

*This charter is signed by the doctoral researcher and the thesis supervisor(s)\*.*

*\* Here and throughout the text, “thesis supervisor(s)” is used to mean the thesis supervisor, in some cases in partnership with the co-supervisor(s), in accordance with the first paragraph of Article 16 of the Order of 25 May 2016 establishing the French national training framework and the terms of award of the national doctorate degree.*

The preparation of a thesis is based on the double agreement freely entered into between the doctoral researcher and the thesis supervisor(s) on the one hand, and between the latter and the director of the research unit on the other. This agreement concerns the choice of subject and the working conditions necessary for the research to progress. The thesis supervisor(s) and doctoral candidate therefore have a very demanding set of respective rights and duties.

This charter defines these reciprocal commitments while providing a reminder of the ethics behind the regulations in force and the practices already experienced while respecting the diversity of the subject areas and institutions. Its aim is to guarantee a high level of scientific quality. The doctoral researcher’s institution of enrolment undertakes to act to ensure that the principles that it sets out are upheld.

This charter is approved by the director of the doctoral school, the director of the unit or the host research team, and the thesis supervisor(s). It is signed by the doctoral researcher and the thesis supervisor(s) when the doctoral researcher first enrolls and is approved by the doctoral school and the institution of enrolment.

## **1. THE THESIS, A STAGE IN A PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL PLAN**

The preparation of a thesis is both a professional experience and an education in and through research. This plan must be clearly defined by the doctoral researcher and must be in keeping with their host unit’s areas of development. This preparation requires clarity in the objectives pursued and the means used to achieve them.

The candidate must receive information on academic and extra-academic opportunities in their field. To this end, statistics on the career development of doctors trained at their host unit and their future doctoral school must be provided by the latter before the candidate enrolls.

The thesis supervisor(s) and the director of the doctoral school (or the deputy director of the site) must inform the candidate before enrolment of the resources available to help with the preparation of their thesis (different types of allowances, budgets that will be allocated by the unit for the development of the thesis, etc.).

To carry out their research properly, the doctoral researcher must have access to sufficient resources. For a full-time thesis, a level of funding comparable to that obtained by a doctoral contract must be sought, and priority must be given to funding in the form of employment contracts lasting at least three years following the date of enrolment on the thesis.

If the doctoral researcher's resources come from a professional activity not directly related to

the thesis (e.g. teaching or liberal profession), it will be necessary to ensure that this activity gives them sufficient time to successfully complete the thesis on a part-time basis within a period of up to six years.

The doctoral school reserves the option to require a minimum level of resources before a candidate can enrol on a thesis.

Where a three-year funding plan exists, it is set up when the candidate first enrolls and appended to this charter. The research work entrusted to the doctoral researcher must be compatible with the duration of funding provision.

The doctoral candidate and the thesis supervisor(s) must comply with the internal rules of their doctoral school, which includes the rules governing thesis enrolment, monitoring of doctoral researchers, training that doctoral researchers must receive, conditions of authorisation for the thesis defense and reproduction of the thesis, and the various arrangements for settling any conflicts that may arise between the doctoral researcher and their thesis supervisor(s).

In order to broaden their field of competence and knowledge of a range of subjects, and in order to facilitate their future occupational integration, the doctoral researcher must take a minimum of 100 hours of training or an equivalent activity while preparing their thesis, which must be validated by the doctoral school.

This amount of hours and the balance between cross-curricular and subject-based education shall be adjusted according to the specificities of the thesis being prepared and the doctoral researcher's project.

Vocational training (cross-curricular/complementary) as well as language courses (French and English) and education in research ethics and scientific integrity are available at the Bretagne Loire University School of Doctors and the Doctoral Colleges of the site. The doctoral school offers subject-based education.

Exceptionally, in particular for co-supervised theses, those under CIFRE agreements (Industrial Agreements for Training through Research) and doctoral researchers in paid employment unrelated to the thesis work, in response to a justified request countersigned by the thesis supervisor(s), the director of the doctoral school (or the deputy director of the site) can exempt a doctoral researcher from having to take all or part of the courses during the thesis.

Each doctoral researcher, while respecting the above rules, is free to choose their training programme and their thesis supervisor(s) are responsible for ensuring that the choices made are appropriate when a doctoral researcher chooses a course outside of those offered by the doctoral school, the school of doctors and the doctoral colleges of the sites.

A list of the courses taken, drawn up by the doctoral researcher and validated by the doctoral school, is included in the portfolio set out by the national regulations. This may be requested by the institution of enrolment before granting permission for the thesis defense.

At the same time, it is incumbent on the doctoral researcher, with the support of the team supervising the thesis, on the doctoral school to which the researcher belongs and on the institution of enrolment, to take an early interest in the doctoral researcher's occupational integration by contacting their potential future employers (research or R&D laboratories, companies, universities, research centres in France or abroad, etc.). To this end, the doctoral researcher shall whenever possible take part in the various events arranged for the purpose of improving the match between their education and employment prospects.

## **2. SUBJECT, PREPARATION AND FEASIBILITY OF THE THESIS**

The thesis supervisor(s), the institution and the director of the doctoral researcher's host unit must ensure that the proposed thesis subject is in keeping with the host unit's areas of research. The thesis supervisor(s), called upon due to their recognised expertise in the field of research concerned, must identify the innovative nature of the subject in the scientific context and ensure its current relevance.

They must ensure in the definition of the subject that the research work can be completed within a time period consistent with the thesis duration as set out by the current regulations in force (three years for a full-time equivalent devoted to research, or in other cases, the doctorate preparation period may be up to six years).

Extensions can only be granted on an exceptional basis in response to a justified request by the doctoral researcher and the thesis supervisor(s). An extension being accepted shall under no circumstances automatically result in the continuation of the funding that the doctoral researcher may have received, although the option of further assistance may be explored, especially for doctoral researchers encountering social or medical difficulties.

In order to keep to the scheduled timetable, the doctoral researcher and thesis director(s) must honour their commitments. Repeated failure to do so shall be documented in a joint statement by the doctoral researcher and the thesis supervisor(s), which may lead to a mediation procedure.

The supervisor(s) must define and assemble the resources to be implemented in order to enable the work to be done under the right conditions. To this end, the doctoral researcher is fully integrated into their host unit, and where possible they have equal access to the same facilities there as the tenured researchers in order to complete their research work (equipment, resources - IT in particular, documentation, opportunity to attend seminars and conferences). The director of the doctoral researcher's host unit and their thesis supervisor(s) must ensure that the doctoral researcher has the necessary material resources to present their work at scientific meetings, in particular national and international ones.

The thesis supervisor(s) must provide quality supervision and monitoring of the progress of the thesis work, which accounts for a significant amount of their time. The future doctoral researcher must be informed of the number of theses currently being supervised by the potential thesis supervisor(s) under consideration and the frequency of meetings between the doctoral researcher and their thesis supervisor(s).

The doctoral researcher regularly informs their thesis supervisor(s) about the progress of their thesis and any difficulties encountered.

The doctoral researcher is supported by an individual monitoring committee composed of at least two persons not involved in the thesis and appointed at the time of enrolment by the director of the doctoral school and proposed by the director of the unit. If one of the committee members resigns, he or she is replaced following the same process. The monitoring committee may be convened at the request of the doctoral researcher or the thesis supervisor(s) at any time during the course of the thesis. The individual monitoring committee shall meet at least once a year with the doctoral researcher or, for the first year, shall receive an activity report from the doctoral researcher and evaluate the training conditions and the progress of their research. It then formulates recommendations and a detailed opinion on re-enrolment, which it forwards to the director of the doctoral school, the doctoral researcher and the thesis supervisor(s).

Preparation of the thesis requires the doctoral researcher's enrolment at their institution to be renewed each year. On this occasion, the director of the doctoral school checks that the scientific, material and financial conditions are in place to guarantee that the doctoral researcher's research and thesis preparation work go smoothly.

Re-enrolment applications are accompanied by a report on the progress of the thesis work. This report produced by the doctoral researcher includes the opinions of the thesis (co-)supervisors, the directors of the host unit and the individual monitoring committee. The director of the doctoral school proposes the enrolment for the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> year to the head of the institution in charge of enrolment as soon as these opinions are favourable. Applications to enrol for the 4<sup>th</sup> year (and above) as well as disputed cases of enrolment for the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> year are subject to the favourable opinion of the individual monitoring committee.

If the planned enrolment is not renewed after the thesis supervisor has given their opinion, the doctoral researcher is notified of this opinion and the justification for it by the director of the doctoral school. The doctoral researcher may request a second opinion from the research committee of the academic council or the authority that fulfils this function at the institution in question. Non-renewal decisions are made by the head of the institution, who notifies the doctoral researcher if this is the case.

In accordance with national regulations, exceptionally and in response to a justified request by the doctoral researcher, an indivisible gap period lasting a maximum of one year may be taken once, by decision of the head of the institution where the doctoral researcher is enrolled, after the employer has given their agreement, if applicable, and the thesis supervisor(s) and director of the doctoral school have given their opinion.

### **3. THE DOCTORAL RESEARCHER'S PLACE AT THE HOST UNIT: RIGHTS AND DUTIES**

As a member of the host unit in their own right, the doctoral researcher is subject to the same rules as all of the research professors and researchers at the unit, especially in the field of

publications, communications, invention patents and scientific ethics. They participate in the collective tasks inherent in the unit's scientific life but cannot make up for any inadequacies in the technical supervision provided by the unit or be given tasks outside of their research project. It is the duty of the thesis supervisor(s) and the director of the host unit to explain the doctoral researcher's status precisely to them, as well as the position of the doctoral researcher's scientific project in relation to the activities of the host team. They must also inform the doctoral researcher about how the unit works (statutes, internal regulations, unit council, health and safety conditions) and the representation of doctoral researchers within these authorities.

The doctoral researcher, meanwhile, must commit to a timetable and pace of work consistent with that of their host unit, with the aim of earning the doctorate within the agreed timeframe. They have a duty to inform their thesis supervisor(s) of any difficulties encountered and how their thesis is progressing.

As part of their thesis, the doctoral researcher is encouraged to participate in activities to disseminate the scientific and technical cultures developed at the unit.

The doctoral researcher undertakes to follow the internal regulations of the doctoral school to which they belong, the institution at which they are enrolled and their host unit.

#### **4. THESIS DEFENSE-RELATED ARRANGEMENTS**

The practicalities regarding the membership of the jury and the thesis defense, as described in the internal regulations of each doctoral school, must comply with the national regulations in force and be in line with the procedures in place at the establishments that award the national doctorate degree.

#### **5. PUBLICATION AND APPLICATION OF THE THESIS**

The quality and impact of the thesis can be measured in particular through publications or patents and industrial reports that will be based on the work, be it the thesis itself or articles written during or after the preparation of the manuscript.

The thesis work shall preferably be published in journals or peer-reviewed publications recognised by the sections of the CNU (National Council of Universities) and the HCERES (High Council for Evaluation of Research and Higher Education). The same shall apply to doctoral researchers' participation in communications at international conferences or filing patents. When the thesis defense dossier is submitted, unless another rule has been set in the internal regulations of the doctoral school, the doctoral researcher is advised to highlight the publication (or acceptance) of at least one publication recognised by the section(s) of the CNU and the HCERES as the main author or sole author.

#### **6. MEDIATION PROCEDURES**

Any persistent conflict between the doctoral researcher and the thesis supervisor(s) may be brought to the attention of the director of the unit, who shall endeavour to help the parties to

find a solution to the problem. The doctoral researcher, the thesis supervisor(s), or the director of the unit may also contact the director of the doctoral school (or the deputy director of the site), who will call on a mediation group consisting of two members of the doctoral school council, one of whom is a doctoral researcher representative. This group, without divesting anyone of their responsibilities, shall listen to the parties and propose a solution. The mission of the mediation group implies its impartiality. Should this mediation fail, the doctoral researcher, the thesis supervisor(s) or the director of the unit may ask the head of the institution of enrolment to appoint a new mediator. In the event of further failure, a final appeal may be made to the head of the institution of enrolment.

The doctoral school and the institution of enrolment shall keep each other informed of the conclusions of any mediations that they organise.

## **7. PARTICIPATION IN THE ACTIVITIES OF THE BRETAGNE LOIRE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF DOCTORS**

The doctoral researcher keeps themselves informed of the activities of the Bretagne Loire University School of Doctors. At the time of their enrolment on the thesis, they commit to giving the Bretagne Loire University School of Doctors any information necessary for the proper use of the Bretagne Loire University doctoral database, in particular the information about their occupational integration and professional career, and this for a period of five years after earning their doctorate.

*The undersigned declare that they have read and understood the doctorate charter and the training agreement and agree to all of the proposals made therein.*

*Signatures*

Doctoral researcher (place and date, last name and first name):	Thesis supervisor(s) (or assistant supervisor(s)) (place(s) and date(s), last name(s) and first name(s)):
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