those mentioned under Article 4, §1, °1 d, may still be admitted for the preparation of the doctoral thesis by the competent faculty body or the ICDO, notwithstanding the absence of the required diploma.

§2. Should the competent faculty body be of the opinion that the foreign diploma cannot be deemed to be equivalent to a Master's degree, the admission may be made dependent on an investigation to assess the suitability of the doctoral candidate to conduct scientific research and record the findings of the research in a doctoral thesis, or the successful completion of an exam to be determined by the competent faculty body. The subsequent organisation of this exam shall be specified in the supplementary faculty doctoral regulations.

*The Doctoral Progress Monitoring Commission, as authorised under Article 9 of the supplementary faculty doctoral regulations may, on the recommendation of the supervisor of the doctoral candidate who does not have a Master's degree deemed to be equivalent, require the doctoral candidate to take a number of exams for which an ECTS credit should be obtained before the candidate can be admitted to enrolment for the preparation of a doctoral thesis.
In choosing the subjects for said exams, the Doctoral Progress Monitoring Commission shall take into account any hiatus in the prior knowledge of the doctoral candidate.*

Article 8 - The admission (acceptance of regulations)

Once admitted for the preparation of the doctoral thesis, as defined under Article 3, the doctoral candidate shall receive a copy of both these Central Regulations for the Conferral of the Academic Title of Doctor and the supplementary faculty doctoral regulations. In addition, the doctoral candidate shall receive a copy of *The Charter for Researchers*, attached as Annex II to these regulations and the Validation Regulations, as approved by the Executive Board of the University Association Brussels on 2 June 2015.

Department III. Throughout the preparation of the doctoral thesis

Article 9 - The Doctoral Progress Monitoring Commission (CDO)

§1. Every faculty sets up at least one CDO. These commissions are composed of at least three members of the ZAP, supplemented by at least one member of the OAP (Other Academic Staff) in an advisory capacity. The precise composition and working method of this commission will be specified in the supplementary faculty doctoral regulations.

As voting members of the Doctoral Progress Monitoring Commission (CDO), the Faculty Research Commission (FOZ) delegates one of its ZAP members per department and one OAP member in an advisory capacity.

The faculty secretary and the faculty policy officer for Research will be added to the CDO in an advisory capacity.

The CDO shall be chaired by the Chair of the FOZ; The Chair is at the same time the delegated representative of his/her department in the CDO.

The supervisor and/or the doctoral candidate may, also at their own request, be invited by the CDO to provide information.

The CDO has five tasks:

- At the request of the dean, in implementing Articles 4 and 55 of these regulations, the CDO shall determine the academic title of Doctor to which the diploma grants access.*
- In implementing Articles 6 and 7, the CDO shall determine which ECTS should be obtained as a precondition for enrolment for the preparation of a doctoral thesis, based on the recommendations of the supervisor.*
- Based on the recommendations of the supervisor in implementing Articles 10 and 18 of these regulations, the CDO shall determine which study programme components and/or activities are to be completed in the context of the Doctoral Programme and within which time period they should be successfully completed.*
- As defined under Article 17 of these regulations, the CDO shall discuss the progress of the doctoral theses.*
- In accordance with Article 13 §3, the CDO shall check the composition of the Advisory Commission at the annual evaluation of the progress.*

The CDO shall decide by a simple majority. In the event of a tied vote, the decision shall be made in favour of the doctoral candidate.

The CDO may delegate tasks.

§2. Each CDO is responsible for ensuring the smooth running of the preparation of doctoral theses in its faculty.

§3. The principles as laid out in *The Charter for Researchers*, attached as Annex II to these regulations, shall be applied as guidelines for this monitoring process. Each CDO shall annually evaluate the progress of all doctoral candidates in its faculty, as defined under Articles 16 and 17 of these regulations. Progress of doctoral candidates working on an interdisciplinary doctorate

across faculty boundaries and those preparing a doctorate in the arts, shall be evaluated by the ICDO, according to the same procedure.

Article 10 - The Doctoral Schools

As soon as the doctoral candidate is enrolled in the Doctoral School, they gain the right to follow the Doctoral Programme, in accordance with the VUB Doctoral Schools Regulations. The doctoral candidate who is enrolled from academic year 2019-2020 is obliged to follow the Doctoral Programme, in accordance with the VUB Doctoral Schools Regulations and Article 18 of these regulations.

Article 11 – The guidance of and responsibility for the doctoral thesis

§1. The doctoral thesis shall be prepared on the responsibility and under the guidance of at least one member of the Self-employed Academic Staff (ZAP) who may be assisted by:

- 1° an external ZAP supervisor at the VUB
- 2° an emeritus ZAP supervisor at the VUB
- 3° a non-ZAP supervisor with a doctorate based on a thesis.

In the event of a doctorate being guided by multiple supervisors, one of them shall be designated supervisor-spokesperson. The supervisor-spokesperson shall manage the budgets of the doctoral candidate to be supervised.

§2. The supplementary faculty doctoral regulations may also further expand the list of supervisors who can assist the ZAP supervisors.

Article 12 - Changing the supervisor

The doctoral candidate and the supervisor may, in exceptional circumstances, submit a written request to the dean of the faculty, asking to change the supervisor (spokesperson) of the thesis. The dean may designate a new supervisor, if this is possible within the funding agreements and following consultations with the supervisor (spokesperson), the doctoral candidate and any potential new supervisor (spokesperson).

The doctoral candidate and supervisor (spokesperson) shall be heard and informed of any changes without delay.

Article 13 - The Advisory Commission

§1. Every doctoral candidate shall also be guided by an advisory commission, consisting of the supervisor or supervisors as defined under Article 11 and at least one other member who, in principle, has a doctorate based on a thesis. The latter member should preferably be external to the professional group, the research group or the VUB.

§2. The Advisory Commission shall be put together on the initiative of the supervisor or supervisors and the competent faculty body. In any case, the Advisory Commission shall be put together within 18 months of the first enrolment by the doctoral candidate. The supplementary faculty doctoral regulations may further specify the composition, powers and working method of the Advisory Commission.

On the advice of the supervisor, the bureau of the faculty shall put together an Advisory Commission as quickly as possible, but certainly within 18 months of the first enrolment by the doctoral candidate. The Advisory Commission shall monitor the progress of the doctorate and determine the form it should take, as defined under Article 20. To this end, a feedback moment

between the Advisory Commission and the doctoral candidate shall be scheduled at least once a year. This may be by way of a physical meeting or interactive electronic means of communication, such as teleconferencing. A report shall be made of this feedback moment, including any comments made by the Advisory Commission. The report by the Advisory Commission shall be added to the annual progress report, as stipulated in Article 16.

§3. At the annual progress evaluation, the CDO shall verify that the Advisory Commission has been put together, as described under Article 17. Should this not have taken place, the CDO shall encourage the supervisor to do so. If the supervisor fails to put together the Advisory Commission within the period stipulated in §2 of this article, the Chair of the CDO shall place the matter on the agenda of the OZR, which can take appropriate measures.

Article 14 - The Charter for Researchers

§1. The supervisor is obliged to guide and motivate the doctoral candidate in the preparation of the doctoral thesis. In doing so, the supervisor must take into account the principles as laid out in *The Charter for Researchers*, attached as Annex II to these regulations.

§2. The doctoral candidate is obliged to keep their supervisor or supervisors regularly informed of the progress of their doctoral thesis.

§3. Any failure to comply with the obligations specified in the *Charter for Researchers* may be reported to the dean and/or one of the Ombudspersons for doctoral candidates by the supervisor or the doctoral candidate.

Article 15 - Breaches of scientific integrity

§1. The doctoral candidate shall refrain from committing any breaches of scientific integrity, in any form whatsoever.

§2. Should a breach of scientific integrity be suspected, this shall be reported to the Liaison Officer for Scientific Integrity and the VUB Regulation Concerning Breaches of Scientific Integrity applies (Annex III).

§3. Should the Scientific Integrity Commission be of the opinion that the doctoral thesis submitted by the doctoral candidate forms a breach of scientific integrity, such a breach can lead to one of the following disciplinary decisions (exam-related):

- 1° the doctoral thesis is to be rewritten in such a way that it no longer forms a breach in the opinion of the Scientific Integrity Commission
- 2° the rejection of the doctoral thesis: the doctoral candidate shall be refused permission to submit or defend a thesis on the same subject, or one that is closely related
- 3° the rejection of the doctoral thesis and the expulsion of the doctoral candidate: the doctoral candidate shall be refused permission to submit or defend a thesis on the same subject, or one that is closely related and shall be prohibited from re-enrolling at the university for a number of academic years, later to be determined.

§4. Establishment of a breach of scientific integrity following the public defence of a doctoral thesis can lead to the title of Doctor that was conferred being retracted and to the decisions mentioned in Paragraph 3 of this article.

§5. Should the doctoral candidate also be a VUB staff member, the order and disciplinary and relevant staff regulations shall apply.

Article 16 - The annual progress report

§1. Each doctoral candidate shall draw up a report on the progress of the doctoral thesis annually. The candidate shall submit a copy of this report no later than 30 April of each academic year to their supervisor or supervisors, the dean and the Chair of the (I)CDO who in turn shall provide all members of the (I)CDO with a copy. The supplementary faculty doctoral regulations may bring this date forward.

§2. The complete progress report consists of two parts:

1° The part to be submitted by the doctoral candidate, consisting of:

- a. a report of the activities they have undertaken in the past year (including a publication list) and mentioning having followed the introductory course at the Doctoral Schools, which is compulsory for doctoral candidates enrolled from academic year 2017-2018 onward, or a justification for non-participation;
- b. a plan for the subsequent year;
- c. an indication of any problems there may be.

2° The part of the supervisor, consist of:

- a. a report on the activities undertaken by the doctoral candidate;
- b. an indication of any problems there may be;
- c. the composition of and a report by the Advisory Commission, including any comments the Commission might have.

§3. The supplementary faculty doctoral regulations may specify further requirements of the specific content of the progress report.

Article 17 - The evaluation of progress

§1. Each academic year, all the CDOs discuss the progress of the doctoral theses.

The relevant CDO invites the doctoral candidate and the supervisor or supervisors to be heard if the progress report indicates an apparent lack of progress or if a serious discrepancy is detected between the part of the report by the supervisor and that of the doctoral candidate, that is if the doctoral candidate submitted a progress report on time.

The doctoral candidate may request that one of the Ombudspersons for doctoral candidates be present at this meeting.

§2. The (I)CDO shall submit a report of this meeting to the OZR no later than 25 May and send the progress reports and a recommendation to the supervisor, the dean and the doctoral candidate. In that report, the (I)CDO shall formulate a reasoned and detailed recommendation concerning the re-enrolment of the doctoral candidate. Such a recommendation may be positive or negative or the decision to issue a recommendation may be postponed. Failure on the part of the doctoral candidate to submit the annual progress report on time, in both the first and second exam periods, as referred to in Article 16, except in the event of force majeure, shall automatically lead to a negative recommendation on re-enrolment.

§3. The (I)CDO has until 31 August at the latest to submit a new recommendation to the OZR on the previously postponed cases.

§4. The OZR shall decide upon permitting the re-enrolment of the doctoral candidate based on the report by the (I)CDO. It is possible to appeal against this decision in accordance with the provisions in Section VII of these regulations.

Article 18 - The Doctoral Programme

§1. The VUB offers a doctoral programme in the framework of the supervision of the doctoral candidate, as described in more detail in the VUB Doctoral Schools Regulations.

§2. This doctoral programme is compulsory for doctoral candidates who first enrolled in a doctorate at the VUB starting from academic year 2019-2020. The programme must be successfully completed before the doctorate may be submitted. Participation in this doctoral programme is not compulsory for doctoral candidates who first enrolled before academic year 2019-2020, with the exception of Introduction Day for doctoral candidates and any additional responsibilities imposed on the doctoral candidate by supplementary faculty doctoral regulations.

§3. The supplementary faculty doctoral regulations may specify further requirements such as within which period of time this programme (or a part of it) must be successfully completed and which body is to verify this.

The authorised Doctoral Progress Monitoring Commission (CDO) as provided for in Article 9 of the supplementary faculty doctoral regulations may, on the advice of the supervisor, oblige the doctoral candidate to undertake a number of programme components and/or activities in the context of the doctoral programme.

In determining which programme components and/or activities should be undertaken, the CDO shall take into account any hiatus in the prior knowledge of the doctoral candidate and/or any special needs with regard to the subject of the doctorate.

The Advisory Commission as provided for in Article 13 shall report on the progress of the doctoral programme to be followed, in the annual progress report.

§4. The Doctoral Schools Regulations determine which categories of doctoral candidates can be exempted from the compulsory Doctoral Programme and which procedure should be followed to that end.

Section IV. The Doctorate Exam and the Doctoral Thesis

Article 19 - The Doctorate Exam

The exam for the academic title of Doctor consists of submitting and defending in public a thesis which meets the requirements as set out in Article 20.

Article 20 - The Learning Outcomes of the Doctoral Thesis

§1. The doctoral exam gives the doctoral candidate the opportunity of demonstrating that they are capable of making an independent contribution to the growth and development of scientific knowledge and of reporting on this both orally and in writing.

§2. The doctoral thesis should demonstrate the capacity to create new scientific knowledge in a particular field or across fields of expertise on the basis of independent scientific research including the arts and should be able to lead to scientific publications. The thesis should be written in the form allowed by the supplementary faculty doctoral regulations.

The Advisory Commission appointed in accordance with Article 13 will determine the form of the thesis in agreement with the doctoral candidate.

Article 21 - Admission to the Doctorate Exam (general)

§1. When the doctoral candidate wishes to take the doctorate exam they should submit, with the supervisor's agreement, an application to do so.

This application to take the doctorate exam may be specified in more detail in the supplementary faculty doctoral regulations.

At the time of the submission of the doctoral thesis, according to the provisions in Article 23, the doctoral candidate should use the appropriate form to submit an application to the faculty secretariat to take the exam. The bureau of the faculty grants admission to the doctorate exam.

§2. The same diploma requirements apply to admission to the doctorate exam as defined in Article 4, with the additional condition that the diploma granting admission to the preparation of the doctoral thesis must have been obtained at least two years previously.

§3. In order to be admitted to the doctorate exam, the doctoral candidate must demonstrate an ability to undertake scientific work independently.

§4. If following the Doctoral Programme, or part of it, is compulsory in accordance with Article 18, the successful completion of this programme is a condition to being allowed to submit and defend the doctoral thesis. The competent faculty body shall verify whether this condition has been met.

Article 22 - Admission to the Doctorate Exam (internal and public defences of the thesis)

The doctoral candidate shall only be admitted to the internal and public defences of their thesis following a mandatory screening of the thesis for plagiarism.

The thesis shall be imported into the plagiarism software by the faculty, after which the Chair of the Doctoral Examining Panel shall interpret the results of the plagiarism software, following the

principles and definitions as defined in the VUB Regulation concerning Breaches of Scientific Integrity (Annex III). If the Chair of the Doctoral Examining Panel signals no peculiarities, the doctoral candidate will be admitted to the internal defence.

Article 23 - Submission of the doctoral thesis

§1. At the time of applying to take the doctorate exam, the doctoral candidate should submit at least one (1) copy of the thesis to the faculty secretariat. This submission should take place electronically, as further explained in these regulations.

The doctoral thesis should be submitted electronically to the faculty secretariat through faces@vub.be

§2. The supplementary faculty doctoral regulations may further define the method of submission of the thesis and the number of copies required.

In addition to the copy for the faculty secretariat, the doctoral candidate shall submit a number of copies equal to the number of members of the Doctoral Examining Panel who have indicated the desire to receive a paper copy of the thesis.

Article 4 - Intellectual property rights and the doctoral thesis

§1. The doctoral candidate retains all copyrights resting on their thesis.

§2. The doctoral candidate irrevocably grants the VUB non-exclusive permission to reproduce and share with the public the doctorate, unchanged and in its entirety unless explicitly otherwise stipulated, in the version submitted for its public defence in accordance with Article 23:

1° on paper:

The thesis may be made available on paper on the premises of the VUB university library so that visitors may view it there.

2° in electronic form:

- a. To be stored in the electronic archives of the VUB university library.
- b. To be consulted through special terminals on the premises of the VUB university library.
 - i. The VUB undertakes to make every necessary and reasonable effort to provide adequate technical protection for the thesis to prevent it being downloaded, printed and/or shared with third parties.
 - ii. The thesis may also be reproduced in order to index the complete text and facilitate searches, even if the entire text is not made available.
- c. For online availability to the public.

When submitting the thesis, the doctoral candidate has the option of immediately making all or part of the thesis available by way of a publicly accessible network on the Internet. The candidate shall indicate the modalities of this availability on the form they sign on enrolment. However, the bibliographical description of the thesis (such as title, author, year, summary of the abstract if available etc.) shall immediately be incorporated into the online library catalogue of the VUB university library.

Following the public defence of the thesis, the doctoral candidate has two years in which to exploit the thesis commercially or otherwise, and to

reproduce and publicise it, whether in its entirety or in an adaptation. If the thesis is not published (commercially or otherwise) during these two years, the VUB has the right to reproduce and publicise the thesis in its entirety by making it available (without intent to profit) to the public by way of an open network (for example, on the Internet). This period may be extended if the doctoral candidate can provide justification for this (for example by submitting a signed publishing contract in which, in accordance with customary industry practices, a reasonable period of time is set for the production and distribution of the agreed number of copies of the thesis, even if publication has not yet taken place).

§3. Use of the thesis in electronic form, in accordance with this article, implies that it may be reproduced on digital media to be used according to generally recognised rules. Depending on technical developments, the thesis may be reproduced and technically adapted in any way in order to ensure that the techniques used are the most suitable for the use permitted according to this article.

§4. This non-exclusive licence is valid worldwide and for the full term of protection of copyright and all other intellectual and commercial property rights applying to the thesis.

§5. The doctoral candidate shall receive no compensation for any of the aforementioned user rights granted to the VUB.

§6. The doctoral candidate guarantees that they have not granted and shall not grant to third parties exploitation rights which are incompatible with those they have granted to the VUB.

§7. The doctoral candidate guarantees that they are the author of the thesis and that where necessary, they have been given authorisation to include copyrighted material from third parties (such as texts, graphs, images, recordings etc.) in the thesis and to grant to the VUB the aforementioned user rights.

§8. The doctoral candidate indemnifies the VUB without restriction against any claims by third parties (for example, for infringements of intellectual property rights, personality rights etc.).

§9. The remaining intellectual property rights resting on the doctorate are subject to the provisions of the Validation Regulations of the Free University Brussels (VUB).

Article 25 - Storage of the doctoral thesis

One copy of the doctoral thesis will remain at the faculty secretariat and be made available to members of the Self-employed Academic Staff. Following the public defence and providing the doctoral candidate has been awarded the title of Doctor, the faculty secretariat shall deposit a copy in the university library. This copy shall be made available under the same conditions as specified in Articles 23 and 24. If the doctoral candidate is not awarded the title of Doctor, the copy of the thesis destined for the library shall be stored in the faculty archives.

Article 26 - The language of the doctoral thesis

§1. The doctoral thesis shall be written and defended in Dutch or English. If the subject of the doctoral thesis is a different language, the thesis may be written in that language.

§2. At the request of the doctoral candidate and if permission has been obtained from the competent faculty body, the doctoral thesis may also be written and defended in a language other than Dutch or English.

§3. If the doctoral thesis has been written in a language other than Dutch, the doctoral candidate should provide an abstract in Dutch, if the candidate has obtained a basic Bachelor or Master's degree in Dutch. If the doctoral thesis has also been written in a language other than English, the abstract may be written in English. This abstract will be made available to the public.

Article 27 - The Doctoral Examining Panel

§1. The competent faculty body appoints a Doctoral Examining Panel on the proposal of the supervisor or supervisors and naturally, before the submission of the doctorate.

§2. The Doctoral Examining Panel consists of at least three VUB self-employed academic staff members and at least two external members. In principle, the panel will be put together in such a way that at least two members will be of the opposite sex. Any deviations from this must be justified.

§3. In principle, all members have the title of Doctor based on a thesis. Any deviations from this must be justified.

§4. The Doctoral Examining Panel should consist of no more than eight voting members. The Advisory Commission may not form the majority of voting members in the Doctoral Examining Panel. The supervisor is a member of the panel, and in the case of there being multiple supervisors, they have one joint vote. However, the votes of VUB members should always constitute the majority of the votes cast. Written recommendations shall not be taken into account in the voting.

§5. The Chair, appointed from among the members of the Doctoral Examining Panel by the competent faculty body, may under no circumstances be the supervisor of the doctoral candidate.

§6. Should an interested party demonstrate that grave conflicts of interest exist with one of the panel members, the competent faculty body which approved the selection may be asked, by way of a reasoned request, to replace that member.

Article 28 - Assessment term for the doctoral thesis

§1. In accordance with Articles 23 and 24, the Doctoral Examining Panel has two months from the date of submission to examine the doctoral thesis submitted and to decide whether the internal defence of the thesis is to take place.

§2. The Doctoral Examining Panel may reduce this term by no more than one month, by a unanimous vote or, with the explicit consent of the doctoral candidate, extend this term by no more than one month. Such an extension cannot be made without good reason.

§3. The doctoral candidate and the Doctoral Examining Panel shall receive timely notification from the Chair of the panel about any holiday period which could extend the assessment term by more than one month. Both panel and candidate must explicitly agree to such an extension.

Article 29 - Attendance requirements for the internal defence

§1. The assessment by the Doctoral Examining Panel of the internal defence of the thesis by the doctoral candidate shall only be valid if at least half of the voting members are present at the deliberations, or take part in the deliberations through interactive electronic means of communication.

§2. If a member of the Doctoral Examining Panel has submitted a written advice, this member shall be deemed to be present in accordance with the attendance requirements described in Paragraph 1.

Article 30 - Consultation and assessment procedure

§1. On expiry of the term provided under Article 28, the panel members shall embark upon a consultation and assessment procedure consisting of two phases:

- 1° Phase 1: the panel members consult among themselves. This can be orally or in writing
- 2° Phase 2: the doctoral candidate defends the thesis.

§2. The supplementary faculty doctoral regulations describe the course the internal defence should take and specify the possibilities for the further detailed reworking of the thesis. The procedure shall provide for, at a minimum, a moment in which the doctoral candidate can defend by answering questions from panel members.

The course the internal defence should take was decided by the Faculty Council at its meeting on 14/10/2015 and should proceed as follows:

- *Before the internal defence, each panel member shall draft a brief report with an explanation of the strengths and weaknesses of the thesis. This report shall not contain any grade or final assessment. The panel members submit their reports, also in advance of the internal defence, to the Chair of the panel. Under no circumstances shall the Chair share these reports among the other panel members. These reports will later be incorporated in full, reworked where necessary, in the report of the internal defence.*
- *In principle, all panel members are expected to be present for the internal defence. Should a panel member be physically unable to attend, they shall take part where possible by way of interactive electronic means of communication, such as teleconferencing. Should a panel member be absolutely unable to take part in the defence, due to force majeure, they should provide the Chair with a detailed report in advance, with a reasoned assessment of the thesis.*
- *During the internal defence, the panel members shall begin with brief deliberations, without the presence of the candidate. The Chair will use these deliberations to gauge the general level of appreciation and the questions members intend to ask. The Chair may ask the supervisor or supervisors to give additional information.*
- *After the brief deliberations, the candidate will be called in. The candidate may, but is not obliged to, give a presentation. The candidate answers the panel's questions. During this round, the supervisor or supervisors will not speak. When the Chair and the panel indicate that they have received sufficient answers, the Chair will ask the candidate to leave the room.*
- *Once the candidate has left the room again, the panel will deliberate and take a decision in accordance with Article 30 - §3.*

- *If necessary, a vote may be taken. In accordance with Article 27, the supervisor is a member of the panel; if there are multiple supervisors, they have a joint vote. The supervisor may speak and offer additional information. The Chair will act as referee-mediator to prevent polarisation.*
- *In a vote, all panel members shall vote on the proposal being voted on; it is not permitted to abstain from voting. The outcome of the vote shall be determined by a majority (half + 1); in accordance with Article 30 - §5 , in the event of a tied vote, the decision shall be made in favour of the doctoral candidate.*
- *Once the panel has reached a decision, the Chair will call the candidate back in and the decision shall be announced.*
- *The decision of the panel shall be recorded as the conclusion of the report of the internal defence. That report shall be drawn up by the Chair in the form provided for the purpose by the faculty and contain the name of the candidate, the title of the thesis, the date of the internal defence, the panel members present, the names of any absent panel members including whether or not they submitted a written report, the brief reports submitted by the panel members beforehand, where necessary reworked, the decision of the panel and in the case of a positive response according to Article 30 - §3,1°, the date on which the public defence of the thesis is to take place. The Chair shall provide the faculty secretariat and the candidate, in accordance with Article 30 - §4, with the report within 5 days after the internal defence.*

§3. The assessment of the internal defence can lead only to the following decisions:

- 1° The Doctoral Examining Panel decides that the doctoral thesis may be publicly defended. The Chair of the Doctoral Examining Panel shall determine the day on which the public defence shall take place and take any measures necessary to publicise this date.
- 2° The Doctoral Examining Panel decides that the doctoral thesis must be revised. The consultation and assessment procedure shall be suspended and the submission of the revised doctoral thesis is then dealt with according to Article 28. If the doctoral candidate receives conflicting instructions or comments in relation to the required revision of the thesis, the Chair of the Doctoral Examining Panel shall make a recommendation to the doctoral candidate regarding these contradictions.
- 3° The Doctoral Examining Panel decides to admit the doctoral candidate to the public defence, but with the provision that the candidate must first make certain verifiable revisions to the doctoral thesis.
The Chair of the Doctoral Examining Panel shall determine in writing both the conditions which the revision of the thesis must meet and the modalities with relation to that revision. If the doctoral candidate receives conflicting instructions or comments in relation to the required revision of the thesis, the Chair of the Doctoral Examining Panel shall make a recommendation to the doctoral candidate regarding these contradictions. The Chair shall also determine the day on which the public defence will take place and take any measures necessary to publicise this date, if the panel decides that the conditions set have been met.
- 4° The Doctoral Examining Panel decides that the doctoral thesis may not be publicly defended.
The procedure described in this article shall be discontinued. The Doctoral Examining Panel may request that the (I)CDO recommend the OZR refuse re-enrolment in accordance with the provisions under Article 17.

§4. In all cases, the Chair of the Doctoral Examining Panel shall report in writing to the doctoral candidate after the internal defence. This report shall clearly state which of the four possible decisions has been made.

§5. In the event of a tied vote, the decision shall be made in favour of the doctoral candidate.

Article 31 - Date of the public defence

§1. The day on which the public defence shall take place shall be at least one month after the decision to allow a public defence.

§2. If the Doctoral Examining Panel has decided that the thesis must be revised, as provided for in Article 30 §3 under 3, the Chair of the panel shall, at the time the Doctoral Examining Panel decides that the doctoral thesis may be publicly defended, determine the day on which the public defence shall take place and take any measures necessary to publicise this date.

Article 32 - Announcement of the public defence

§1. The faculty secretariat shall ensure that the announcement of the public defence is posted on the VUB website. Every faculty may set more detailed rules in the supplementary faculty doctoral regulations for the way in which the announcement of the public defence can be organised.

§2. The announcement, which should be made at least eight calendar days before the public defence is to take place, should contain the name of the doctoral candidate, the title of the doctoral thesis and the day, time and location of the public defence.

§3. The doctoral candidate shall also draft a summarised popular scientific abstract of the doctoral thesis in English or, in accordance with Article 26, in Dutch, approved by the supervisor. This text of between 200 and 500 words should be delivered to the Expertise Unit for Scientific Communication, for the public defence. The text can be used for press releases and announcements and shall be made available to the general public.

Article 33 - Location of the public defence

In principle, the public defence shall take place on the premises of the VUB. Any deviations from this should be approved by the competent faculty body.

Article 34 - Content and course of the public defence

§1. The public defence shall last at least one hour and no more than two hours. It shall consist of a brief summary of the doctoral thesis, intended for the Doctoral Examining Panel and the lay audience, followed by a discussion.

§2. Both the Doctoral Examining Panel and the audience have the right to question the doctoral candidate. The latter must defend themselves against any questions and concerns.

Section V. The deliberations and the proclamation

Article 35 - Attendance requirements for the public defence

The Doctoral Examining Panel may not deliberate on whether or not the doctoral candidate has passed, and with which grade, unless at least half of the voting members are present, take part in the public defence by way of interactive electronic means of communication or have submitted a written recommendation in advance. A maximum of one written recommendation may be taken into account when calculating the presence of a quorum according to the attendance requirements.

Article 36 - Deliberations following the public defence

Immediately following the public defence, the Doctoral Examining Panel shall deliberate in private on whether to confer the academic title of Doctor and if provided for in the supplementary faculty doctoral regulations, the grade to be given.

Article 37 - Assessment of the public defence

The Doctoral Examining Panel declares the doctoral candidate to have passed or not by a majority vote, taking into consideration the substantive scientific value of the doctoral thesis and the way in which the doctoral candidate has defended the thesis. In the event of a tied vote, the decision shall be made in favour of the doctoral candidate. A maximum of one written recommendation may be taken into account for the assessment.

Article 38 - Awarding grades

If the doctoral candidate is declared by the Doctoral Examining Panel to have passed, the panel shall not award a grade unless this is provided for in the supplementary faculty doctoral regulations. In that case, the panel shall announce whether the doctoral candidate has passed cum fructu, cum laude, magna cum laude or summa cum laude.

Article 39 - The proclamation

If the Doctoral Examining Panel declares the doctoral candidate has passed, the Chair of the panel shall continue to the proclamation immediately after the deliberations. The Chair then publicly declares that all relevant rules and regulations have been observed.

Article 40 - The doctoral diploma

It is preferable that the doctoral degree is issued to the doctoral candidate at the proclamation or failing that, within no more than two months.

Section VI. The Ombudspersons for Doctoral Candidates

Article 41 - Appointment of Ombudspersons for Doctoral Candidates (the purpose)

With a view to offering high-quality supervision of the doctoral candidates, the VUB shall appoint three Ombudspersons for doctoral candidates, who shall have the powers described below. Each Ombudsperson shall perform their duties within the area of operation of a single Doctoral School and work, or have worked, at a faculty of that Doctoral School.

Article 42 - Appointment of Ombudspersons for Doctoral Candidates (the candidates)

§1. The Ombudspersons for Doctoral Candidates are appointed by the Academic Council before the start of each academic year, in response to a proposal by the OZR. Candidates must be able to demonstrate sufficient experience in supervising doctoral candidates.

The candidate Ombudsperson must be either a ZAP member or an emeritus with a post-retirement assignment, on the understanding that an emeritus professor may hold the position of Ombudsperson for doctoral candidates up to, at the latest, five years after reaching emeritus status.

§2. The Ombudspersons for doctoral candidates may, where necessary, assist each other in processing case files or take over files from each other.

§3. The mandate of the Ombudspersons for Doctoral Candidates is not compatible with the positions of rector, vice rector, vice dean, member (deputy) of the AR, member (deputy) of the OZR or member (deputy) of a Doctoral Progress Monitoring Commission.

§4. The names of the Ombudspersons for doctoral candidates and where and when they can be reached shall be made known by way of an annual circular, addressed to all doctoral candidates.

Article 43 - Duties of the Ombudspersons for doctoral candidates

The Ombudspersons for Doctoral Candidates receive and assess comments and complaints from doctoral candidates. Where such comments and complaints relate to difficulties in the relationship with the supervisor or supervisors or the (I)CDO, or problems in preparing and implementing the doctoral research, the Ombudspersons for Doctoral Candidates may subsequently decide on one of the following actions:

- to further investigate the comments and complaints;
- to mediate, at the request of the doctoral candidate, between the candidate and the supervisor or supervisors, the Chair of the (I)CDO, the dean, the Chair of the Doctoral Examining Panel or the members of the academic staff or the Administrative Secretary with the aim of reaching an amicable resolution of the conflict;
- to report on their findings in the form of analyses, recommendations or advice, in accordance with Article 46 of these regulations.

Article 44 - Procedure for Ombudspersons

§1. The Ombudspersons for doctoral candidates maintain a register of all comments and complaints received in confidential files. The Ombudspersons for doctoral candidates are obliged to maintain confidentiality and discretion.

§2. The Ombudspersons for doctoral candidates shall determine, in agreement with the candidate involved, how to respond to contact initiated by that candidate. After an initial contact, further procedure shall be considered. Any written confirmation of a complaint shall always be followed up in writing.

§3. Ombudspersons for doctoral candidates generally propose an amicable resolution to comments and complaints (also written), as mentioned in Article 43, as quickly as possible. The doctoral candidate shall be notified of this proposal in writing without delay.

§4. Should an Ombudsperson for doctoral candidates be primarily a member of the same research group as the doctoral candidate appealing to the Ombudsperson, or should the Ombudsperson be deemed to be too closely involved, one of the other Ombudspersons for doctoral candidates shall take their place.

§5. The Ombudspersons for doctoral candidates shall ensure that any comments or complaints which are reported but which do not, in their opinion, fall within the scope of operations of the Ombudspersons for doctoral candidates, are forwarded directly to the correct point of contact, provided the person reporting the comments and/or complaints agrees to this in the light of the safeguards offered.

Article 45 - Right of inspection of the Ombudspersons for doctoral candidates

In the performance of their mandate, the Ombudspersons for doctoral candidates have the right to:

- 1° be involved in the discussions of the Doctoral Progress Monitoring Commissions;
- 2° consult all information necessary to allow implementation of that defined under Articles 43 and 44;
- 3° view data of the annual PhD survey, should the responsible faculty member so advise.

Article 46 - Reporting by the Ombudspersons for doctoral candidates

§1. The Ombudspersons for Doctoral Candidates shall report annually, before 15 November, to the Academic Council on their activities from the previous academic year. The report shall be presented to the OZR beforehand. The report shall contain a numerical summary of contact and all cases in which there was actual mediation, without breaching the obligation of confidentiality.

§2. The Ombudspersons for doctoral candidates may submit a quarterly report to the Vice-Rector of Research Policy.

§3. Should an Ombudspersons for doctoral candidates be of the opinion that a matter is grave enough to warrant being reported, they shall report it immediately to the Vice-Rector of Research Policy.

Section VII. Appeal Options

Article 47 - Appeal against material errors

§1. Should a material error be signalled in a study progress decision, the dean shall be formally notified of this within 10 calendar days following the day the decision was made.

§2. Any error which does not lead to a less favourable decision with relation to the doctoral candidate, shall be rectified by the dean. The doctoral candidate shall be informed of the rectification and the rectification properly documented within the faculty.

§3. If the error signalled does lead to a less favourable decision with regard to the doctoral candidate, the error shall be corrected by the body which made the original decision. If necessary, the dean shall convene that body as quickly as possible. The doctoral candidate shall be informed of the rectification and the rectification properly documented within the faculty.

Article 48 - Decisions against which an appeal may be lodged

Both internal and external appeals can be made against decisions as described in Articles 17-§4, 30-§3 and 37. External appeals are only possible when all available internal appeal options have been exhausted.

Article 49 – Composition of the internal appeal body

§1. An appeal body shall be set up for each faculty or study programme, and authorised to investigate all internal appeals initiated within that faculty or study programme against decisions as described in Articles 17-§4, 30-§3 and 37.

§2. The appeal body shall consist of at least one ZAP member and two other members of the academic staff who have appropriate experience in supervising doctoral candidates in the relevant or in a related subject area. The members of the appeal body shall appoint a Chair from their midst.

§3. The following may be invited to take part in the appeal body in an advisory capacity:

- one member of RTDO;
- one of the Ombudspersons for doctoral candidates. If the Ombudsperson for doctoral candidates so wishes, they are permitted to refuse membership of the appeal body by way of a letter to the Chair, giving their reasons for doing so;
- a legal expert from the Research and Data Management department.

§4. Any further composition of the appeal body may be provided in more detail in the supplementary faculty doctoral regulations.

The faculty Internal Appeal Committee shall act as the appeal body.

The Faculty Appeal Committee shall consist of the following three ZAP members:

- 1) the academic secretary;*
- 2) two additional members of the bureau of the faculty, nominated by the dean, or if this is impossible, the chair of the department with the highest seniority and highest degree obtained.*

The youngest member shall act as Chair. The chairs of the department shall act as deputies, starting with the oldest in terms of seniority and with the highest degree.

The composition of this commission shall be announced through the faculty student portal at the beginning of the academic year.

Article 50 - Internal appeal procedure (except for a decision to grant reasonable modifications)

§1. If a doctoral candidate feels that a decision in their case, as described in Articles 17-§4, 30-§3 and 37, has been affected by a violation of the law, they may lodge an appeal with the office of the relevant dean. The appeal must be lodged within an expiry period of seven calendar days, and that period starts:

1° in the case of an exam decision: the day after the day of the proclamation
2° in the case of another student progress decision: the day after the doctoral candidate was informed about the decision.

§2. The doctoral candidate should substantiate the request with facts and give reasons for the objections put forward within the expiry period mentioned. If they fail to do this, their appeal will automatically be deemed to be inadmissible, insofar as there are no other grievances and no factual description of the objections put forward was already recorded.

§3. On pain of inadmissibility, the appeal shall be lodged by means of a signed and dated petition which should be sent by registered post to the Chair of the appeal body involved. The petition should show, at the least, the identity of the doctoral candidate concerned, the decision or decisions being appealed, a factual description of the objections put forward and the reasons behind them. At the same time, the doctoral candidate shall send an identical electronic version of the petition, by way of information, in an email to the email address indicated in the supplementary faculty doctoral regulations. The date of the appeal shall be the same date as that of the postmark on the registered post.

An electronic version of the petition must also be sent to faces@vub.be

§4. The doctoral candidate, or person to whom the decision refers, has the right to be heard by the appeal body. The appeal body determines whether this right to be heard should be carried out in writing or orally. During an oral handling of their appeal, the doctoral candidate may have representation. In this dialogue, the secretary of the appeal body shall be present to take brief minutes of the statements, and the doctoral candidate shall be asked to sign these minutes. If the Chair deems it necessary for a reasonable and fair assessment of the appeal, these minutes will be submitted to the supervisors concerned, for their response.

§5. The appeal shall lead to:

1° the Chair of the professional body involved rejecting the appeal, citing the reasons, on the grounds that it is inadmissible, or
2° a decision by the appeal body which confirms or revises the original decision, citing the reasons.

§6. The decision in the application of §5 shall be communicated to the doctoral candidate or the person to whom the decision refers within 20 calendar days, which will start on the day after the one on which the appeal was lodged. This notification offers the possibility of lodging an external appeal and gives the relevant periods for this. The decision taken in the application of §5 shall be communicated by the dean to the Ombudsperson for doctoral candidates at the relevant Doctoral School.

§7. It is possible to lodge an appeal against the decision taken in the application of §5 with the Council for Disputes concerning decisions on academic progress.

Article 51 - Internal appeal procedure (in the case of a decision to refuse reasonable modification)

§1. The doctoral candidate may lodge an internal appeal against a decision to refuse reasonable modification to education and exam activities for doctoral candidates with a disability, in the event that a doctoral candidate is of the opinion that this decision was affected by a violation of the law. This appeal must be sent by registered post to the office of the relevant dean within an expiry period of seven calendar days, which will start on the day after the announcement of the decision.

§2. The internal appeal procedure shall lead to a well-founded decision which is binding for everyone within the organisation. The doctoral candidate has the right to be heard in this. An Ombudsman for doctoral candidates and a lawyer from the Research and Data Management department may be present.

§3. The doctoral candidate shall be notified of the decision in the application of §2 within one month, which shall start on the day after the day on which the appeal was lodged. The authorised Ombudsperson for doctoral candidates shall be notified of the decision.

Section IIV. Special Doctorates

Part 1. General provisions

Article 52 - Scope and guiding principle of the section

§1. This section deals with the joint PhD, the interdisciplinary doctorate and the doctorate in the arts.

§2. Everything previously defined in these regulations still applies in full to joint PhDs, interdisciplinary doctorates and doctorates in the arts unless this section specifically deviates from such previous provisions.

Article 53 - Composition of the ICDO

The (I)CDO consists of the three directors of the Doctoral Schools, the Vice-Rectors of Education and Student Affairs and Research Policy and at least one member of the OAP in an advisory capacity.

Part 2. The joint PhD

Article 54 - Doctorate contract

§1. At the initiation of a joint PhD, a doctorate contract shall be drawn up as soon as possible (*Joint PhD contract*). A draft version of the doctorate contract must be drawn up and submitted to the partner institute no later than one (1) year before the submission of the thesis.

§2. The aforementioned doctorate contract (*Joint PhD contract*) may deviate from provisions in these regulations and in the relevant faculty doctoral regulations, as long as any deviation in a specific file is approved by the competent faculty body and only if it does not conflict with prevailing laws.

The deviations from the provisions in these regulations and the faculty doctoral regulations included in the 'Joint PhD contract' shall be approved by the bureau of the faculty. To this end, all 'Joint PhD contracts' for doctoral candidates affiliated with the faculty shall be signed by the dean.

Article 55 - Academic title of Doctor in a joint PhD

The supplementary faculty doctoral regulations determine which diploma grants give access to which academic degree in the case of a joint PhD.

By way of a standard:

- *a degree Master of Science in Economic Sciences grants access to the academic title of Doctor of Economic Sciences;*
- *a degree Master of Science in Applied Economic Sciences grants access to the academic title of Doctor of Business Economics;*
- *a degree Master of Science in International Business grants access to the academic title of Doctor of Business Economics;*
- *a degree Master of Science Business Engineering grants access to the academic title of Doctor of Business Economics;*

- a degree Master of Science Business Engineering: Business and Technology grants access to the academic title of Doctor of Business Economics;
- a degree Master of Science in Political Sciences grants access to the academic title of Doctor of Political Science;
- a degree Master of Science in Political Science: European and International Governance grants access to the academic title of Doctor of Political Science;
- a degree Master of Science in Sociology grants access to the academic title of Doctor of Sociology;
- a degree Master of Science in Communication Sciences grants access to the academic title of Doctor of Media and Communication;
- a degree Master of Science in Communication Studies: New Media and Society in Europe grants access to the academic title of Doctor of Media and Communication Studies;
- a degree Master of Science in Communication Sciences grants access to the academic title of Doctor of Media and Communication Studies: Journalism Studies
- a degree Master of Science in Communication Studies: Journalism and Media in Europe grants access to the academic title of Doctor of Media and Communication Studies: Journalism Studies

Deviations from these regulations are possible and may be put before the Doctoral Progress Monitoring Commission by the dean.

Article 56 - Guidance of and responsibility for a joint PhD

In the case of a joint PhD, the doctoral thesis must be co-prepared under the guidance and on the responsibility of a member of the ZAP of the partner institute, if so desired assisted by:

- 1° an external ZAP supervisor at the VUB
- 2° an emeritus ZAP supervisor at the VUB
- 3° a non-ZAP supervisor with a doctorate based on a thesis.

Article 57 - Progress report for a joint PhD

If the VUB is not the main institute, a template from the partner institute completed for the purpose will suffice for drawing up and submitting the annual progress report in the context of a joint PhD.

Article 58 - Language of the doctoral thesis

§1. The thesis of a joint PhD shall be written and defended in the language specified in the doctorate contract signed by all parties concerned.

§2. Regarding the public defence, the previous paragraph may be deviated from if the doctoral candidate has received permission for this from the Doctoral Examining Panel.

Article 59 - Defence of the thesis of a joint PhD

It is possible to deviate, in the doctorate contract concluded, from the organisation of the internal defence for the defence of the thesis of a joint PhD. The supplementary faculty doctoral regulations determine under which conditions such an exception is allowed. The explicit approval of the competent faculty body, as defined in Article 54, Paragraph 2, is not required for such a deviation.

The deviations from the provisions in these regulations and the faculty doctoral regulations, which are included in the 'Joint PhD contract', with regard to the organisation of the internal defence, shall be permitted by the bureau of the faculty on a case-by-case basis. To this end, all 'Joint PhD contracts' for doctoral candidates within the faculty shall be signed by the dean.

Article 60 - Submission of the thesis of a joint PhD

The obligations described in Article 23 with regard to submitting the doctoral thesis apply equally for the doctoral candidate engaged in a joint PhD, should the doctoral candidate wish to publicly defend the doctoral exam at the VUB. The compulsory submission of the doctoral thesis in electronic form still applies for the doctoral candidate engaged in a joint PhD, irrespective of the location of the public defence.

Article 61 - Composition of the examining panel for a joint PhD

§1. The Doctoral Examining Panel for a joint PhD shall consist of the supervisors plus at least four other voting members. Each partner institute shall be represented in this panel by at least two voting members, of whom one is the supervisor. If there are multiple supervisors, they shall have a joint vote. In addition, there should be at least two external members in the panel, who are not affiliated with either of the partner institutes.

§2. The members affiliated to the VUB shall be appointed by the competent faculty body. The Chair and the external members of this Doctoral Examining Panel shall be appointed according to the provisions of the doctorate contract.

§3. The Advisory Commission may not form the majority of voting members in the Doctoral Examining Panel. Written recommendations shall not be taken into account in the voting. Article 27-§1, §3, §5 and §6, and Article 73-§1 still apply in full to joint PhDs.

Article 62 - Defence of the thesis of a joint PhD

The defence of a joint PhD shall take place on the premises of the main institute of the doctoral candidate unless otherwise agreed in the doctorate contract.

Article 63 - Compulsory Doctoral Programme

As mentioned in Article 18, the Doctoral Schools Regulations determine which category of doctoral candidate can be exempted from the compulsory Doctoral Programme and the procedure which should be followed to that end. This applies to doctoral candidates doing a joint PhD in which the VUB is not the main institute, for example.

Part 3. The interdisciplinary doctorate and doctorate in the arts

Article 64 - Admission to an interdisciplinary doctorate

§1. The competent faculty body shall evaluate the diploma requirements for each admission application for an interdisciplinary doctorate, in accordance with Articles 6 and 7. The competent faculty body may, if it so wishes, request that the ICDO issue a recommendation in a specific case.

§2. The ICDO has the authority to assess whether or not a doctorate has an interdisciplinary character.

Article 65 - Admission to a Doctorate in the Arts

§1. In order to be admitted for the preparation of a doctorate in the arts, the candidate must in principle hold a Master's diploma from a study programme in the area of audiovisual arts, music, performing arts, literature, architecture or visual arts. The Kunstenplatform Brussel (*Brussels Arts Platform*) may be requested to give a non-binding advice with regard to doctorates embedded in the common research environment of the VUB and EhB (*Erasmushogeschool Brussel*) School of Arts, the KCB (*Royal Conservatory of Brussels (Koninklijk Conservatorium Brussel)*) and the RITCS (*Royal Institute for Theatre, Cinema and Sound*).

§2. Candidates not in possession of a Master's diploma (or equivalent) in one of the above-mentioned areas of study may be admitted to this doctorate if the aptitude assessment of Previously Acquired Competences (PAC) by the competent faculty body makes it possible to recognise competences which generally achieve the level of a Master's in the field of the arts. The competent faculty body may, if it so wishes, request that the ICDO issue a recommendation in a specific case.

Article 66 - Admission to a doctorate in the arts and the additional assessment

In the case of an application for admission to a doctorate in the arts, the competent faculty body may conduct an additional assessment or set an exam, as described in Articles 6 and 7. The competent faculty body may, if it so wishes, request that the ICDO issue a recommendation or set an exam in a specific case.

Article 67 - Admission for the preparation of a doctorate in the arts

In the case of a doctorate in the arts in collaboration with the EhB, the competent faculty body shall seek advice beforehand from the Brussels Arts Platform.

Article 68 - The Doctoral Programme for special doctorates

§1. The competent faculty body may, on the basis of the application for admission by the candidate, make the Doctoral Programme or a part of it compulsory for a doctorate in the arts or an interdisciplinary doctorate. For doctoral candidates for whom the Doctoral Programme is already compulsory, it may stipulate additional educational obligations. In such cases, completing the aforementioned educational package shall be a condition for being admitted to the defence of the doctoral thesis. The competent faculty body may, if it so wishes, request that the ICDO issue a recommendation about this in a specific case.

§2. The competent faculty body may impose a maximum time period within which this educational package must be completed.

Article 69 - Monitoring of doctorates in the arts and interdisciplinary doctorates

In the case of an interdisciplinary doctorate across faculty boundaries or a doctorate in the arts, the ICDO monitors the smooth running of the doctorate. To monitor doctorates in the arts, the ICDO shall be supplemented by the Chair of the Brussels Arts Platform, who will act in an advisory capacity.

Article 70 - Guidance of and responsibility for a doctorate in the arts

Supplementary to Article 11, in the case of a doctorate in the arts there will always be a supervisor observing the artistic guidance, in addition to the VUB ZAP supervisor or supervisors. The artistic supervisor is exempt from the requirement of holding a Master's on the basis of a thesis.

Article 71 -The Advisory Commission for a doctorate in the arts

The Advisory Commission for a doctorate in the arts consists of the supervisors and at least one other member. The artistic supervisor counts as one of the supervisors and may therefore not act as the additional member.

Article 72 -The doctoral thesis for a doctorate in the arts

§1. In the case of a doctorate in the arts, the thesis forms a whole consisting of two components, each of which shall be fully taken into account:

- 1° an artistic component, which comprises the total of the artistic findings of the research and is presented in a manner characteristic of the artistic process involved
- 2° a discursive component which comprises a relevant reflection on the personal artistic process of the doctoral candidate, on the methodology and on the skills which were called upon, all of this done in an scientifically responsible way while taking into consideration the specific nature of artistic research.

§2. These two components must result in an original thesis as earlier described in this article. This provision also applies to the realisations in the artistic part of the thesis.

§3. The thesis, consisting of the artistic and discursive components, must be submitted in such a way that the whole and its parts are verifiable and reproducible to the extent allowed by the uniqueness of the artistic research.

§4. The artistic part of the thesis of the doctorate in the arts is exempt from the provision in Article 24 which stipulates the obligation of granting non-exclusive permission to reproduce the thesis and make it available to the public. Granting this permission is considered to be worthwhile, but is not mandatory.

Article 73 - Application to take the doctoral exam

A doctoral candidate preparing an interdisciplinary doctorate or doctorate in the arts should direct their written application to take the doctoral exam to the dean of the faculty with which their ZAP supervisor is principally affiliated.

Article 74 - Composition of the examining panel

§1. For a doctorate with an interdisciplinary character which crosses faculty boundaries, each faculty should be represented in the Doctoral Examination Panel by at least one ZAP member.

§2. For a doctorate in the arts which has been realised in cooperation with the EhB, the proposal for the composition of the Doctoral Examination Panel shall be accompanied by the non-binding recommendation of the Brussels Art Platform.

Article 75 - Defence of the thesis for a doctorate in the arts

In the case of a doctorate in the arts, the presentation elements which form a part of the doctoral exam are not bound by the time and location restrictions stipulated in Articles 33 and 34.

Section IX. General and final provisions**Article 76 - Holiday periods**

For the calculation of valid time periods in these regulations, with the exception of Section VII, academic leave and the period between 15 July and 15 August are not taken into account.

Article 77 - Entry into force of these regulations

Following approval by the Academic Council, these regulations shall enter into force on 1 January 2019 with the exception of the provisions of Section VI which shall enter into force on 1 October 2018.

Doctoral theses which were submitted before 1 January 2019 shall be examined, defended and, where applicable, proclaimed in accordance with the provisions of the Central Regulations for the Conferral of the Title of Doctor, as they were in force at the time of submission.

ANNEX I ACADEMIC TITLES OF DOCTOR

The VUB confers the following academic titles of Doctor:

	Dutch name	English name
1	Doctor in de wijsbegeerte en de moraalwetenschappen	Doctor of Philosophy and Moral Sciences
2	Doctor in de taalkunde	Doctor of Linguistics
3	Doctor in de letterkunde	Doctor of Literary Studies
4	Doctor in de taal- en letterkunde	Doctor of Linguistics and Literary Studies
5	Doctor in de toegepaste taalkunde	Doctor of Applied Language Studies
6	Doctor in de geschiedenis	Doctor of History
7	Doctor in de kunstwetenschappen en de archeologie	Doctor of Art Studies and Archaeology
8	Doctor in de kunstwetenschappen en de archeologie: cultureel erfgoed studies	Doctor of Art Studies and Archaeology: Cultural Heritage Studies
9	Doctor in de rechten	Doctor of Law
10	Doctor in het notariaat	Doctor of Notarial Law
11	Doctor in de criminologische wetenschappen	Doctor of Criminology
12	Doctor in de psychologische wetenschappen	Doctor of Psychology
13	Doctor in de pedagogische wetenschappen	Doctor of Educational Sciences
14	Doctor in de pedagogische wetenschappen: agogische wetenschappen	Doctor of Adult Educational Sciences
15	Doctor in de economische wetenschappen	Doctor of Economics
16	Doctor in de toegepaste economische wetenschappen	Doctor of Business Economics
17	Doctor in de toegepaste economische wetenschappen: handelsingenieur	Doctor of Business Economics
18	Doctor in de politieke wetenschappen	Doctor of Political Science
19	Doctor in de sociale wetenschappen: sociologie	Doctor of Sociology
20	Doctor in de media- en communicatiestudies	Doctor of Media and Communication Studies
21	Doctor in de media- en communicatiestudies: journalistieke studies	Doctor of Media and Communication Studies: Journalism Studies
22	Doctor in de bewegings- en sportwetenschappen	Doctor in Movement and Sport Sciences
23	Doctor in de revalidatiewetenschappen en de kinesitherapie	Doctor in Rehabilitation Sciences and Physiotherapy
24	Doctor in de wetenschappen	Doctor of Sciences
25	Doctor in de bio-ingenieurswetenschappen	Doctor of Bio-Engineering Sciences
26	Doctor in de ingenieurswetenschappen	Doctor of Engineering Sciences
27	Doctor in de industriële ingenieurswetenschappen	Doctor of Engineering Technology

28	Doctor in de medische wetenschappen	Doctor of Medical Sciences
29	Doctor in de sociale gezondheidswetenschappen	Doctor of Social Health Sciences
30	Doctor in de tandheelkunde	Doctor of Dentistry
31	Doctor in de farmaceutische wetenschappen	Doctor of Pharmaceutical Sciences
32	Doctor in de gerontologie	Doctor of Gerontology
33	Doctor in de kunsten	Doctor of Arts
34	Doctor in de interdisciplinaire studies *	Doctor of Interdisciplinary Studies *
35	Doctor in gender en diversiteit	Doctor of Gender and Diversity
36	Doctor in de Wereldwijde gezondheidszorg, humanitaire hulp en rampengeneeskunde	Doctor of Global Health, Humanitarian Aid and Disaster Medicine

* The title/name of the study programme is continually supplemented with the exact combination of areas of study relevant to the substance of the doctorate.

ANNEX II THE CHARTER FOR RESEARCHERS

BACKGROUND

In December 2005, the VUB endorsed the recommendations made by the European Commission on 11 March 2005 with regard to the European Charter for Researchers and a Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers.

In 2011, following the implementation of the European Charter for Researchers and the EU Code of Conduct for Researchers, the VUB was awarded the HR Excellence in Research label. The European Charter forms the framework for VUB human resources policy in terms of research. The general principles and requirements of this European Charter will therefore be implemented as the basis for good scientific practice and culture.

The VUB research policy focuses permanently on maintaining and improving good scientific practice. Awareness-raising and prevention and the use of a procedure for dealing with complaints in the event of breaches of scientific integrity are all part of this research policy.

Another key pillar of the research policy is raising awareness of the researcher through the Doctoral Programme.

This Charter is also drawn up in the context of the conditions formulated in CLA IV for Higher Education and in particular with a view to:

- continued training and raising awareness and accountability of researchers with regard to correct scientific practice
- the expectations which doctoral candidates, supervisors and other stakeholders have of each other in terms of scientific practice in general and the doctorate in particular.

This text describes what is meant by 'breaches of scientific integrity'. In addition, there is a description of what constitutes 'good scientific practice'.

- Profile of a good researcher
- Profile of a good scientific author
- Profile of a good peer reviewer
- Profile of a good supervisor

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I. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

European Charter for Researchers

The European Charter for Researchers is based on the following general principles:

Extract from 'The European Charter for Researchers – The Code of Conduct for Recruitment of Researchers' (ISBN 92-894-9311-9):

General principles and requirements applicable to researchers:

Research Freedom

Researchers should focus their research for the good of mankind and for expanding the frontiers of scientific knowledge, while enjoying the freedom of thought and expression, and the freedom to identify methods by which problems are solved, according to recognised ethical principles and practices.

Researchers should, however, recognise the limitations to this freedom that could arise as a result of particular research circumstances (including supervision/guidance/management) or operational constraints, e.g. for budgetary or infrastructural reasons or, especially in the industrial sector, for reasons of intellectual property protection. Such limitations should not, however, contravene recognised ethical principles and practices, to which researchers have to adhere.

Ethical Principles

Researchers should adhere to the recognised ethical practices and fundamental ethical principles appropriate to their discipline(s) as well as to ethical standards as documented in the different national, sectoral or institutional Codes of Ethics.

Professional Responsibility

Researchers should make every effort to ensure that their research is relevant to society and does not duplicate research previously carried out elsewhere.

They must avoid plagiarism of any kind and abide by the principle of intellectual property and joint data ownership in the case of research carried out in collaboration with a supervisor(s) and/or other researchers. The need to validate new observations by showing that experiments are reproducible should not be interpreted as plagiarism, provided that the data to be confirmed are explicitly quoted.

Researchers should ensure, if any aspect of their work is delegated, that the person to whom it is delegated has the competence to carry it out.

Professional Attitude

Researchers should be familiar with the strategic goals governing their research environment and funding mechanisms, and should seek all necessary approvals before starting their research or accessing the resources provided.

They should inform their employers, funders or supervisor when their research project is delayed, redefined or completed, or give notice if it is to be terminated earlier or suspended for whatever reason.

Contractual and Legal Obligations

Researchers at all levels must be familiar with the national, sectoral or institutional regulations governing training and/or working conditions. This includes Intellectual Property Rights regulations, and the requirements and conditions of any sponsor or funders, independently of the nature of their contract. Researchers should adhere to such regulations by delivering the required results (e.g. thesis, publications, patents, reports, new products development, etc) as set out in the terms and conditions of the contract or equivalent document.

Accountability

Researchers need to be aware that they are accountable towards their employers, funders or other related public or private bodies as well as, on more ethical grounds, towards society as a whole. In particular, researchers funded by public funds are also accountable for the efficient use of taxpayers' money. Consequently, they should adhere to the principles of sound, transparent and efficient financial management and cooperate with any authorised audits of their research, whether undertaken by their employers/funders or by ethics committees.

Methods of collection and analysis, the outputs and, where applicable, details of the data should be open to internal and external scrutiny, whenever necessary and as requested by the appropriate authorities.

Good practice in Research

Researchers should at all times adopt safe working practices, in line with national legislation, including taking the necessary precautions for health and safety and for recovery from information technology disasters, e.g. by preparing proper back-up strategies. They should also be familiar with the current national legal requirements regarding data protection and confidentiality protection requirements, and undertake the necessary steps to fulfil them at all times.

Dissemination, Exploitation of Results

All researchers should ensure, in compliance with their contractual arrangements, that the results of their research are disseminated and exploited, e.g. communicated, transferred into other research settings or, if appropriate, commercialised. Senior researchers, in particular, are expected to take a lead in ensuring that research is fruitful and that results are either exploited commercially or made accessible to the public (or both) whenever the opportunity arises.

Public Engagement

Researchers should ensure that their research activities are made known to society at large in such a way that they can be understood by non-specialists, thereby improving the public's understanding of science. Direct engagement with the public will help researchers to better understand public interest in priorities for science and technology and also the public's concerns.

Relationship with Supervisors

Researchers in their training phase should establish a structured and regular relationship with their supervisor or supervisors and faculty/departmental representative or representatives, so as to take full advantage of their relationship with them.

This includes keeping records of all work progress and research findings, obtaining feedback by means of reports and seminars, applying such feedback and working in accordance with agreed schedules, milestones, deliverables and/or research outputs.

Supervision and Managerial Duties

Senior researchers should devote particular attention to their multi-faceted role as supervisors, mentors, career advisors, leaders, project coordinators, managers or science communicators. They should perform these tasks to the highest professional standards. With regard to their role as supervisors or mentors of researchers, senior researchers should build up a constructive and positive relationship with the early-stage researchers, in order to set the conditions for efficient transfer of knowledge and for the further successful development of the researchers' careers.

Continuing Professional Development

Researchers at all career stages should seek to continually improve themselves by regularly updating and expanding their skills and competencies. This may be achieved by a variety of means including, but not restricted to, formal training, workshops, conferences and e-learning.

VUB staff regulations

Members of Academic Staff shall refrain from any behaviour which undermines the dignity of others or impedes the fulfilment of the mission of the university as defined in the Organic Statutes. The position of member of Academic Staff is in particular incompatible with activities which impair intellectual integrity or cause scientific or academic deontology to be disregarded.

Research policy

Scientific integrity and focus on the existence and development of an ethically sound research culture are key issues in the 2013-2017 Strategic Policy Plan for Research.

In providing researchers with training and career guidance, there is particular emphasis on teaching them about the principles of a good publication culture and the importance of scientific integrity.

Publication ethics merit special attention, given that it has been established that any malpractice found often concerns copyright and manipulation of data.

One priority is raising awareness through the training of young researchers, for whom the Doctoral Programme contains a class on the various aspects of research ethics.

The VUB Validation Regulations stipulate the requirements for the ownership of research results.

Lastly, reference is made to the policies of the Ethics Committee for the Humanities, the Ethical Committee for the Use of Laboratory Animals and the Medical Ethics Committee of Brussels University Hospital.

II. Breaches of scientific integrity

Definition

§1. A breach of scientific integrity is described as any act whereby a person unlawfully appropriates the intellectual property or work of others, intentionally impeding the progress of research or possibly corrupting scientific reporting or impairing the integrity of the scientific activities. Three main types of breach of scientific integrity can be distinguished:

- 1° Fabrication of observations or results
Fabricating observations not based on the proposed methods or reporting completely fabricated results not based on actual observations;
- 2° Misrepresentation or falsification of results, whether deliberate or through carelessness:
 - a. sharing or proposing incorrect information;
 - b. omitting a fact, leading to the provision of incorrect information;
 - c. falsifying observations or results, whether that involves amending observations or proposals in such a way as to influence the final result or amend or select research results in a scientifically irresponsible way. Misrepresentation therefore also includes omitting results essential to the findings of the research;
 - d. misusing statistical methods to achieve other results than those justified by the data;
 - e. wrongly interpreting results or conclusions;
 - f. misrepresenting the results of others.
- 3° Plagiarism, misappropriation, whether deliberate or through carelessness:
 - a. adopting an original research idea or intention or an original observation from another researcher without their approval or cooperation;
 - b. presenting evidence-based claims or ideas of others - in the form of a research plan, manuscript, article or other text by another researcher - and claiming whole or part ownership, without the acknowledgement customary in the medium

concerned.

This also includes unjustified claims of authorship or co-authorship.

c. use of information in a breach of a duty of confidentiality, for example in the context of the assessment of a manuscript or an application for funding. Breaching a guarantee of anonymity is also included here.

§2. The following may also be judged to be breaches of scientific integrity:

- 1° Carelessness when conducting research or having it conducted;
- 2° More subtle dubious research practices, such as including authors who have contributed little or nothing, publishing parts of a study more than once (note: data from a doctoral manuscript may still be offered for publication), failing to report a conflict of interests, omitting unwanted outcomes and other practices which deviate from the generally accepted standards of scientific practice;
- 3° Removing the research-related property of others deliberately and without permission, confiscating or damaging it including, but limited to equipment, reagents, biological materials, notebooks, data, hardware, software or other substances or apparatus used or produced in the course of the research.

III. GOOD SCIENTIFIC PRACTICE

The responsibility for good scientific practice and prevention of misconduct lies:

- primarily with the researchers themselves;
- with the research managers;
- with the research institutions;
- with the research organisations and professional associations;
- with the scientific community.

The researcher must be made aware of the guidelines of the institute concerning good scientific practice and should be taught how reprehensible breaches of scientific integrity are and how to act accordingly.

In addition to the researchers, the scientific associations and research institutes also have a great responsibility for maintaining and improving good scientific practice. Consistent promotion of good scientific practice is hugely important for all scientific organisations. Scientific integrity is best maintained by the development and dissemination of clear behavioural expectations in academia, for example through training and by setting an example in all stages of scientific development.

One essential element is setting up a system for evaluation of quality. Peer review systems - whether for scientific publishing, assessment of funding applications or in the context of broader research evaluations - also play a role in preventing breaches of scientific integrity and fraud as an important instrument for quality assurance

in general. Outside their own systematic evaluations, an institute may encourage the researchers to subject their own research as often as possible to evaluation by international experts. In practice, this may mean publishing the research in international journals with a referee system or making maximum use of the possibilities of presenting research at international conferences (provided that due account is taken of the prior protection of exploitable research as stipulated in the VUB Validation Regulations).

Teaching good scientific practice and research ethics should preferably be included in the academic programmes.

The FRE (Framework for Research Ethics) consists of six basic principles of ethical research:

Research must be designed, assessed and conducted with respect for integrity, quality and transparency.

Researchers and research participants should, as a general rule, be informed about the purpose and methods of the research and the manner in which it will be used. They need to know what their role is in the research and which potential risks are involved in that research.

The confidentiality of information provided by the research participants and the anonymity of respondents must be respected.

Participation in the research by respondents must be voluntary, free of any form of coercion.

Harm to respondents and to researchers must be avoided at all times.

The independence of the research must be clear. Any conflict of interest or instances of partiality must be made explicit.

The various aspects of 'the good researcher' are described below: as researcher, author, peer reviewer and supervisor.

IV. THE GOOD RESEARCHER

Publication, a moral obligation

Publication of results is an essential part of research activities. A scientific publication should normally be the mechanism by which new findings are first made known to the public. Before proceeding with publication, there must first be an examination of whether exploitable research can be protected (see VUB Regulations). The regulations concerning intellectual property rights must also be respected for research covered by contracts with sponsors or funders.

Scientific publication, as the end point of a specific research, is also the beginning of a process of evaluation, revision where necessary and further development for the scientific community. The researchers have a moral obligation to let this process play out in full.

International screening and visibility

Researchers are encouraged to publish their work as much as possible in international media with peer review systems because:

- subjecting the research to an international referee system can only improve its quality;
- it is in the interests of every researcher and the research in general that research results are given the greatest publicity possible and international journals are the ideal instrument for this;
- publications in international journals are not only read by more colleagues than in other media but also sooner.

Researchers are encouraged to consult publication databases, such as Thomson Reuters 'Web of Science', to which all VUB researchers have access and:

- check whether their publication information is correctly listed;
- check whether journals not yet listed, in which they publish, meet the requirements for indexation and if relevant, suggest that the publisher submit an application to that end.

Literature on patents

Researchers are encouraged to consult the literature on patents, in addition to the more traditional publication media, in order to:

- get a complete picture of all research previously conducted;
- avoid identical research;
- check whether the research results obtained can be protected;
- check to what extent there is freedom to act with a view to the social or economic exploitation of the research results.

V. PROFILE OF A GOOD RESEARCHER

The good researcher:

- carries out their research conscientiously and accurately
- provides for adequate storage of data
- ensures timely publication of new and significant results, contributing in that way to the advance of science
- ideally publishes in the most prominent publication media, the content of which corresponds to the research concerned
- issues scientific publications, each of which makes a substantial contribution to the relevant field
- takes part in the peer review process, making an important contribution to science in that way
- pays the necessary attention to ethical aspects in connection with their research
- ensures that reports in popular media on the research conducted are also accurate and discuss its significance in an objective manner, albeit in less scientific and more understandable language for the lay person

- does not allow themselves to be tempted to perform minor or grave forms of breach of scientific integrity, nor do so through carelessness, they therefore publish the results of scientific research not piecemeal, but in publications each of which gives a complete picture of a certain aspect of the general study
- does not publish these or similar data again in a different publication
- does not, as a rule, report on a specific research in the media for the general public before the work has been subjected to peer review and published in full, in order to avoid the dissemination of careless or premature conclusions. In any event, no findings shall be presented to the general public without the experimental, statistical or theoretical substantiation of it being robust enough to ensure publication in the scientific literature. In that case, the work involved should be submitted for scientific publication as soon as possible.
- does not respond to invitations to act as 'ghost author' and makes that clear in an appropriate fashion
- does not unlawfully appropriate the intellectual property or work of others
- does not violate obligations of confidentiality, guarantees of anonymity or other agreements with regard to the use of material
- does not impede the research of others
- weighs up and discusses the possible protection and registration of the research results by applying for the relevant intellectual property rights in advance of publication in the context of the potential social or economic exploitation of the research results.

VI. THE GOOD SCIENTIFIC AUTHOR

As far as **authorship** is concerned, good scientific practice can be described as follows:

- In terms of public accountability for the appropriate parts, all authors have participated enough in the work by making significant contributions with regard to concept and set-up, collecting, analysing and interpreting data and the compiling or critical revision of the publication.
- All authors are involved in the final approval of the version to be published, demonstrating in that way their willingness to support the general conclusions of the study and take their share of the responsibility for it.
- As such, obtaining funding, collecting data, general supervision of the research group or administrative assistance do not warrant authorship.
- All persons cited as author must meet the requirements for authorship.
- All persons who meet the requirements for authorship shall be cited as author.
- The order in which the names of the authors are cited shall be agreed among and justified by the authors.
- Non-authors who contributed to the work shall be mentioned in the acknowledgements.

VII. PROFILE OF A GOOD SCIENTIFIC AUTHOR

The good scientific author:

- reports accurately on the research conducted and discusses its significance in an objective fashion
- identifies the methods, equipment and procedures in enough detail to enable other researchers to reproduce the results (the most important method of verifying scientific results).
- describes the statistical methods in enough detail to enable a well-informed reader with access to the original data to check the accuracy of the results reported
- provides sufficient substantiation of the claims
- refers sufficiently to the original publications of results previously achieved and takes care to interpret them correctly
- shows appropriate acknowledgement for the work of others and represents it accurately
- only uses or quotes information shared on a personal level (in a conversation, correspondence or discussion with third parties) or confidential information (for example obtained in the context of peer review procedures) with the explicit permission of the researcher involved
- acknowledges financial and other conflicts of interest which could influence their work and makes them known
- cites in an appropriate fashion each institute with which they are affiliated and where the research was conducted or co-conducted
- cites every financial assistance for their work and other financial or personal interests linked to the work
- does not allow themselves to be tempted to perform minor or grave forms of breach of scientific integrity, nor do so through carelessness, they therefore do not engage in the omission of facts which would compromise the accuracy of the work as a whole
- does not fabricate observations which do not result from the methods proposed and does not report any imagined results which are not based on actual observations
- does not change data or observations in a way which would influence the final result
- does not manipulate the experimental set-up in a scientifically irresponsible way
- does not change or select the research results in a scientifically irresponsible way
- does not misuse statistical methods to achieve other results than those justified by the data
- restricts to a minimum citations from work to which there is no reference in the research being reported (unless it concerns a review article).

VIII. PROFILE OF A GOOD PEER REVIEWER

The good peer reviewer:

- only agrees to act as a peer reviewer, whether for a scientific treatise (for example, an article submitted for publication, an application for research subsidy, a clinical research protocol) or a research programme (for example, for a site visit), if they have expertise in the field concerned
- delivers their assessment punctually

Should circumstances make this impossible, the manuscript shall be returned immediately to those responsible for the review process or there shall be notification of the anticipated delay and a revised deadline proposed.

- decides not to take part in the review process and returns the material unread if they deem it to constitute a conflict of interest
- in any case reports to those responsible for the review process any realistic or suspected conflict of interest whatsoever which could arise from a direct competitive, collaborative or other close connection to one or more of the authors of the material to be assessed which could influence the judgement of the reviewer no matter whether or not their judgement would actually be influenced where appropriate, those responsible for the review process shall interpret the assessment and decide whether it can be withheld
- forms an objective opinion, based solely on scientific evaluation of the material presented within the context of published information and uninfluenced by scientific information which is not publicly available
- states and substantiates the assessment adequately
- treats the material presented as confidential information, does not use it to their own advantage unless it was made known to the public in advance, does not allow anyone access to it unless this is necessary to the review process and where appropriate, notifies those responsible for the review process of this, does not copy or save it unless this was explicitly permitted by those responsible for the review process and the authors.

IX. PROFILE OF A GOOD SUPERVISOR

The good supervisor:

The good supervisor only agrees to act as supervisor of a doctorate thesis if they can offer the doctoral candidate the expertise, infrastructure and guidance necessary.

expertise, infrastructure and guidance - The supervisor:

- has built up a reputation in a field which is at least closely related to that in which the doctoral candidate will be conducting their research
- is responsible for the material and intellectual climate in which the doctoral candidate develops their research

They ensure that the basic amenities for the doctoral candidate are present, such as easy access to computer infrastructure with Internet connection and desk space.

- makes sure that the number of doctoral candidates is adapted to the supervisory options available (including supervision by post-doctorate researchers)
- guarantees the quality of the research plan of a doctoral candidate

- ensures that there are financial resources to support their doctoral candidates, by means of applying for internal and external research resources and through the 'Basic Funding' allocated. They inform the doctoral candidate about the number of credits to be acquired for the doctoral research.
- takes on a motivating, coordinating and evaluating role for the entire duration of the doctoral process:

coordination - The supervisor:

- makes enough time available to speak regularly with the doctoral candidate and follow the research closely
- helps with the development and, if necessary, the redirecting of the research
- helps the doctoral candidate to place the research in a broader context.

planning and time management - The supervisor:

- joins the doctoral candidate in setting up sound planning for the research activities
- ensures that the educational assignment and other tasks of the doctoral candidate are organised in such a way that there is no danger that the doctorate will not be completed within the time provided
- is responsible for the efficient progress of the doctoral process, preferably within the time provided.

motivation - The supervisor:

- introduces the doctoral candidate to the world of science by putting them in touch with researchers who can help them, by stimulating the candidate to take part in congresses and the Doctoral Programme, by advising them on the development of their scientific project, by encouraging them and making them enthusiastic.

evaluation - The supervisor:

- is regularly present when the doctoral candidate presents their work to other scientists and subsequently gives the doctoral candidate feedback
- regularly evaluates the progress of the work, together with the doctoral candidate and makes adjustments where necessary in order that the doctorate is completed on time
- has a duty towards the doctoral candidate to inform the candidate of their recommendation in the progress report.

publication - The supervisor:

- indicates publication possibilities to the doctoral candidate and helps them prepare publications
- takes an important share of the responsibility for the thesis of the doctoral candidate, and also for the articles and abstracts which result from the doctoral research
- gives the doctoral candidate every possible opportunity to exploit the work delivered, as first author in publications
- ensures that in addition to the required citing of the funding source, the VUB affiliation of the doctoral candidate will also be cited, in accordance with internal guidelines
- safeguards the possible protection of the research results prior to publication.

ANNEX III SCIENTIFIC INTEGRITY REGULATIONS