



Université de Strasbourg  
Université Haute-Alsace  
Bibliothèque nationale et universitaire  
Institut national de sciences appliquées de Strasbourg  
École nationale supérieure d'architecture de Strasbourg  
École nationale du génie de l'eau et de l'environnement de Strasbourg

Doctoral College - University of Strasbourg

## **DOCTORAL CHARTER**

### ***of the Universities of Strasbourg and Haute-Alsace***

*(validated by the Board of the Doctoral College on 13 december 2017)*

*For the sake of conciseness, wherever the forms "he/him" and "his" appear, they are to be understood in the generic sense that includes "she" and its related forms. In this document, the terms to describe people are used in the generic sense, including both men and women.*

The PhD programme combines high-level training with professional research experience. After defending the thesis, it is recognised with the degree of Doctor. The fundamental doctoral activity consists of an innovative research project supervised by one or more supervisors, in a research unit tied to a doctoral school. The programme concludes with the writing of a thesis to validate a scientific project. The title of Doctor guarantees a high level of competence, which can be used across the whole socio-economic fabric.

The University of Strasbourg and University of Haute-Alsace award the doctorate without honours; however it is accompanied by a report specifying the scientific quality of the thesis and presentation.

This Doctoral Charter sets out the principles laid down by the Doctoral College – University of Strasbourg (governed by the convention annexed to the site convention outlining the organisational and operational procedures of the Doctoral College – University of Strasbourg and its branch at the University of Haute-Alsace) for the preparation of a thesis to promote high scientific quality in the work undertaken, as well as high-quality cross-disciplinary training provided by the institutions.

The Charter is based on the decree of May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2016 on doctoral education, the European Charter for Researchers, the principles of the National Charter for Ethics in Research Activities, the doctoral policy of the site and doctoral school missions (whether tied to a single institution or co-accredited or associated between the University of Strasbourg and the University of Haute-Alsace).

The PhD programme is carried out in one of the doctoral schools of the Doctoral College - University of Strasbourg. The doctoral school is involved in selecting PhD students, organising their programme and helping to prepare them for their careers. The research project is based on the voluntary agreement made between the student and the supervisor in a research unit of the University of Strasbourg, University of Haute-Alsace or a partner institution. This agreement, formalized in the individual training agreement, covers the precise topics and working conditions needed to carry out the research, including of a financial nature. The thesis supervisor and PhD candidate therefore have respective rights and duties that demand a high level. All PhD students are recognised as full-time researchers and treated as such.

Universities are committed to ensuring that the principles laid down by the Charter are upheld during the thesis preparation. For doctorates under joint supervision or in partnership with a non-university organisation, the partner must acknowledge this Charter and agree to comply therewith.

The signatories are:

- **The PhD student.** He agrees, by enrolling in the PhD, to carry out the previously established research project and to undertake the other educational activities prescribed by his doctoral school.
- **The thesis supervisor.** As the first point of contact for the PhD student, the thesis supervisor must be part of a research unit that is tied to the doctoral school. He is responsible for establishing the research topic, as well as its implementation and monitoring. He has sole responsibility over the scientific framework. He ensures that the PhD student undertakes the educational activities prescribed by the doctoral school and that the student exhibits a sense of innovation.
- **The director of the research unit.** He is responsible for the successful integration of the PhD student into his unit, and for the quality of the working conditions required for the research to be carried out successfully.
- **The doctoral school director (or his representative in the UHA branch where necessary).** He ensures the validation and monitoring of doctoral research projects. He also ensures the quality of the PhD training that the student receives and oversees compliance with the rules governing student conduct.

The signatories of this Charter agree to read the procedures in force at the Doctoral College and apply them. They shall agree to familiarise themselves with the websites of their respective universities, the website of their respective doctoral school and that of the College.

### **1 - The thesis, personal and professional project stage**

The thesis preparation must be in keeping with the framework of a personal and professional plan, which is clearly defined in terms of goals and requirements. It shall have clear objectives and means to achieve them.

The doctoral school director shall ensure that as many PhD students as possible receive funding. The goal of a thesis supervisor and director of unit is to obtain a contractual remuneration that covers the PhD preparation time for as many students as possible who do not have any other occupation.

The candidate must receive information on all opportunities in his field, as well as national statistics on the future of doctors and information on the professional prospects for doctors trained at its doctoral school. The PhD researcher shall discuss his career plans with his supervisor. To ensure that the career prospect information is provided to prospective PhD students of the laboratory, all outgoing doctors must notify their supervisor, as well as the doctoral school director, of their professional status for a period of six years after graduating. The doctor agrees to respond to questionnaires sent by the university and notify it of any changes to his postal and email address during this period. In addition, all former students are encouraged to update their entry in the directory of former PhD students of the University throughout their career. Institutions shall ensure that the email addresses of all former PhD students remain active for a period of three years after their last year of enrolment.

Once enrolled in a PhD programme, the student must comply with the regulations in force particularly

regarding his training. He is offered training to expand upon his scientific and transferable skills. The training is organised in a complementary way under the responsibility of the doctoral school and college; it raises the student's awareness of his further career opportunities and allows him to acquire diversified skills. This strategy may include participation in Doctoriales® or other training programmes approved by the doctoral school, including upon the student's initiative (conferences, workshops, etc.).

For all training, a certificate is issued by the doctoral school director, as well as a diploma supplement by the university. This document must highlight the skills acquired by the doctor, such as scientific expertise, advanced technology, cross-cutting skills (teamwork, network building, supervision, etc.), as well as his personal abilities (autonomy, creativity, written and oral expression, etc.).

It is the responsibility of the doctoral student to create and update a portfolio containing the individualized list of all his activities during the PhD in order to highlight the skills he has developed during the preparation of his doctorate.

It is the responsibility of the PhD student to engage in his career prospects.

## **2 - Thesis topics and feasibility**

All doctoral schools shall display their recruitment procedure and selection criteria for PhD students.

The topic of research, research unit and university awarding the degree are specified when registering for the thesis.

The thesis topic will give rise to a project that is both original and educational, and that can be feasibly carried out within the established time period. The choice of thesis topic is agreed by the researcher and thesis supervisor, and is formalised at the time of registration and in the individual training agreement. The thesis supervisor, who is selected for their established knowledge in their respective field of research, must help the student to pursue an innovative project in its relevant scientific context and ensure that it is topical. The supervisor must define the means necessary to conduct the work and allow access to these means.

In this respect, the student shall be fully integrated into his research unit with access to the same facilities as other researchers in order to carry out his research: equipment, tools (especially IT), documents, as well as opportunities to attend seminars and conferences and to present their work at scientific meetings.

PhD students shall have the right of expression and representation at the general meeting and boards of the research unit, as well as the right of association and the right to organise. They are represented by elected members within the various boards of the research unit, doctoral school and Doctoral College and within the research committee of the academic board of their university.

The team members accepting the researcher must require him to uphold a number of rules on their community life. The PhD student shall not compensate for the shortcomings of the technical staff of the laboratory, nor be assigned tasks that fall outside of the field of his thesis or of the technical tasks of the unit as a whole. If the research is carried out in partnership with a company or administration, the student must not be given an additional workload that falls outside of his thesis project. The PhD student shall agree to a time and pace of work. He has the duty to regularly inform his supervisor of the progress of his thesis and the difficulties he encounters. He must demonstrate initiative and an innovative spirit in conducting his research. He shall sign the National Charter for Ethics in Research Activities, as well as the internal regulations of his research unit.

## **3 - Supervising and monitoring the thesis**

The PhD student must be informed by the doctoral school of the number of outstanding theses being supervised by the relevant supervisor. The maximum number of PhD students that a thesis supervisor can take on is established by the research committee of each university as proposed by the boards of each doctoral school. This number may vary by discipline. The doctoral schools shall ensure compliance with these limits.

The PhD student has the right to personal monitoring by his supervisor, who agrees to devote him a significant portion of his time. The principle of regular and frequent meetings shall be settled in the initial agreement and formalized in the individual training agreement. Co-supervision with a researcher – whether or not they are authorised to supervise research projects – does not release the thesis supervisor from his duty to regularly and effectively monitor the progress of the research. In order to provide high-quality personal mentoring, the college organises specific training for individuals who have qualified to supervise research.

The PhD student agrees to submit to his director as many midway notes as required for his subject and to present his work in the seminars of the research unit. The supervisor shall undertake to regularly monitor the progress of the work and discuss any new directions to be taken in light of the results achieved thus far. He has a duty to inform the student of any positive comments or objections/criticisms that his work may receive.

Before his third registration and then annually for any derogatory registration, the student shall carry out a progress review of his work and present it to a monitoring committee in accordance with the terms set out by each doctoral school. The main objective of this review is to identify and address any issues that might hinder the proper completion of the PhD within the set time and career goals of the doctoral student.

The rules for organising the thesis defence, including designating the attending experts and examining committee, are laid down by the regulations and procedures approved by the boards of both universities.

#### **4 - Duration of the thesis**

The duration of the thesis preparation is three years full-time. Upon a justified request by the candidate, time exemptions may be granted by the director of the institution based on the proposal of the doctoral school director (or his representative at the UHA branch), after consulting with the supervisor. This agreement does not automatically entail an extension of the candidate's funding.

Extensions must be rare and reserved for specific situations, such as paid work (excluding doctoral funding), specific issues in the research relating to certain disciplines, the assumption of a particular risk, maternity or parental leave, or extended sick leave. Extensions may take account of the PhD working conditions but shall in no way substantially change the nature and intensity of the research as initially decided by mutual agreement.

In the event of a dispute over the refusal of an extension, the student may submit a written letter of complaint to the director of the institution who will make the final decision.

In any case, the PhD preparation requires the PhD student to renew his enrolment to the university each year. A non-breakable gap of up to one year may occur once in accordance with a procedure validated by the boards of both institutions. Ceasing the thesis on a voluntary basis (withdrawal) must be reported to the doctoral school by the student and his supervisor.

At the end of the second year, the foreseeable schedule for the defence shall be discussed in light of the progress of the research and recommendations of the monitoring committee.

To comply with the schedule, in the interest of the student, both the student and supervisor must meet their commitments in relation to the necessary work time. Repeated breaches of these commitments between the student and the supervisor may lead to a mediation process.

### 5 - Publication and promotion of the thesis

The quality and impact of the thesis can be measured through the publications or patents and industrial reports deriving from the work, be it in relation to the thesis itself or articles produced during or after the preparation the manuscript. The PhD student must appear among the authors or co-authors in all articles or books referring to his research, including after his departure from the research unit.

The student must be familiar with the national legal requirements regarding data protection and confidentiality, and must uphold them at all times. Under the National Charter for Ethics in Research Activities signed by the student, it is recalled that: *"The results of a research project should be brought to the attention of the scientific community and the public, recognising the intellectual and experimental contributions behind them, as well as intellectual property rights"*.

The university uses an archiving and electronic distribution system for theses. Authorisation to disseminate the thesis is agreed by the author and covers its distribution online. A thesis dissemination agreement is provided to each PhD student at the time of submitting his thesis for the defence.

The PhD student shall be made aware that including quotes in his work while failing to cite their sources shall constitute an act of plagiarism. Plagiarism is a copyright and intellectual property infringement.

### 6 - Mediation process

Any persistent dispute between the student and the supervisor that cannot be settled amicably shall be brought by either party to the knowledge of the director of the research unit, who shall work to remedy it. Should the dispute continue, the student, his supervisors or the director of the research unit shall refer it to the doctoral school director or his representative at the UHA branch.

Should the initiatives taken lead to no solution, the latter can then appeal to the Vice President of "Research and doctoral education" of the university concerned.

Where no solution is found, the Vice President of "Research and doctoral training" may appeal to the University Ombudsman

Lastly, a final appeal may be made to the University President.

Through all these steps, the student may request to be assisted by a chosen PhD student.

Produced in \_\_\_\_\_ on:

\* Precede the signature with the words "Read and approved"

Le doctorant :	Le directeur de thèse :	Le co-directeur de thèse ou encadrant entreprise / administration :
Nom : *	Nom : *	Nom : *
Le directeur de l'unité de recherche :		Le directeur de l'école doctorale ou par délégation le Responsable de formations doctorales :
Nom		Nom :