

## **SORBONNE UNIVERSITÉ DOCTORATE CHARTER**

- *Having regard to the French Code of Education,*
- *Having regard to French decree no. 2009-464 **amended** of 23 April 2009 on doctoral candidates under contract with public higher education or research establishments,*
- *Having regard to the French decree of 25 May, 2016, setting the French national framework for the training and the terms of issue of the French national doctorate degree,*
- *Having regard to the French National Charter for Research Integrity of 29 January, 2015,*
- *Having regard to the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers of 11 March, 2005,*
- *Having regard to the statutes of Sorbonne Université,*
- *Having regard to the decision of the research commission of 18 June, 2019,*
- *Having regard to the decision of the Sorbonne Université Board of Directors to adopt the Sorbonne Université Doctorate Charter.*

### **Preamble**

The national doctorate degree is the highest academic qualification in France. The doctorate confirms the training and research conducted for an initial degree program or during life-long training, including the validation of prior experience. It is prepared in an accredited public higher education establishment, directed by a thesis supervisor, according to the stipulations of the decree dated 25 May, 2016, setting the national framework for the training and the terms of issue of the French national doctorate degree.

The doctorate is recognised throughout the scientific world and valued in social and economic circles in France, Europe and around the world. Its preparation is part of a personal and professional development project with specific goals and requirements. It combines high level training with professional research experience, with the goal of developing transferable scientific skills.

As a personal project carried out in a team environment, the doctorate involves the creation of new knowledge; the open sharing of such knowledge helps to enlighten citizens, public powers and society as a whole. The fundamental aspect of doctoral training consists in innovative research work, serving as a foundation for the thesis.

Within the field of doctoral training, as in all other fields, Sorbonne Université undertakes to respect and ensure respect of the principles of fair treatment of its members, to banish and fight all forms of discrimination, whether related to gender, ethnic origin, religion, sexual orientation, handicap or economic/social situation.

### **Article 1: Purpose and scope of the charter**

This charter, completed by the provisions of the rules of each doctoral school, defines the rights and obligations of all those involved in doctoral training, notably concerning the monitoring and supervision of doctoral candidates. The university guarantees that the community as a whole is aware of these rights and obligations and ensures the respect thereof.

This charter is drawn up in compliance with the decree of 25 May, 2016, on doctoral training and the recommendations and principles of the French National Charter for Research Integrity. It also complies with the doctoral policy framework of Sorbonne Université, which coordinates and supports the College of doctoral schools.

The charter guarantees the scientific excellence of the doctorate. It defines the principles and values according to which the doctoral training is organised, notably the relationship between the doctoral candidate and the thesis supervisor, and more generally between all those involved in a doctoral training project.

It applies to all those involved in doctoral training at Sorbonne Université.

It is applied by every research unit director and by every doctoral school director. The director approves and undertakes to comply with this charter by signing it when a doctoral candidate registers.

It is applied by every doctoral candidate and by every thesis supervisor. They sign the doctoral charter together when the doctoral candidate first registers for doctoral training at Sorbonne Université or, if they are already doctoral candidates when the charter comes into effect, at the time of re-registration.

The provisions of this doctorate charter do not apply retroactively. The provisions of doctorate charters that are no longer applicable cease to apply once this charter comes into effect and has been signed by the various parties.

If necessary, Sorbonne Université will ensure that there is no contradiction between the principles of this charter and any joint supervision or partnership agreement with another establishment or non-academic organisation.

## **Article 2: The training agreement**

In compliance with the decree of 25 May, 2016, a personal training agreement, signed by the thesis supervisor and the doctoral candidate at the time of the first registration, defines the environment and organisation of the doctoral project. This agreement may be modified as necessary at the time of each registration.

## **Article 3: Sorbonne Université doctoral training**

3.1. Sorbonne Université encourages doctoral candidates to apply a critical mindset, autonomy of thought, intellectual rigour and high standards to their search for knowledge. It promotes respect of the rules of ethics and scientific integrity in all research work.

3.2. The university helps its doctoral candidates to find their place in the local, national and international research environment. It advises candidates on the generation of value from their research work and encourages development of their knowledge of work carried out in their research field in France and world-wide. Sorbonne Université therefore encourages and supports doctoral mobility.

3.3. In collaboration with the thesis supervisor and the director of the doctoral school, each doctoral candidate prepares a personal training plan to support his/her research project and to develop his/her career project. This personal training plan enables the candidate to broaden his/her skills through disciplinary and transversal training programs in preparation for his/her future career.

3.4. Sorbonne Université aims to have as many doctoral candidates as possible under paid contracts for the preparation of their doctorate.

When preparing the registration, the thesis supervisor, director of the research unit, director of the doctoral school and candidate should find out about available funding and do all they can to achieve this objective.

## **Article 4: Starting a doctoral training program**

### **4.1 The doctoral research project**

4.1.1. Doctorate preparation is based on a freely made agreement between the doctoral candidate, the thesis supervisor and the thesis co-supervisor, if any, in close collaboration with the research unit, the doctoral school and the university.

4.1.2. The agreement defines the doctoral research project and its terms of completion; it organises the acquisition of high level scientific skills and professional know-how. The terms of completion notably define the scientific environment and supervision, the numeric, material, financial and human resources, and any confidentiality clauses.

4.1.3. Each project is validated by the doctoral school, which makes sure of its scientific and innovative nature, and its feasibility within the deadlines fixed by the decree of 25 May, 2016.

### **4.2 Starting doctoral training**

4.2.1. The doctoral school implements an admissions policy based on explicit, public criteria and applies fair, transparent procedures that are described in the school's rules.

4.2.2. The doctoral school informs the future doctoral candidate of the resources available (equipment, financial and human) and the number of doctorates supervised by their possible thesis supervisor. The doctoral school rules set a maximum limit on the number of doctoral candidates supervised by each thesis supervisor. The doctoral school also informs the candidate of the professional futures of its doctoral graduates, based on local and national statistics.

4.2.3. The thesis supervisor acts according to the ethical rules applicable to his/her position. He/she is responsible for the scientific management of the doctoral project.

The doctoral candidate is under the responsibility of his/her thesis supervisor.

The thesis supervisor supervises his/her doctoral candidates personally and undertakes to attend frequent, regular meetings in the work areas provided on university premises and to assist them with their thesis projects. He/she ensures that the doctoral candidate acquires autonomy in his/her research activities.

4.2.4. The thesis director helps the doctoral candidate to find his/her place in the scientific community and provides useful information and professional contacts that might help with his/her research and generate value from it on a local, national and international level. He/she

advises the doctoral candidate on his/her career project, creating the conditions necessary for him/her to develop skills and generate value from the knowledge created by his/her research.

4.2.5. The scientific monitoring of the doctoral candidate may include co-supervision. If this is the case, the roles and responsibilities of each party are defined and explained in the personal training agreement.

Training programs and doctoral supervision assistance are proposed to all supervisors.

4.2.6. The doctoral candidate participates in the life of his/her research unit and doctoral school, and undertakes to attend training programs to broaden his/her scientific culture, develop his/her skills and prepare for his/her future career. He/she keeps his/her thesis supervisor regularly informed of the progression of research work and any difficulties encountered. The supervisor validates the scientific quality of the approach implemented and the results obtained in collaboration with the candidate. The doctoral candidate must show initiative and creativity in his/her research activities. Doctoral research implies compliance with the French National Charter for Research Integrity and the good practices specific to each discipline regarding the development of knowledge and publications.

4.2.7. If the doctorate is carried out part time, the doctoral candidate undertakes to devote the time necessary to the research project.

## **Article 5: Organisation of the doctoral training**

The doctoral school ensures adequate organisation of the doctoral training, respect of the schedule and the commitments cited herein. Particular attention is given to the personal supervision of the doctoral candidate, regarding both the research project and the candidate's career project.

### **5.1 The personal training project**

5.1.1. The doctoral candidate defines a personal training project to assist with his/her research work and prepare his/her professional career. This project is materialised in the implementation of a training plan to enable the candidate to acquire new knowledge and to develop new, transferable, scientific skills that will be useful both in his/her doctoral research project and in his/her career. The plan must include a section on research ethics and scientific integrity. Another important element is the preparation of the candidate's future career, according to his/her career project, which may evolve during the doctoral training.

5.1.2. Sorbonne Université's doctoral institute and the doctoral schools propose transversal and disciplinary training programs to doctoral candidates and actions to help them prepare their future careers. The thesis supervisors and the doctoral school must advise the doctoral candidates and help them to prepare their personal training plan. The thesis supervisor undertakes to ensure that his/her doctoral students have time to attend the aforementioned training programs and participate in the life of the research unit and the doctoral school.

5.1.3. The doctoral candidate undertakes to attend the training programs for which he/she has asked to be enrolled. He/she must attend the information meetings and scientific days

organised by the university, the doctoral schools and the doctoral institute. His/her research work must be organised accordingly.

5.1.4. The doctoral candidate must keep an up-to-date portfolio, including a detailed list of the activities in which he/she has participated, including what he/she learned and the scientific culture or technology shared; this document records the capacities and skills developed during the doctoral training.

## **5.2 Personal monitoring committee**

5.2.1. A personal committee monitors the doctoral candidate and ensures smooth completion of the program.

The committee makes sure that the doctoral training proceeds properly and is completed on time, based on this charter and the personal training agreement. By way of an interview with the doctoral candidate, it assesses the training conditions and research progress.

Discussions are arranged with the doctoral candidate concerning his/her future career, to ensure that he/she receives training suited to both the research project and his/her career project. The committee also ensures that the candidate develops his/her awareness of research ethics and scientific integrity issues.

The committee ensures that any form of conflict, discrimination or harassment is avoided. If necessary, any incidents must be reported to the competent bodies for action. The monitoring committee does not participate in the management of the research work.

5.2.2. The committee's composition, organisation and operation are defined by the rules of the doctoral school. The monitoring committee has at least two members. The doctoral school ensures independence between the committee members and the thesis supervisor.

5.2.3. The monitoring committee meets at least once a year until the last doctorate registration. Each meeting must include a personal interview with the committee and the doctoral candidate. As well as the meetings planned at the start of the doctoral training, the doctoral candidate and the thesis supervisor may contact the monitoring committee at any time. The doctoral school can also request that the monitoring committee organises additional meetings if this is deemed necessary.

5.2.4. The monitoring committee makes its recommendations and submits an interview report to the director of the doctoral school, the doctoral candidate and the thesis supervisor. The monitoring committee must approve re-registration for the doctorate after the second year.

## **5.3 Duration of the doctoral training – “gap” period**

5.3.1. A doctorate is generally prepared over three years with the equivalent of a full-time position devoted to the research. In other cases, doctorate preparation can take up to six years.

5.3.2. Under exceptional circumstances, and in response to a justified request from the doctoral candidate, one “gap” period of up to one year (non-divisible) may be permitted by decision of the head of the establishment, after consulting the thesis supervisor and the director of the doctoral school. This period is not counted as part of the doctoral training.

If the doctoral candidate receives specific funding for the preparation of his/her doctorate, the “gap” period must be approved by the financial organisation and the employer. The employment contract is suspended during the “gap” period.

During the “gap” period, the doctoral candidate temporarily suspends his/her training and research work. The provisions related to confidentiality continue to apply. The doctoral candidate must comply with these obligations and remain vigilant as to the protection of the intellectual property of his/her work.

### **Article 6: The thesis defence**

The thesis defence must take place during the year of the last permitted registration. The thesis is evaluated by a specifically compiled jury, and should comprise equal numbers of men and women. Jury members are selected for their scientific or professional skills in the research field in question. The rules of jury composition and designation are defined in the decree of 25 May, 2016.

The jury deliberates on the scientific quality of the candidate’s work, its original and innovative nature and the candidate’s ability to situate the work in its international scientific context. The jury deliberates with all the impartiality and neutrality necessary to ensure a reasoned evaluation of the work presented. The jury guarantees the high scientific level of the doctorate.

### **Article 7: The future for doctoral graduates**

Sorbonne Université undertakes to inform doctoral candidates of the career opportunities that they can expect after completing their doctoral training. The university therefore conducts surveys, which can be consulted by the candidates.

Doctoral graduates undertake to respond to requests for information concerning their professional future, even several years after their thesis defence. They undertake to answer the questionnaires sent to them and to inform the university of any change in contact details.

Doctoral graduates of Sorbonne Université are part of the *Alumni* community and the Doctors’ Club. They are encouraged to participate in the activities of the group and network.

### **Article 8: Mediation and conflict resolution**

8.1. In the event of conflict or disagreement, the doctoral candidate or the thesis supervisor is encouraged to contact the director of the doctoral school as soon as possible. A confidential interview can be arranged. The role of the director of the doctoral school (or any person duly missioned for the task) is to facilitate a peaceful discussion and to find an appropriate solution that is acceptable to all parties.

8.2. The doctoral candidate and thesis supervisor can also contact the Sorbonne Université mediator personally. He/she will bring the two parties together (subject to their consent) to try and restore peaceful dialogue between them.

8.3. If the conflict cannot be resolved by the mediator or the doctoral school, the director of the doctoral school or one of the parties submits the case to the conflict prevention and resolution commission of the doctoral institute of Sorbonne Université.

This commission is made up of equal numbers of doctoral candidates and thesis supervisors; it is attentive to the viewpoints of each party, makes recommendations and submits an advisory opinion, with justifications, to the President of Sorbonne Université, who decides on any further action to be taken.

The composition and terms of operation of this commission are set by decision of the President of Sorbonne Université after consultation of the research commission of the academic board of Sorbonne Université.

### **Article 9: Dissemination, value creation and intellectual property**

The thesis supervisor and the director of the research unit guide the doctoral candidate to ensure the best possible value is obtained from his/her work.

9.1. Within the limits of his/her confidentiality agreements, the doctoral candidate is encouraged to attend the scientific events organised by the doctoral school, during which each candidate has the opportunity to present his/her work. The director of the research unit will enable the doctoral candidate to attend national or international events under the same conditions as the permanent members of the unit.

9.2. With regard to the publication of his/her work and in the routine exercise of his/her activities, the candidate undertakes to find out about and abide by all the applicable laws and rules, notably those concerning the protection of personal or health data; the possession of human biological material or genetic resources comes under the Nagoya Protocol.

9.3. The doctoral candidate undertakes to refrain from making any communication or publication without first obtaining consent from his/her thesis supervisor. He/she must include the normalised Sorbonne Université signature on all publications, in application of the *ad hoc* guide.

9.4. Publications must be made freely accessible to as broad a public as possible. They are to be deposited in an open archive, notably HAL. The doctoral candidate must be named among the authors of all publications directly related to his/her work, even after the thesis defence.

9.5. The doctoral candidate is bound by a secrecy obligation with respect to third parties. This undertaking applies until the information, know-how and equipment enters the public domain. He/she undertakes to preserve the confidentiality of his/her research results and all information, know-how and equipment about which he/she became aware during the course of the research, during his/her time in the research unit or even during collaborations with other organisations or companies.

9.6 If the candidate's research produces value-generating results, an invention disclosure will be drawn up, listing the doctoral candidate as one of the contributors. If a patent application is registered, the doctoral candidate will be named as an inventor – or as an author in the case of software registration. The percentage contribution of each person listed in the invention disclosure is determined jointly by the contributors.

9.7. Since each discipline uses different criteria to measure the quality of research work, each doctoral school is responsible for explaining what the scientific community expects of doctorates in the field or discipline concerned, notably in terms of publications, seminar communications, intellectual property rights (patents, software, brands, etc.) and industrial reports.

### **Final clauses – signature**

The undersigned hereby declare that they are aware of the various provisions of the Doctorate Charter implemented at Sorbonne Université, in application of the decree of 25 May, 2016,

setting the national framework for the training and the terms of issue of the French national doctorate degree, adopted by the Board of Directors of Sorbonne Université on 2 July, 2019, after consulting its research commission.

The parties undertake to comply with the clauses herein. If the thesis supervisor fails to comply with the provisions of this charter, the director of the doctoral school may ask the President of Sorbonne Université to re-assign the doctoral candidate to another supervisor. If the doctoral candidate fails to comply with the provisions of this charter, his/her doctoral training may be terminated. If applicable, his/her employment contract may be terminated according to the terms defined therein. The termination decision is pronounced by the President of the university, based on the proposal of the thesis supervisor and the director of the doctoral school. In all cases, decisions related to a failure to comply with provisions by any party involved in the doctorate must be preceded by a mediation procedure, as defined in article 8.

*Signature of the doctoral candidate*  
*Write “read and approved” and sign*

*Signature of the thesis co-supervisor*  
*(if any)*  
*Write “read and approved” and sign*

*Signature of the thesis supervisor*  
*Write “read and approved” and sign*

*Signature of the director*  
*of the research unit*  
*Read and approved*

*Signature of the director*  
*of the doctoral school*  
*Read and approved*