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A. Ordinances

- (1) The Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) is awarded by the University in recognition of the successful completion of a period of supervised research and training, the results of which show convincing evidence of the capacity of the candidate to pursue research and scholarship and make an original contribution and substantial addition to knowledge. The results of this research shall then be embodied in a dissertation or other appropriate form and must contain material of a standard appropriate for peer-reviewed publication.
- (2) The mode of admission to the degree and other conditions relating to the degree shall be prescribed in the Regulation.
- (3) Applicants for admission to the degree must hold a degree or some equivalent qualification prescribed by the Regulation and must satisfy the University that they are fit by reason of their ability and training to undertake the degree.

B. Regulation

Chapter 1: General Requirements

1.1 Aims of the Regulation

Article 1: This regulation defines the rules of functioning of the PhD programs and the relationship created between students and staff in the activities of the programs. It defines the object, the internal structure and its functioning, the rights and obligations of executive bodies, academic and administrative staff, students, relationship between the criteria of students` admissions , teaching, research , practice, assessment, and graduation; and provides sanctions in case of violation of the regulation.

1.2 Legal Basis

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Article 2: The Regulation “On Doctorate (PhD) study programs at Epoka University is based on the Law No. 80/2015, "On Higher Education and Scientific Research in Higher Education Institutions in the Republic of Albania ", on the Council of Ministers Decision No. 864, dated 05.12.2007 “On the opening of Doctorate (PhD) study programs at public institutions of higher education and the stipulation of conditions to be fulfilled by the student regarding the obtaining of the diploma related to the “Doctor of Philosophy” (PhD) scientific degree”, as amended, on the Council of Ministers Decision No. 467, dated 18.07.2007 “On the stipulation of criteria and procedures concerning the scientific and pedagogical qualification of the academic staff”, on the license granted by the Council of Ministers Decision No. 281, dated 12.03.2008, “On the licensing of the Private Institution of Higher Education "EPOKA" Institution of Higher Education”, on the Decision of the Council of Ministers No. 553, dated 22.08.2012 “On the naming as “Epoka” Private University of “Epoka” Institution of Higher Education, on the Ministry of Education and Science Directive No. 5, dated 22.01.2008 "On the opening, termination and reorganization of PhD study programs”, as amended, on other related legal acts as well as on the Statute and on the Basic Regulation of this institution.

1.3 Definitions

Article 3: The following terms are defined as:

- a) the Law: is the Law No. 80/2015, "On Higher Education and Scientific Research in Higher Education Institutions in the Republic of Albania ";
- b) the institution/university: refers to Epoka University otherwise stated;
- c) the faculty: refers to the faculty of the Epoka University to which the discipline of the dissertation’s subject belongs;
- d) the department: refers to the department of Epoka University which is a basic unit of the Faculty;

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- e) the dissertation: is a long essay on a particular subject one written as a requirement for the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree. It should be in the form of a book or article;
- f) propositions: statements which the doctoral candidate is prepared to defend with scientific arguments;
- g) preliminary and supplementary material of the dissertation: refers to the manual of Epoka University’s dissertation;
- h) the doctoral defence: the meeting at which there is a public defence of the dissertation and the propositions, and at which the doctorate is awarded;
- i) Rector: Rector of the Epoka University;
- j) Council of Professors: the Council of Professors of the Faculties of Epoka University;
- k) Scientific Committee: Scientific Committee of the PhD study program;
- l) Credits: Course Credits according to the American System;
- m) ECTS: European System of Collection and Transfer of Credit;
- n) TOEFL: Test of English as a Foreign Language;
- o) IELTS: The International English Language Testing System;
- p) CGPA: Cumulative Grade Point Average.

1.4 The Awards of the Doctorate

Article 4:

- (1) In order to qualify for a research degree, students must:
 - a) Meet the specified entry requirements;
 - b) Pursue the programme of study prescribed for the specified period of enrolment;
 - c) Comply with supervision, residence and attendance requirements;

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- d) Fulfil all other progression and programme requirements specified, including successful; completion of the University’s online Academic Integrity Tutorial;
 - e) Pay such fees or other sums as may be prescribed;
 - f) Meet the specified assessment and examination requirements, including the final thesis, dissertation or research project and, where required, an oral examination.
- (2) Failure to meet the requirements set out in Article 4 (a) to (f) above may result in a student not being permitted to enter for assessments or examinations for the specified award.

1.5 The Council of Professors

Article 5:


- (1) The Council of Professors (CP) consists of all the full-time professors of the faculty. The minimum number of members of the CP should be seven, from whom five should have the “Prof. Dr.” title.
- (2) At most two out of the seven members of the CP can have the “Associate Professor Dr.” title and they should be employed full-time in the said faculty or in other faculties of Epoka University (being close to the promotion with the “Professor Dr.” title). If the number of professors at the faculty is less than seven, the other two professors can be invited by other faculties of Epoka University or if it is necessary, universities of Albania or other universities of other countries.
- (3) The proposal for candidates, who are invited to become members of the CP, is made by the Faculty Board and approved by the Senate of Epoka University.

1.6 The Scientific Committee

Article 6: The Council of Professors selects a Scientific Committee for each PhD study program, which is composed by not less than three members of academic staff of Epoka University who hold a PhD degree.

1.7 Confidentiality

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Article 7: Those present at the meetings of the PhD Jury, as referred to in chapters 4, 7 and 8, are obliged to treat the discussions held during such meetings as confidential.

Chapter 2: Admission and Enrolment to the Degree

1.8 Eligibility to apply to the PhD programme

Article 8:


(1) In accordance with the Law, the persons who are eligible for admission to the PhD programme should:

- a) have obtained a Master of Science/Master of Arts, integrated second cycle studies or any other equivalent diploma in the field of the Doctorate (PhD) program or in a close field previously defined in the requirements established by the respective of the Scientific Committee;
- b) have a CGPA of at least 2.70 out of 4.00 or 8 out of 10 from the Master of Science/Master of Arts, integrated second cycle studies or any other equivalent diploma in the field of the Doctorate (PhD) program or in a close field previously defined in the requirements established by the respective Scientific Committee or an equivalent CGPA;
- c) Applicants must demonstrate that they have reached the minimum acceptable level of proficiency in use of the English language, having obtained the equivalent score for C1 level from the internationally recognized English Language Exams as stipulated in the Directive of the Minister of Education and Sports No. 52, dated 03.12.2015 "On defining the foreign language levels and international tests, on the admission to second and third cycle study programs, in Higher Education Institutions".

1.9 Admission of Foreign Students

Article 9: Admission of the foreign students is made upon the above rules, but in justified cases by the proposal of the Scientific Committee and the decision of the Council of Professors, other documents may be required to be submitted by the candidate.

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1.10 Enrolment Requirements

Article 10:

(1) A student shall register with the University for the degree of PhD at the beginning of their degree and shall re-register at the same time annually unless a change to this conventional pattern results from an approved period of interruption. Appropriate fees are payable annually for the duration of the degree and for any period of submission pending registration.

(2) For enrolment at the PhD programs, the applicant should submit the following documents to the Admission Office:

a) An original or a notarized copy of the Master of Science/Master of Arts, integrated second cycle studies or any other equivalent diploma translated into English and Albanian languages;

b) Official transcript of the first cycle (Bachelor) study program or any other equivalent study program in which are defined all the courses and grades taken by the candidate translated into English and Albanian languages;

c) Official transcript of the Master of Science/Master of Arts, integrated second cycle studies or any other equivalent study program in which are defined all the courses and grades taken by the candidate translated into English and Albanian languages;

d) If the candidate has completed the Master of Science/Master of Arts, integrated second cycle studies or any other equivalent study program in a foreign institution, he must also submit the notarized copy of the document on the equivalence of the said studies by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Albania translated into English language;

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- e) Document certifying the English proficiency level of C1 as stipulated in the Directive of the Minister of Education and Sports No. 52, dated 03.12.2015 "On defining the foreign language levels and international tests, on the admission to second and third cycle study programs, in Higher Education Institutions";
 - f) Two academic reference letters for the applicant;
 - g) Curriculum Vitae;
 - h) A PhD proposal in area on which the applicant would wish to prepare his/her dissertation.
- (3) The Admission Office checks the submitted documents according to formal criteria; if the all required forms and documents have been submitted, then the Admission Office submits the applicant’s file to the respective Scientific Committee for evaluation.
- (4) The Scientific Committee proposes the admission to PhD programs based on applicants':
- a) academic success in the graduate and undergraduate program;
 - b) level of English language proficiency;
 - c) interview conducted with the respective Scientific Committee;
 - d) other documents which may be requested by the Scientific Committee.
- (5) The Scientific Committee submits its proposal about the prospective students for approval to the Council of Professors.

1.11 Registration at the PhD Study Program

Article 11:

- (1) If the application of the candidate has been approved for registering at the PhD study program, s/he must comply with all the registration procedures envisaged in this regulation.

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(2) The candidate should submit at the Registrar’s Office the following documents, within the time line defined by the University:

- a) An original or a notarized copy of Master of Science/Master of Arts, integrated second cycle studies or any other equivalent diploma translated into English and Albanian languages;
- b) Official transcript of the Master of Science/Master of Arts, integrated second cycle studies or any other equivalent study program in which are defined all the courses and grades taken by the candidate translated into English and Albanian languages;
- c) If the candidate has completed the Master of Science/Master of Arts, integrated second cycle studies or any other equivalent study program in a foreign institution, he must also submit the notarized copy of the document on the equivalence of the said studies by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Albania translated into the English language;
- d) Document certifying the English proficiency level of C1 as stipulated in the Directive of the Minister of Education and Sports No. 52, dated 03.12.2015 "On defining the foreign language levels and international tests, on the admission to second and third cycle study programs, in Higher Education Institutions". ;
- e) Identity card copy for Albanian citizens; or notarized copy of passport for foreign citizens translated into Albanian language;
- f) Document certifying the payment of fee as stipulated in the education agreement;
- g) 6 photographs size 5x6 cm (photographs must be in suitable attire);
- h) Candidates who are employed should submit a document certifying their full-time employment.

(3) The registration of foreign students will be considered as conditional until the student submits the notarized copy of the residence permit to the Registrar’s Office.

1.12 Student Status

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Article 12:

- (1) The candidate signs the education agreement with the University. After the signing of the agreement the candidate gains the student status.
- (2) The student status ends by graduation of the student or by the termination of his enrolment earlier than the graduation from the study program.

Chapter 3: The Organization of the PhD program.

1.13 Duration of the Degree

Article 13:


- (1) Candidates for the degree of PhD shall be registered for a continuous period of not less than 3 years and no more than 5 years of full-time study at the respective Department.
- (2) Candidates for the degree of PhD who are employed as academic staff members in another higher education institution or as research staff member at a base or applied research institution shall be registered for a continuous period of not more than 5 years of studies.

1.14 The Stages of the PhD Study Program

Article 14:

- (1) The PhD program consists of two stages:
 - a) In the first year, there is a focus on training in research methods and stage of theoretical gaining.
 - I. During the first year of the PhD program, the student is engaged in the first stage’s courses for theoretical experiences and writing a literature review on the chosen topic.
 - II. The normal duration of this stage takes, in a full-time format, one year or two academic semesters. The students complete not less than 60 ECTS credits, 1,500 hours study time. The duration of classes is 60 minutes.

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III. Educational activities are organized in accordance with the objectives of the program through theoretical classes: various academic activities including trainings, practice or internships, seminars, course, laboratories, workshops, and research projects.

IV. During this stage the students may be part of exchange programs with foreign research institutions in accordance with the bilateral agreements signed by Epoka University with such institutions.

b) Prior of entering into the PhD dissertation writing stage, students shall be subject to a Qualifying Examination in front of the Scientific Committee of the respective PhD study program through written exams, oral exams and/or presentations as determined by the respective Scientific Committee. Students who cannot successfully pass the Qualifying Examination shall be entitled to enter once more the Qualifying Examination at a period determined by the respective Scientific Committee. Failure to successfully pass the Qualifying Examination for the second time shall cause the termination of enrolment of the concerned student.

c) After the successful completion of the first stage, the student will start the second stage, which includes the writing of the dissertation.

d) These stages do not apply to those students who have gained a full or partial exemption from the first stage.


1.15 Exemption from the stage of theoretical deepening (first year of the PhD Program)

Article 15:

(1) The following persons are eligible for a full or partial exemption from the first stage of the PhD program who:

a) in accordance with the Law, have obtained a Master of Second Level (MND) degree or any other equivalent diploma;

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b) have completed 360 ECTS of theoretical courses prior to enrolment in the PhD program, out of which 60 ECTS of theoretical courses should have been completed in a third cycle study program. At least 15 of these 60 ECTS should have been taken from foreign academic staff in third cycle study programs.

(2) A request for exemption from the academic requirements is submitted to the Scientific Committee and after the evaluation of the presented:

a) certified copies of the relevant diplomas and/or degree certificates,

b) an overview of courses followed by the candidate,

(3) The Scientific Committee proposes whether the obtained degrees and taken courses are accepted or not and submits to the decision for final approval of the Council of Professors.

(4) The applicant will be informed of the decision regarding exemption being awarded or the refused thereof in writing.

1.16 Interruption of the Degree


Article 16:

(1) A student may be granted a temporary interruption of the PhD degree for approved reasons at the discretion of the University where the continuation of research or thesis preparation is not possible. An application should be made before the beginning of the proposed period of interruption with the support of the supervisory team. Retrospective applications will not normally be considered.

(2) Where appropriate, students and the supervisory team should seek the advice of relevant sponsors before applying for an interruption and should in all cases seek permission as soon as the requirement for the interruption becomes apparent.

1.17 Changes to the Nature of the Degree

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Article 17: Permission for significant changes to the nature of the research to be undertaken must be sought by the supervisory team with the agreement of the student. Where appropriate, students and supervisors should seek the advice of the relevant sponsoring body before making such changes.

1.18 Appointment of the Supervisor

Article 18:

(1) Based on the mutual consent of the student and the prospective supervisor, the Scientific Committee proposes the supervisor and submits this proposal for final approval to the Council of Professors.


(2) After the decision of the Council of Professors, the Head of Department notifies in writing the professor and the PhD candidate on the appointment.

(3) Part-time professors are not usually appointed as supervisors unless the Council of Professors decides otherwise.

(4) The following persons are excluded from being appointed as supervisors:

- a) the spouse of the PhD candidate;
- b) a blood relative or first or second-degree relative of the candidate;
- c) any person whose relationship to the candidate represents a conflict of interest and as such precludes them from assessing the said candidate.

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(5) Doctorate (PhD) candidates are supervised by the academic staff of the particular discipline of the Doctorate (PhD) study program, holding the “Professor Dr.” or “Associate Professor Dr.” title. The scientific supervisor holding the “Professor Dr.” academic title and employed full-time, can supervise simultaneously no more than five PhD candidates. The scientific supervisor holding the “Associate Professor Dr.” academic title, who is employed full-time, can supervise simultaneously no more than two PhD candidates. The scientific supervisor holding the “Professor Dr.” academic title and employed part-time, can supervise only one PhD candidate.

1.19 Appointment of the co-supervisor

Article 19:

(1) Subject to the final approval by the Council of Professors, the Scientific Committee may propose a co-supervisor if so requested by the supervisor and following consultation with the PhD candidate. The supervisor ascertains that the proposed co-supervisor is willing to act as such.


(2) In the case of one supervisor, the number of co-supervisors is limited to one.

(3) Persons may be appointed as co-supervisors who are Albanian or foreign experts holding the “Professor Dr.” or “Associate Professor Dr.” title. In cases when a part of the PhD studies is carried out in a higher education institution at an EU member state, United States of America and Canada, the co-supervisor at the host institution can hold the PhD degree. Such experts should be actively involved with the subject or part of the subject as described in the dissertation.

1.20 Tasks of the Supervisor

Article 20:

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(1) The supervisor guides the PhD candidate to the best of his ability in completing the dissertation. The supervisor draws up a supervision plan in discussion with the PhD candidate within six weeks of his appointment and sends a copy to the Council of Professors. This plan provides for regular consultation between supervisor and candidate as well as a written report thereof.

(2) The supervisor ensures that:

a) the PhD research is conducted according to the rules of conduct for academic practice within the University and according to the rules of conduct and/or the professional code which applies to professional conduct for the relevant academic field;

b) should the PhD research necessitate research on or with human subjects, the PhD research is conducted with the consent of the parties involved or with the consent of a representative appointed by those parties;


c) in so far as the PhD research or part of the research is funded by third parties, as few restrictions as possible should be imposed on the research, and, if limitations are imposed on freedom of publication of data and results of the research, these limitations should not contravene academic freedom.

(3) The PhD candidate submits the manuscript of the dissertation to the supervisor, either as a whole or in sections. The supervisor reads the submitted manuscript or the sections thereof and checks that the manuscript or the parts thereof meet the requirements for a dissertation leading to a PhD degree.

(4) The supervisor may make suggestions for additions and/or alterations after conferring with the PhD candidate and any other persons involved with the dissertation.

(5) The PhD candidate makes the agreed alterations to the manuscript and subsequently submits the manuscript as a whole to the supervisor for approval.

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1.21 Resignation of the Appointed Supervisor

Article 21: If the supervisor resigns, the appointment of the said supervisor lapses and the Scientific Committee by the approval of the Council of Professors proposes another supervisor.

1.22 Monitoring Student Progress and Termination

Article 22:


(1) The Scientific Committee shall in respect of candidates admitted for degrees by research obtain a per semester’s report by the respective supervisor as to whether their progress has been satisfactory.

(2) If the Scientific Committee finds consecutively two times that the reports on the candidate’s progress are unsatisfactory, it shall have the power to recommend to the CP that their candidature for the degree be terminated.

(3) It is the duty of every candidate whose performance has been or is likely to be impaired by any circumstances to inform the Head of the Scientific Committee and the Head(s) of the relevant Department(s) accordingly in writing at the earliest opportunity, but in any case not later than the date on which the candidate submits the dissertation for examination.

1.23 Revoking of the PhD degree

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Article 23: The PhD degree is revocable at any time and under any circumstances where a case of plagiarism or data falsification is identified in the work carried out by the PhD candidate. In such circumstances, the Dean requests the Council of Professors to meet immediately and evaluate the identified case. The decision of the Council of Professors is evaluated by the Ethics Board of the University, which may propose to the Rector the revoking of the PhD degree attained by the candidate. After evaluating the proposal, the Rector decides on the matter and sends the decision to the Chairman of the Commission on the Evaluation of Academic Titles to erase the registration of the said PhD degree from the respective register of this Commission. The Commission on the Evaluation of Academic Titles also has the right to revoke the PhD degree in cases when it has credible information concerning this subject.

(1) The PhD degree can be revoked even in cases when it has been already conferred to the said person.

1.24 Approval of the Manuscript as Dissertation

Article 24:

(1) The supervisor is responsible for the manuscript being accepted as a dissertation. S/he ensures that the dissertation meets the standards that can in general be applied to a dissertation.

(2) Before approving the manuscript as a dissertation, the supervisor assesses the text submitted with particular regard to the requirements stipulated in the concerned legal acts and regulations.


(3) If in the opinion of the supervisor, the manuscript meets the required standards and qualifies as proof of competence of independent research, the supervisor will then give his approval.

Chapter 4: The Dissertation

1.25 Content and Length of the dissertation

Article 25:

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(1) Candidates shall submit electronic and paper copies of a dissertation embodying the results of the research undertaken during the degree. The dissertation may embody reprints of published material, must be free from restrictions on publication, and must be presented and bound in a satisfactory manner.

(2) The University shall have the right to retain both copies. Matter which has been included in a dissertation or report submitted in support of a successful application for a degree or qualification of any university or professional or learned body must not be embodied in the dissertation submitted for the degree, except that such matter:

- a) If unpublished, may be reported in sufficient detail to enable the work done during and for the purpose of the degree to be fairly evaluated; or
- b) If published, may be mentioned for purposes of reference in the same way as publications by other workers.

In either case the fact of the previous submission of such matter must be made clear at all relevant points in the dissertation.

(3) Work to be embodied in the dissertation should be reported concisely.


(4) All dissertations must be written in English; quotations, however, may be given in the language in which they were written. In exceptional circumstances a candidate may be granted permission to submit a dissertation written in a language other than English where the nature of the research makes this appropriate.

(5) PhD dissertations should be submitted in accordance with the information set out in the University’s Guidance for the Presentation of Theses. Candidates submitting their PhD in alternative format should submit their dissertations in accordance with the information set out in the University’s Guidance for the Presentation of Theses.

1.26 Character, Content and Size of the Dissertation

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(1) The dissertation is the description of the research conducted independently by the PhD candidate or of research to which the candidate has made an essential contribution. The PhD candidate is also responsible, or jointly responsible, for the dissertation as a scientific work.

(2) The dissertation is prepared based on the guideline approved by the Council of Professors of the respective Faculty.

1.27 Languages

Article 27: The dissertation and the attached propositions are written in English.


1.28 Conditions to be Fulfilled before the Examination

Article 28: The student before the dissertation defence should have fulfilled the following conditions to be checked by the Scientific Committee:

a) should have conducted as first author at least three scientific proceedings, presentations or posters, out of which two proceedings, presentations or posters should have been held in an international scientific activity (symposium, conference, congress) held in a developed country, as defined by the respective Directive of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Albania, accepted on the basis of a preliminary scientific assessment and published in the Proceedings, indexed with a ISBN code;

b) should have published as first author at least three scientific articles in scientific journals. At least two of the articles should have been published or accepted for publication at a recognised international scientific journal in developed countries, as defined by the respective Directive of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Albania, out of which one should be a peer-reviewed and periodical journal found in Science Citation Index (SCI), Social Science Citation Index (SSCI) or Arts and Humanities Citation Index (AHCI) in Thomson Reuters or Scopus.

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c) should have prepared and submitted the dissertation to the Council of Professors of the respective Faculty, accompanied with a summary approved by the supervisor, after having ensured the compliance of the format of the dissertation with the Guidelines of Epoka University on Thesis Format as certified by the academic staff member appointed to this end by the Scientific Committee.

d) students enrolled at the PhD study programs prior to the 2015-2016 academic year, should have obtained a score equivalent to the C1 Level in one of the internationally recognized English Language Exams as stipulated in the Directive of the Minister of Education and Science No. 14, dated 28.03.2011 "On the recognition of English language exams for the second and third cycle study programs".

Chapter 5: Conduct of the PhD Study Programme

1.29 Admission Quotas

Article 29: Admission quotas of the PhD study programs are approved by the Senate decision based on the proposal of the Faculty Board, after the opinion of the Council of Professors for each study program has been taken into consideration.

1.30 The Course Advisor

Article 30:

(1) The advisor for each student is appointed by the Scientific Committee. The advisor has the main duty to advise the student concerning course registration for each semester and to follow his/her performance situation. The advisor is appointed from one of the lecturers at the relevant faculty and has the PhD degree.

(2) The advisor also gives advice for career management of the students.

1.31 Attendance

Article 31:

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- (1) The student has the obligation to attend at least 80% of the theoretical and the research courses held as well as laboratories.
- (2) If the students fail to comply with the above condition, they have to retake the course with all the relevant obligations.

1.32 Course Registration

Article 32:


- (1) The students who attend PhD studies at Epoka University are obliged to make their course registration which they will attend during the said semester, pursuant to the procedure laid out by the Scientific Committee. Registration renewals are to be made within the time specified in the academic calendar, before each semester.
- (2) Students failing to pay the tuition fee as fixed and determined by the University shall not be allowed to renew their semester registrations. Such students shall not be able to attend courses and take exams.
- (3) Failure to renew registration each semester shall cause the student to be subject to penalties determined by the competent University body.
- (4) The Advisor approves the student’s course registration.

1.33 Admission through Transfers

Article 33:

- (1) A student who is currently enrolled in a PhD program within or outside the institution may apply to be transferred to another PhD program offered by Epoka University subject to the following rules:
 - a) A transferred student should study at Epoka University at least two full academic years before the completion of the PhD programme;
 - b) The student should meet all the criteria for enrolment at the PhD study program of Epoka University;

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c) 60 ECTS taken by the student in a third cycle (MND) study program can be recognized as courses of the first stage of the PhD program;

d) The transfer application must be submitted before the deadline established in the academic calendar, based on the principles established by the Senate;

(2) The Scientific Committee makes a proposal on the transfer request and submits it to the Council of Professors for decision to be taken, based on the principles established by this Council;

(3) If the student has been accepted through a transfer, it is subject to the same rights and obligations as a student of the Epoka University.

1.34 Successful Passing of the Theoretical Stage

Article 34: Students who at the end of the second semester have a CGPA of at least 3.00 and no FD or FF grades are considered to have successfully completed the theoretical stage of the PhD study program.


Chapter 6: Students

1.35 Students’ Rights

Article 35: The students in the PhD study programs have the following rights:

- a) To be lead by clearly formulated and academically justified rules and procedures.
- b) To be protected against any form of discrimination or any other inappropriate form of academic evaluation.
- c) To have access to all the information regarding every academic issue and on the activities program of the third cycle study program.
- d) To use the institution’s equipment, according the respective rules, to realize the study program and the work programmed in their scientific activity, library and internet.

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- e) To freely express their opinions and points of view.
- f) To participate in the evaluation of the academic and professional activity of the third cycle study programs.

1.36 Students’ Responsibilities

Article 36:

(1) The students of the PhD study programs have the following responsibilities:


- a) To acknowledge, be aware of and comply with the third cycle study programs and the University’s regulations, plan requirements and programs; if not, the institution is not responsible for the consequences deriving from a lack of due awareness.
- b) To maintain adequate behaviour, ethical, professional and civilized attitudes in relation to the directors, academic and administrative personnel and students.
- c) To fulfil the requests and obligations of the program in time.
- d) To contribute to the successful realization of the third cycle study program and to the creation of a positive climate in the institutions.
- e) To pay the registration and tuition fee within the pre-defined time.
- f) To bear responsibility in the case of a breach of the rules of the third cycle study programs.

(2) The disciplinary measures for the students, in case of breaching of rules, are defined in the Regulation “On the Students` Discipline at Epoka University”.

1.37 Suspension of Student Status

Article 37:

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(1) The student can be granted a leave of absence for justified reasons, as mentioned below, and can be excused for a limited period of time concerning the student’s status. The student has the right to continue the studies at a later date as approved by the Council of Professors. The student applies at the latest within 30 days after the beginning of the semester. The permission must be approved by the Council of Professors and up to two permissions can be granted per student. The student has to pay one fourth of the tuition fees for each semester for which he/she has been granted a leave of absence.

(2) The justified reasons are as follows:

a) In case of enlistment in military service duty or is exemption from the postponement of the service despite the position of the student.

b) On account of epidemic, natural disasters, detention and other cases defined in the Regulation “On the Students` Discipline”, or economic reasons which are approved as appropriate and justified reasons from the Council of Professors, the student can be granted a permission to be excused even within the semester. However, the tuition fee paid by students in these conditions is not refunded.


c) In case of absences because of mental, psychological and physical illnesses proved by an official document.

(3) In the event mentioned in point (b), the student shall apply to the Registrar’s Office within 20 days at the latest following the occurrence of such reason and prove it by documentary evidence. The continuity of the said reasons is grounds for the extension of leave of absence by the Council of Professors.

(4) The long-term permissions are not included in the study period only if there is a decision of the Council of Professors.

1.38 Leaving the Program

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Article 38: Students wishing to leave the study program at their own discretion shall apply in writing to the Scientific Committee of the program. Such students' registration shall be removed subject to the delivery by them of a non-affiliate document to be obtained from the relevant unit demonstrating that they have no obligation toward any unit of the University and with the approval of the Council of Professors. Upon request by any such student documents submitted when registering to “Epoka” University shall be given back to the student.

1.39 Dissertation Submission

Article 39:


(1) Notice to submit a PhD dissertation shall be made on the prescribed form not less than six weeks and not more than six months before submission.

(2) A PhD dissertation submission shall consist of one electronic copy in Portable Document Format (PDF) with a plain-text metadata record, and two paper copies downloaded and printed directly from the submitted electronic copy. The University shall have the right to retain both the electronic and paper copies. Full details of dissertation presentation requirements can be found in the Presentation of Theses Policy.

(3) If a dissertation is not submitted before the end of the PhD degree or submission pending period, the student’s candidacy automatically lapses and the student cannot subsequently submit, unless further approval is granted by the University.

(4) If a student wishes to submit a dissertation more than 3 months before the end of their PhD degree (or 6 months if part-time) they will require the permission of the supervisor and the Scientific Committee.

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(5) Students wishing to submit a dissertation in an alternative format must first prepare a written request giving an outline of the proposed dissertation structure to their supervisor and appropriate Scientific Committee for approval. The request will be considered in accordance with the alternative format principles and conditions described within the Guidance for the Presentation of Theses. If approval is granted for submission in alternative format, the student must complete the prescribed form and return it to the appropriate Scientific Committee when submitting their dissertation.

Chapter 7: The PhD Jury

1.40 Appointment of the PhD Jury

Article 40: After receiving the supervisor’s approval of the manuscript as a dissertation, and at the request of the supervisor, the Head of Department proposes the PhD Jury to the Council of Professors. The Council of Professors evaluates the proposal and approves the Jury for the PhD defence exam.

1.41 Composition of the PhD Jury


Article 41:

(1) The PhD Jury is composed of five members, of whom at least three should hold the “Professor Dr.” title. In cases when the other two members of the jury with “Professor Dr.” title cannot be brought into being, lecturers who hold the “Associate Professor Dr.” title and have sufficient academic and scientific experience within and outside the country can be accepted as Jury members.

(2) The Council of Professors appoints two or three opponents, one of whom should be from outside the University. Opponents are also members of the Jury. Opponents should hold the requested academic titles and have a rich research and publishing experience, within and outside the country, in the respective study area, where the respective PhD study program is offered.

(3) The thesis supervisor cannot be a member of the PhD Jury.

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(4) One of the Jury members can be chosen among lecturers who hold the “Doctor” degree, coming from universities known in the world for quality and rich research and publishing experience in the respective field and having at least five years of academic and research experience in the field on which the student has prepared his dissertation.

(5) The Council of Professors appoints two reserve Jury members who can replace the principal Jury members in case they are unable to attend the PhD defense exam.

Chapter 8: The PhD Exams

1.42 The Examinations

Article 42:

(1) The candidate shall be required to attend an oral examination on the subject of the dissertation and matters relevant thereto. The candidate may also be required by the examiners to undergo a written or other examination. The oral examination shall be attended by the candidate and the examiners and, if required, an independent academic.

(2) No candidate shall be admitted to any examination unless s/he has satisfied the requirements laid down in the Ordinances and Regulation, or has been exempted from any requirements by the Scientific Committee on the recommendation of the CP concerned.

(3) After examining the dissertation presented by a candidate and considering the results of any oral or written examination which they have conducted, the examiners, at their discretion, shall make one of the following recommendations:

- a) That the candidate be awarded the degree of PhD with no corrections to the dissertation being required;
- b) That the candidate be awarded the degree of PhD subject to minor corrections being made to the dissertation to the satisfaction of the examiners;

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- c) That the candidate be invited to revise and resubmit the dissertation for the degree of PhD, after a further period of no more than twelve and no less than three months. A dissertation may normally be referred on one occasion only. The dissertation shall be re-examined, normally by the original examiners. The examiners may require a further oral examination;
- d) That no award be made to the candidate and no resubmission be permitted.

1.43 Decision on the Awarding of the Doctorate

Article 43:


- (1) The PhD Jury takes the decision by unanimity. The decision of the Jury is final.
- (2) The PhD Jury informs the Council of Professors on its decision..

1.44 Granting of awards

Article 44:

- (1) Research degrees will not be awarded or conferred until any minor corrections required by the examiners have been made to the satisfaction of the internal or another of the examiners, and until copies of the dissertation or dissertation have been deposited in the University's Library and the National Library of Albania.
- (2) No student may represent him or herself as holding an award of the Epoka University until such time as that award has been granted to him or her.
- (3) Before the receipt of an award parchment, all students are required to obtain and present clearance that all of their obligations to the University Library have been met.
- (4) Graduates will be present for their degrees either in person, or in absentia, at a Congregation for the conferment of degrees. They are required to notify the respective Department Secretary whether they intend to attend the Congregation.

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(5) Students attending a Congregation of the University for the conferring of degrees or granting of other awards are required to wear the dress prescribed for the occasion.

1.45 Deposit and availability of theses and dissertations after examination

Article 45:

(1) Copies of theses and dissertations must be deposited with the University as specified in the Code of Practice on Research Degrees.

(2) All theses and dissertations deposited shall normally be available for consultation and for reproduction (subject to normal conditions for acknowledgement). The author may request that the University Library withhold access and that none of the material contained in it should be reproduced, for a period not exceeding two years from the date on which it was deposited with the University.

1.46 The awarding of PhD ‘with Distinction’

Article 46:


(1) If the PhD candidate has demonstrated exceptional abilities in his dissertation, the PhD can be awarded with the predicate: ‘with distinction’ (cum laude). In general this predicate can only be awarded if the dissertation can be considered to be among the very best dissertations in the relevant scientific field.

(2) Awarding the PhD with the predicate ‘with distinction’ takes place at the proposal of the PhD Jury or one of its members. The procedure to award the predicate ‘with distinction’ should be initiated at least before the defence of the dissertation.

(3) The decision regarding a proposal for awarding the PhD with the predicate ‘with distinction’ is taken by unanimity.

Chapter 9: Evaluation Documents

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1.47 Diploma

Article 47:

(1) The student who successfully completes 60 ECTS from the theoretical deepening stage and defends his PhD dissertation in compliance with the provisions stipulated in the Regulation is granted the PhD degree diploma.

(2) In the diploma of the third cycle, the program and the title proposed by the Scientific Committee of the program are included.

1.48 Diploma Supplement

Article 48:

(1) The third cycle study diploma is accompanied by the diploma supplement, the content and form of which is defined by the Senate in accordance with the directives of the Ministry of Education and Science.

(2) The diploma supplement contains the nature, study level, the content, the results of the student and other rules defined by the University Senate in accordance with the relevant legal acts.

Chapter 10: The Honorary Doctorate

1.49 The Honorary Doctorate


Article 49:

(1) The Council of Professors is entitled to present the honorary doctorate on Albanian or foreign persons in recognition of outstanding services, by the proposal of the Faculty Board and with the approval of the Higher Board, after taking the approval of the Ministry of Education and Science.

1.50 Grounds for Conferring the Honorary Doctorate

Article 50:

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The honorary doctorate can be conferred:

- a. on persons who have conducted research or activities which has been demonstrated to be of exceptional significance for the University or for academia in general;
- b. on persons who in an academic, cultural or social perspective have carried out activities which have advanced academic teaching and research in an exceptional manner;
- c. in highly exceptional cases and only at the proposal of the Rector, on persons who through their work have made an exceptional contribution to upholding the mission of the University:

1.51 Consideration by the Higher Board

Article 51:

- (1) If the Council of Professors intends to adopt the proposal on conferring the honorary doctorate, the Rector will submit the proposal to the Higher Board for consideration.
- (2) Once the response by the Higher Board has been received, the Council of Professors will reach a decision on the honorary doctorate.


Chapter 11: Academic Appeals and Hearings

1.52 Mediation by the Dean

Article 52:

- (1) If a dispute arises during the preparation for or as a result of the decision regarding the approval of the manuscript as dissertation or with regard to the defensibility of the propositions, the Dean will act as mediator, at the request of either of the parties concerned.
- (2) The Dean should in any event be one of the parties involved in resolving the dispute.
- (3) Paragraphs 1 and 2 do not apply if the dispute relates to a decision pursuant to this regulation taken by the Council of Professors.

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1.53 Decision of the Council of Professors

Article 53:

- (1) Before reaching a decision on the appeal or objection, the Council of Professors gives the parties involved in the dispute, and the Dean, the opportunity to present their case in person.
- (2) The Council of Professors may take advice from a committee set up by the Rector for this purpose.
- (3) The decision of the Council of Professors will immediately be notified to all parties concerned.

Chapter 12: Concluding Stipulations

1.54 Interpretation

Article 54: In the event of a difference of opinion as to the interpretation of one or more articles of this regulation and in any eventualities for which this regulation does not provide, the final decision rests with the Senate.

1.55 Entry into force

Article 55: This regulation takes effect after the approval of the Higher Board.

1.56 Enforcement

Article 56: The enforcement of this regulation is carried out by the Rector of Epoka University

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