

## The Doctorate Charter of the Université Sorbonne Paris Nord

### Letter of consent

Within the framework of the PhD thesis University Sorbonne Paris Nord (USPN), the signatories undertake to comply with the charter contained in the appendix and in particular :

- Each doctoral student undertakes, by registering for a doctoral degree, to carry out the research project previously defined, to follow the training actions and to comply with the follow-up procedures prescribed by his or her doctoral school. During the PhD, he or she is concerned about his or her career development.

- Each thesis director is the doctoral student's first point of contact. His or her role, as part of a research team attached to the doctoral school, is to validate the research project and to ensure its follow-up and the means to carry it out. He or she ensures that the doctoral student follows the training activities and complies with the follow-up procedures prescribed by the doctoral school. The thesis director(s) actively accompanies the doctoral student in his/her career development.

- Each research unit head is responsible for the proper integration of the doctoral student into his unit as a fully-fledged researcher, and for the quality of the working conditions necessary for the proper conduct of the research undertaken.

- Each doctoral school director ensures the validation of doctoral research projects and their follow-up. He or she also ensures the quality of the doctoral training given to the doctoral student and ensures compliance with the rules governing the conduct of the doctorate. The doctoral school undertakes to provide information on the professional future of doctors.

The signatories of this charter undertake to familiarize themselves with the procedures in force in the institutions, validated by their boards, and to apply them.

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The PhD student	The PhD supervisor
The head of the research unit	The director of the doctoral school

The preparation for a doctorate combines high-level training with professional experience in research. This culminates in a thesis defence after which the candidate is awarded the title of doctor. A doctoral student's work consists principally of carrying out innovative research under the supervision of one or several thesis supervisors in the research unit of a doctoral school. The research culminates in a written thesis that is approved as a piece of scientific research. The title of "Doctor" sanctions a high level of competence applicable in a wide socio-economic context.

This Doctorate charter defines the principles adopted by the University Sorbonne Paris Nord for thesis preparation. It aims to encourage high quality scientific research in line with the highest international standards. The charter is based on:

- The decree of [25 May 2016](#) to doctoral training,
- The innovative principles of doctoral training
- the recruitment and supervision procedures set up by doctoral schools.

Doctoral training takes place in one of the Doctoral schools of the University Sorbonne Paris Nord. The doctoral school selects doctoral students through a transparent process, organises their training and provides them with guidance in career development. Doctoral students freely come to an agreement on their research topic with the thesis supervisor in a research unit of Sorbonne Paris Nord.

This agreement covers the precise definition of the research project and the working conditions (including funding) necessary for its completion. Both thesis supervisor and doctoral student are respectively subject to rights and obligations of a high standard. All doctoral students are fully recognised as researchers and treated as such.

The institutions agree to act in order that the principles set out in the charter are respected during preparation for the thesis. In the case of cotutelle or partnership with an external institution, the partner must be informed of this charter and agree to conform to its requirements

## 1 – The thesis, a step towards a personal goal and a career choice.

The preparation of a thesis must be part of a personal and professional project clearly defined in its goals and requirements. It implies the clarity of the objectives pursued and the means used to achieve them. The supervisor and the unit shall provide the doctoral school with the information needed to justify the means that the doctoral student will benefit from to carry out his/her research project.

The doctoral school ensures that the greatest possible number of doctoral students receive funding when they have no other full-time professional activity. The objective of a thesis director and a unit director is to obtain funding covering as much as possible the preparation time of the doctoral degree for doctoral students without other full-time professional activity.

The doctoral student must be informed about all academic and extra-academic opportunities in his/her field. The career path desired by the doctoral student shall be the subject of discussions with his or her thesis director. In order to enable information on career opportunities to be provided to future doctoral students at the laboratory, all outgoing doctoral students must inform their thesis director and the head of their doctoral school of their professional future for a period of five years after obtaining the doctorate. The doctor undertakes to answer the questionnaires sent by his institution or doctoral school and to indicate any changes in his postal and e-mail addresses during this period. It is the doctoral student's responsibility to take care of his or her career development. The thesis director(s) and the doctoral school will assist the doctoral student in this process.

The doctoral student must comply with the regulations of his/her doctoral school and institution in force in terms of training. In order to broaden his or her scientific and transferable skills, training is offered to him or her. Organised under the responsibility of the doctoral school or the training centre

for doctoral students in professional initiatives, they train the doctoral student in his or her career development possibilities, including outside the academic sector. These courses are certified by the doctoral school.

The implementation of these procedures will give rise to the establishment of a training agreement signed by the doctoral student, the unit director, the thesis director, and finally the director of the ED.

## 2 – Thesis subject and feasibility

Each doctoral school publishes its recruitment procedure and selection criteria for doctoral students as defined by the school council.

Enrolment for a thesis specifies the research subject and the associated research unit as well as the resources and amount of funding anticipated for the doctoral student (doctoral contract, CIFRE grant, employee quota for the profession or other).

The thesis topic leads to research that should be both original in nature and instructive for the candidate; it must be feasible within time limit set down by the regulations. The choice of subject depends on an agreement between the doctoral student and the thesis supervisor. It is written down when the student is enrolled. The thesis supervisor is called upon because of his/her recognised expertise in the given research field. The thesis supervisor must help the doctoral student to identify the innovative nature of his/her project in its current scientific context. The thesis director defines the resources needed to complete the research project and ensures that this funding is accessible.

To this end, doctoral students are fully integrated into their research unit where they can access the same research facilities as the other researchers: equipment, missions, resources, particularly in IT, documentation, attending seminars and conferences and presenting their research at scientific gatherings.

Doctoral students are entitled to free expression and representation in the general assemblies and councils of their unit; they are entitled to freedom of assembly and trade union membership. They are represented by elected officials within the various councils of the research unit and the doctoral school and in the assembly of the USPC college of doctoral schools. The members of the research team hosting the candidate may require him/her to respect several shared group rules and to respect scientific deontology. More specifically, the candidate must conform to the internal regulations of his/her institution and research unit when such regulations exist.

Doctoral students are not to be used to make up for any possible shortfall in technical supervision in the lab or be given tasks that are irrelevant to his/her thesis, apart from technical tasks attributed to the whole unit. If the research is undertaken as part of a partnership with a company or public authority, the doctoral student must not be expected to carry out extra work outside the scope of his/her research. Doctoral students commit to work for a certain time at a certain pace. They must inform their supervisor regularly of their research progress and of any difficulties they encounter. They must show initiative and a disposition for innovative research.

## 3 – Thesis supervision and follow-up

The doctoral school must inform doctoral students, prior to their enrolment, of the number of theses currently being supervised by the prospective supervisor. Indeed, thesis supervisors can only provide effective supervision to a limited number of young researchers simultaneously if they are to oversee the research with the requisite attention. The maximum number of doctoral students one supervisor may oversee is set for each doctoral school by the institution's research commission (*or similar*) following the proposal of the doctoral school council. Doctoral schools ensure that these limits are respected.

Doctoral students are entitled to personal supervision from their supervisor who agrees to devote a significant amount of time to them. On the student's initial enrolment for the thesis, the principle of frequent regular meetings with a supervision committee is established. Co-supervision with a

researcher (who may or may not be authorized to oversee academic research), does not dispense the thesis supervisor from regular supervision of the advancement of the research.

Doctoral students are committed to submitting as many papers as their subject requires and presenting their research in unit seminars. The thesis supervisor is committed to regular supervision of the state of the research and to discussion of any new directions it might take given the results so far. The supervisor is bound to inform the doctoral student of positive evaluations as well as potential objections and criticisms raised by the research.

The doctoral school council sets the conditions regarding doctoral student supervision and these are published on its Internet site. The doctoral student and his/her supervisor agree to conform to these conditions and to produce the required reports.

The regulations governing the organisation of the thesis defence, the appointment of rapporteurs and examining board are those set down in the decree of 25 May 2016.

After the thesis has been completed, doctoral students agree to return any material that may have been put at their disposal for their research. They agree to provide the original data that they produced or collected as well as the related written documents, in accordance with the rules of intellectual property in force in their research unit.

#### 4 – Thesis duration

In accordance with the Order of 25 May 2016, the reference period for preparing a thesis is three years full-time and six years part-time. Exemptions to the duration may be granted by the head of the registration establishment on the proposal of the director of the doctoral school, after a favourable opinion from the thesis director, the laboratory director and the doctoral student's monitoring committee. The doctoral student and his/her supervisor shall provide all the elements necessary for this examination in accordance with the procedures adopted by the doctoral school council. The procedures and their application are the subject of a presentation to the institution's research commission (or equivalent).

In the event of a challenge to the refusal of an extension, the doctoral student may submit a written complaint to the head of the enrolment institution, who will make the final decision.

In all cases, the preparation of the doctorate implies an annual renewal of the doctoral student's registration at his/her institution.

The cessation of a thesis must be reported and justified to the doctoral school by the doctoral student and his/her thesis director.

In order to comply with the planned duration, in the interest of the doctoral student, the doctoral student and the thesis director must respect their commitments regarding the necessary working time. Repeated breaches of these commitments shall be the subject of a joint observation between the doctoral student and the thesis director, which shall lead to a mediation procedure.

#### 5 - Publication and further exploitation of the thesis

The quality and impact of the thesis can be measured through the number of publications or patents and industrial reports that result from the research, whether from the thesis itself or from articles written during its preparation or after the manuscript's completion. Doctoral students must be named among the authors of all articles or books that refer to their research even after they have left the research unit.

Doctoral students must be aware of the requirements of the French laws relative to data protection and confidentiality. These legal requirements must always be satisfied.

Institutions have a programme for archiving and publishing theses electronically. Permission to publish a thesis is granted by the author and refers to its publication on Internet. Doctoral students receive a thesis publication contract on submission of their thesis prior to the defence.

Doctoral students must be aware that the inclusion of quotations in their research without citing sources and authors constitutes an act of plagiarism. Plagiarism is an infringement of authors' rights and of intellectual property.

## 6 - Mediation procedures

In the event of a persistent conflict between the doctoral student and the thesis director or the laboratory director, each of the signatories of this charter may call upon a mediator who, without relieving anyone of his or her responsibilities, listens to the parties and proposes a solution acceptable to all.

The mediator is appointed by the director of the doctoral school or, in the event of a conflict of interest, by the head of the enrolment establishment. The mediator's mission implies his or her impartiality.

If this mediation fails, the doctoral student or one of the other signatories of this charter may ask the head of the registration establishment to appoint a mediator. The mediator must be external to the conflict and to the doctoral school, which does not exclude that he or she is external to the institution and may possibly seek advice from the legal services of the enrolment institution. For contractual doctoral students, the appropriate service within the institution is the advisory commission for contractual doctoral students. Finally, a final appeal may be lodged with the head of the registering institution.

In all these procedures, the doctoral student has the right to be assisted by an elected doctoral student or an association representing doctoral students at USPN level.