



**St. Elisabeth University of Health Care  
and Social Work in Bratislava**

**Internal Provision no. 11/2025**

**Directive on doctoral studies**

**St. Elisabeth University of Health Care and Social Work in Bratislava**

The rector of St. Elisabeth University of Health Care and Social Work in Bratislava (hereinafter "VŠZaSP"), in compliance with Article 48 paragraph 1 letter n) of the Act no. 131/2002 Coll., on Universities and on amendment and completion of certain laws as amended (hereinafter "Higher Education Act") and with regard to the Study Regulation of VŠZaSP, releases this internal provision: "Directive on doctoral studies at the St. Elisabeth University of Health Care and Social Work in Bratislava (hereinafter "directive"). The directive is part of the VŠZaSP internal quality assurance system for higher education, in compliance with the standards of the Slovak Accreditation Agency for Higher Education; and it is binding for all students of the doctoral studies and employees of VŠZaSP.

## **FIRST PART – GENERAL PROVISIONS**

### **Art. 1**

#### **Introductory provisions**

- (1) The doctoral study programme is the third level of university education<sup>1</sup>, which is provided by VŠZaSP in the study fields according to accredited study programmes<sup>2</sup> stated in the register of study programmes. The basic condition of such studies are regulated by article 54 of the law. The doctoral study programme focuses on acquiring knowledge based on the current state of scientific and artistic knowledge and especially on the student's own contribution to such knowledge, which is the result of scientific research and individual creative activity in the field of science or technology, or individual theoretical and creative activity in the field of art.
- (2) For doctoral studies, the relevant provisions of the VŠZaSP Study Regulation shall apply accordingly.
- (3) The doctoral studies are taking place at the VŠZaSP in Bratislava and at the Faculty of Health and Social Work of St Ladislaus in Nové Zámky. They may also be carried out in cooperation with an external educational institution, with which VŠZaSP shall stipulate a framework agreement on doctoral studies and, at the same time, it shall stipulate an individual agreement for each doctoral student (in order to regulate the matters related to the doctoral student's activities at the external educational institution, including the payment of costs to the external educational institution<sup>3</sup>).
- (4) Doctoral studies are conducted in full-time form and part-time form.
- (5) Full-time doctoral students must be present at the relevant VŠZaSP workplace, according to supervisor's needs. Full-time doctoral students shall receive a scholarship from the university (or from the external educational institution), from the date of enrolment in doctoral studies until the date of completion of studies. Part-time students shall not receive a scholarship.

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<sup>1</sup> Article 2 paragraph 5 of the Act no. 131/2002 Coll., on Universities and on amendment and completion of certain laws as amended (hereinafter "Act").

<sup>2</sup> Provisions of the Act no. 269/2018 Coll. on the assurance of quality in higher education and on amendments to Act no. 343/2015 Coll. on public procurement and amendments to certain acts, as amended

<sup>3</sup> Article 54 paragraph 12 of the Act.

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- (6) The same methods shall be used both for full-time and part-time form of implementation of the study programme.
  - (7) The standard duration of doctoral studies in compliance with the accredited study programme.
  - (8) Standard duration of full-time doctoral studies:
    - a) three academic years,
    - b) four academic years.
  - (9) Standard duration of part-time doctoral studies:
    - a) four academic years,
    - b) five academic years.
  - (10) The condition for the proper successful conclusion of doctoral studies is the completion of a Dissertation Examination (which is part of the State Examinations) and the defence of the Dissertation Thesis. The Dissertation Thesis is the Final Thesis. The doctoral studies shall end with the defence of the Dissertation Thesis.
  - (11) The student who successfully complete the doctoral studies is awarded the academic title "doctor" ("philosophiae doctor", abbreviated as "PhD.". The abbreviation "PhD." is placed after the name).

## **Art. 2**

### **Management and supervision of doctoral studies**

- (1) At the VŠZaSP, in the given study field, the doctoral studies are monitored and evaluated by the Expert Committee<sup>4</sup> in terms of international and national standards. The Expert Committee is constituted for the purposes of doctoral study programmes in the relevant accredited study fields. The Expert Committee is created according to the relevant internal provision of VŠZaSP.

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<sup>4</sup> Article 54 paragraph 17 of the Act.

- (2) VŠZaSP may agree the creation of a joint Expert Committee with an external educational institution. If the doctoral studies are conducted in cooperation with an external educational institution, such institution shall be adequately represented within the Expert Committee.
- a) The Expert Committee is established by the university rector or by the dean of the faculty where the doctoral study programme is accredited, after the approval by the VŠZaSP Scientific Board, on the basis of a proposal by the person responsible for the implementation, development, and quality assurance of the study programme.
- b) The activity of the Expert Committee is regulated by the Statute and by the Rules of Procedure of the Expert Committee of the study field of St. Elisabeth University of Health Care and Social Work in Bratislava.
- (3) The doctoral study programme in the relevant study field may be provided in cooperation with other universities, including universities based outside the territory of the Slovak Republic ("joint study program"). Terms and conditions of cooperation shall be determined by a written agreement between the universities.

## **SECOND PART**

### **DOCTORAL STUDIES**

#### **Art. 3**

#### **Admission Procedure to doctoral studies**

- (1) The basic condition for admission to doctoral studies at the VŠZaSP is the completion of second-level higher education<sup>5</sup>.
- (2) The VŠZaSP/faculty dean may set additional conditions for admission to individual accredited study programmes in order to ensure that candidates with the necessary skills and aptitudes are admitted (following the second level of higher education) to study in the study fields "nursery", "public health", "social work", "laboratory testing methods in healthcare", or other related study field approved by the Scientific Board.

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<sup>5</sup> Article 56 paragraph 4 of the Act.

The prescribed conditions and the method of verifying their fulfilment must ensure the selection of candidates who display the highest level of ability to study<sup>6</sup>.

- (3) A candidate who does not prove that they meet the conditions for admission to study at the time of verification of the admission conditions may be admitted to study on a conditional basis (with the obligation to prove that they meet the admission conditions to study at the latest on the day designated for enrolment in the study programme)<sup>7</sup>.
- (4) After a proposal by the chairperson of the Expert Committee, at least two months before the application deadline, the VŠZaSP/faculty (rector/dean) shall establish the topics of Dissertation Theses to which candidates may apply during the admission process (in the case of a topic set by an external educational institution, they shall also state the name of this institution)<sup>8</sup>. After an agreement with the competent department, the VŠZaSP/faculty can also accept a topic proposed by the candidate. The topics of Dissertation Theses, as proposed by the supervisors, are approved by the competent Expert Committee.
- (5) The topics of Dissertation Theses (together with the aforementioned formal elements) are published through the VŠZaSP website, in a collective way, according to specific provision<sup>9</sup>. The university/faculty shall publish information about the number of candidates that it schedules to admit in the studies within the relevant study programme.
- (6) For each single topics, the following elements shall be stated:
  - a) name of the study programme,
  - b) title of study field,
  - c) supervisor's name,
  - d) name of the external educational institution which is assigning the topic (if relevant),
  - e) form of study (part-time, full-time),
  - f) admission conditions,
  - g) general content of the admission examination,
  - h) deadline for submission of applications,

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<sup>6</sup> Article 17 of the Act.

<sup>7</sup> Article 58 paragraph 1 of the Act.

<sup>8</sup> Article 57 paragraph 5 of the Act.

<sup>9</sup> Article 57 paragraph 5 of Act no. 211/2000 Coll. on free access to information and on amendments to certain acts (Act on freedom of information).

- i) date of Admission Procedure.
- (7) Candidates for study shall submit their applications in writing according to the instructions by VŠZaSP or electronically, using the information system allowing candidates to verify that their application has been registered, from the date of its submission to the date of completion of the Admission Procedure<sup>10</sup>.
- (8) In the application for doctoral studies, the candidate shall state:
- a) name and surname, birth surname, academic titles, personal number, date and place of birth, marital status, residence, citizenship of the student, e-mail address, ID card number (passport number for foreign citizens), correspondence address (foreign citizens shall also report their residence in the Slovak Republic), selected study field, and selected topic of Dissertation Thesis,
  - b) information about previous employment or current employment,
  - c) selected form of doctoral studies.
- (9) The candidate shall attach the following documents to the application:
- a) curriculum vitae with current photograph of the candidate,
  - b) officially certified photocopies of documents proving candidate's education (university diploma and diploma supplement),
  - c) Candidates from abroad who completed their previous university studies outside the Slovak Republic must attach a certificate of recognition of their educational qualifications, in compliance with article 33 of the Act no. 422/2015 Coll. on recognition of educational documents and professional qualifications and on amendments and supplements to certain laws (the document must be authenticated by a notary),
  - d) additional documents proving other professional and scientific activities,
  - e) proposal for the framework project of the Dissertation Thesis (according to Annex 1),
  - f) copy of the receipt of payment of the Admission Procedure fee (if the Admission Procedure is unsuccessful, this fee will not be refunded),
  - g) consent to the processing of personal data in connection with the GDPR for the purpose of activities relating to the handling of applications/requests and studies.

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10 Article 58 paragraph 2 of the Act

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- (10) VŠZaSP shall return the application and accompanying documents to the candidate if the candidate does not meet the conditions specified in the Admission Procedure notice. Other reasons for returning an application may include: (i) submission after the deadline; (ii) failure to complete the application form or (iii) failure to submit all required annexes to the application.
- (11) The Admission Procedure to doctoral studies includes the Admission Examination<sup>11</sup>, which is conducted in accordance with the relevant principles/criteria of the Admission Procedure for the next academic year (principles/criteria that are published on the university website). The Rector/Dean of the Faculty (by means of the PhD. study offices of VŠZaSP) sends to the candidate the invitation to the Admission Examination, at least 14 days before the date of the Admission Examination.
- (12) The Admission Examination for the doctoral studies takes place in person or online via videoconference or through other information and communication technology.
- (13) The Admission Examination consists of an oral interview on the subject of study during which the candidate demonstrates knowledge in the field of the relevant study programme and with regard to the defence of the draft proposal for the Dissertation Thesis in accordance with the topic of the Dissertation Thesis. The Admission Examination also includes a test in a world language (English, German, French, or Russian) usually in writing.
- (14) The Admission Examination for the doctoral studies is held before the Admission Committee. The Admission Committee consists of its chairperson and at least two members, who are appointed by the rector of VŠZaSP (or by the faculty dean) upon the recommendation of the chairperson of the relevant Expert Committee. The role of Committee member may also be covered by the supervisor for the selected topic. At least one member of the Committee must hold the academic title of professor, or a doctoral degree, or must be a researcher with recognised scientific qualification level "Ila". The other members can be associate professors or researchers with recognised scientific

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11 Article 57 paragraph 3 of the Act.

qualification level "IIb", or qualification level "I", in accordance with specific regulation<sup>12</sup>, or in the functional position of professor or associate professor.

- (15) In the case of Admission Procedure on a topic defined by an external educational institution, a representative of an external educational institution shall also be a member of the Committee (he or she shall be designated by the statutory representative of the external educational institution and officially appointed by the rector of VŠZaSP or by the faculty dean). After mutual agreement, the Admission Examination can also take place at the external educational institution, with the participation of the appointed members of the Admission Committee.
- (16) The Admission Committee shall assess the result of the Admission Examination, in a closed session, and shall eventually decide whether the Examination is "passed" (successful) or "failed" (unsuccessful). In the event that multiple candidates have applied for the same topic, the Committee shall determine their order based on their success in the doctoral study Admission Examination, separately for full-time and part-time studies. When determining the order, consideration is also given to the scope and quality of the candidate's professional publishing activities as well as to the results of their other professional activities (e.g. results in student scientific and professional work competitions).
- (17) A record of the result of the Admission Examination shall be drawn up. The Committee shall prepare a proposal for the admission of successful candidates to be submitted to the rector of VŠZaSP or to the dean of the faculty. In case of Dissertation Thesis topic defined by an external educational institution, such institution must give its written consent to the admission of the candidate.
- (18) The rector/dean of the Faculty takes the decision on the basis of the results of Admission Examination about the acceptance or non-acceptance of the candidate, no later than 30 days from the date of the Admission Examination<sup>13</sup>. If the candidate is accepted, the rector/dean of the Faculty shall also state the name of the supervisor and the title of the Dissertation Thesis in the written document on confirmation of acceptance. Apart from that, this document shall also report: ruling, grounds for the decision, information on the possibility of submitting a request for review of the decision. The document is to be delivered to the candidate personally. An unsuccessful candidate has the right to inspect the documentation of the Admission Procedure and may submit a request for review. A candidate who has been rejected for doctoral studies may submit a request for review of the decision to the authority that issued the decision (within 8 days of its delivery). The date on the postal stamp is binding.
- (19) A candidate who has not been accepted for doctoral studies may submit a request for review of the decision on non-acceptance to the rector/dean.
- (20) Once the decision on admission has been announced, the candidate is entitled to enrol in the

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12 Act no. 133/2002 Coll. on the Slovak Academy of Sciences.

13 Article 58 paragraph 6; Article 54 paragraphs 5 to 7 of the Act.

studies<sup>14</sup>.

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14 Article 59 of the Act.

The competent PhD. study office shall send an invitation to register for the first year to the accepted doctoral study candidate (by registered post with delivery confirmation to the addressee).

- (21) The accepted candidate becomes a doctoral student on the date of enrolment, which is decided by the rector/dean of the faculty. Upon enrolment, the doctoral student shall receive information about the study programme to which they have been admitted and about the conditions of studies.
- (22) Foreign candidates are subject to the same Admission Examination requirements and the same study criteria as local candidates. Foreign students must submit a decision on the recognition of their educational qualifications issued by the competent foreign university (article 33 of the Act no. 422/2015).

#### **Art. 4**

##### **Calendar and organisational matters of doctoral studies**

- (1) The academic year begins on September 1 of the current year and ends on August 31 of the following year. The academic year is split into the first (winter) semester and the second (summer) semester. The doctoral studies start at the beginning of the first semester. The doctoral studies can also start at the beginning of the second semester of the academic year<sup>15</sup>.
- (2) The commencement of doctoral studies is subject to the deadlines approved in the academic year calendar, for the third level with regard to the relevant academic year.
- (3) The doctoral studies at VŠZaSP are carried out according to the accredited study programme in the following study fields:
  - a) Laboratory testing methods,
  - b) Missionary, charitable and development activities,
  - c) Nursing,
  - d) Social work,
  - e) Public health.

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<sup>15</sup> Article 61 paragraph 3 of the Act.

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- (4) The studies according to the doctoral study programme (hereinafter "doctoral studies") are carried out in compliance with the individual study plan under the management of the supervisor<sup>16</sup>. A condition to be fulfilled in order to complete the doctoral studies is the completion of a Dissertation Examination (which is part of the State Examinations) and the defence of the Dissertation Thesis. The Dissertation Thesis is the Final Thesis.
  - (5) The doctoral studies, in the given study programme, are subdivided in "study part" and "scientific part".
  - (6) The study part of the doctoral studies consists of lectures, seminars, and individual study of specialised literature (focusing on the topic of the Dissertation Thesis according to the individual study plan of the doctoral student).
  - (7) Within the study part, the doctoral student shall complete compulsory, compulsory elective, and optional courses (subjects) according to the study field for which they have enrolled. Each subject has a set number of credits, forms of assessment, and conditions for completion (as reported in the Information sheets of the subjects, according to the study field). A completed subject may be assessed as "completed" or "credited" or "not completed". In the case of examinations, it is necessary to use the classification scale "A – E" (passed or "FX" (failed).
  - (8) The study part includes a foreign language examination, which the doctoral student must complete before taking the Dissertation Examination.
  - (9) After passing the Dissertation Examination, the study part of the doctoral programme is completed.
  - (10) The scientific part consists of individual or team scientific work by the students, as well as individual creative work by doctoral students linked to the topic of the Dissertation Thesis.
  - (11) The scientific part includes the project of the Dissertation Thesis, active participation in scientific conferences, publications from research activities, citations, participation in projects, preparation, submission, and implementation of grants, study stays.
  - (12) The scientific part shall end with the defence of the Dissertation Thesis. The scientific part of doctoral studies is professionally supervised by a supervisor.

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<sup>16</sup> Article 51 paragraph 3 of the Act.

- (13) The level and the nature of the study part and scientific part, required for successful completion of the programme, are defined in Annex 2 of this directive (Credit requirements and selection of subjects for the individual study plan).
- (14) If a doctoral student registered for a dissertation topic offered by an external educational institution, they shall complete the scientific part of their doctoral studies at that external educational institution. The university shall stipulate an individual agreement with the external educational institution regarding the doctoral student's doctoral studies. The aforementioned agreement shall regulate issues related to the doctoral student's activities at the external educational institution, including the payment of costs to the external educational institution. The activity pursuant to article 54 paragraph 11 of the Act is linked to educational activity where doctoral programme is carried out.
- (15) The VŠZaSP/faculty may invite creative professionals from abroad with research and teaching experience, in order to teach selected subjects in doctoral study programmes. The VŠZaSP/faculty allows doctoral students to complete a portion of their study part in a foreign language.
- (16) Educational activities are carried out in presence or in hybrid form, as specified in the Information sheet of the relevant study programme.

## **Art. 5**

### **Individual study plan**

- (1) The individual study plan is prepared and approved in accordance with the study programme standards of SAAVŠ and with the rules of the internal system of VŠZaSP.
- (2) The individual study plan of the doctoral studies determines the course of study so that it corresponds to the accredited study programme. It is drawn up by the supervisor together with the doctoral student, within one month of the doctoral student's enrolment<sup>17</sup>. The supervisor shall submit the individual study plan for the approval to the competent Expert Committee. The approved individual study plan is part of the study documentation of the doctoral student. It shall be delivered to the competent office for the PhD. studies.

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17 Article 54 paragraph 8 and paragraph 17 of the Act.

- (3) The compiled form of the individual study plan is to be delivered in three copies. It must be signed by the doctoral student, by the supervisor, and by the chairperson of the Expert Committee.
- (4) The individual study plan is established for the whole period of studies and it consists of a study part and a scientific part (Annex 3 of this directive).
- (5) The individual study plan is established in such a way to allow the doctoral student to meet all requirements for the successful completion of studies within the frame of the standard study length. The individual study plan is updated on a yearly basis according to the annual evaluation of the doctoral student. Its modifications are subject to the approval of the Expert Committee. The proposals for modification of the individual study plan are submitted in written form, with relevant justification and opinion of the supervisor. The Expert Committee shall pronounce itself about the approval of the proposed modification within 30 days. The modification is marked in the Annual evaluation, in the part "Modifications of the Individual study plan" and it is saved in the IS.
- (6) The individual study plan sets time and content sequentiality of attendance to courses and forms of assessment of study results.
- (7) The following items shall be included in the individual study plan:
  - a) name and surname of doctoral student, contact address of the doctoral student,
  - b) supervisor, supervisor's workplace,
  - c) specialised supervisor and his/her workplace, if he/she is designated and approved by the school scientific board,
  - d) study programme,
  - e) form of study,
  - f) theme of Dissertation Thesis, which can be modified by the supervisor with the consent of the chairperson of the Expert Committee,
  - g) beginning of doctoral studies,
  - h) scheduled deadline for termination of studies,
  - i) date of approval of the individual study plan,
  - j) scheduled date of the Dissertation Examination,

- k) timeline for Thesis defence.
- (8) The doctoral student shall choose units of study part and scientific part in the individual study plan, according to the Credit requirements and selection of subjects for the individual study plan (Annex 2).
- a) amongst the compulsory and compulsory elective subjects that the doctoral student has to attend, incl. the relevant credit value,
  - b) amongst the optional subjects (incl. the relevant credit value) which the doctoral student has the possibility to register in order to supplement their studies and obtain a sufficient number of credits,
  - c) within the pedagogical activity (in the full-time form of doctoral studies) or other related specialised activity (incl. the relevant credit value),
  - d) within active participation in national and foreign scientific and specialised conferences (incl. the relevant credit value),
  - e) within study exchange stays (incl. the relevant credit value),
  - f) within scheduled output in the publication activity of the doctoral student (incl. the relevant credit value),
  - g) grants/projects (incl. the relevant credit value),
  - h) literature to be studied by the doctoral student as part of their individual preparation for the Dissertation examination.
- (9) The list of subjects of the Dissertation Examination is established according to the study programme approved by the Expert Committee (Annex 5).
- (10) The fulfilment of the individual study plan is evaluated in the annual evaluation of the doctoral student, by specifying the fulfilment of units of study part and scientific part in each semester, academic year, date of performance, mark, number of credits. The supervisor, the doctoral student, and the chairperson of Expert Committee shall express their opinions about the fulfilment of the individual study plan.
- (11) The evaluation of the individual study plan is recorded in a written report containing an assessment of the study part and scientific activity of the doctoral student. At the same time, tasks for the following period are set, including deadlines for completing the tasks.
- (12) A subject that a doctoral student was unable to complete according to the individual

study plan may be repeatedly registered and must be completed before the date of the dissertation examination.

- (12) Part of the doctoral program involves teaching activities or other specific activities related to the teaching activities, in compliance with the individual study plan, according to the following rules:
- a) for full-time doctoral students: for a maximum of four hours per week on average during the academic year in which the teaching takes place. The teaching activities consist in conducting seminars, exercises, lectures max. four hours per week on average during the academic year, for the benefit of Bachelor's degree students,
  - b) for part-time doctoral students: direct teaching can be replaced by another suitable form of pedagogical activity, e.g.: preparing tests for examinations, conducting seminars, preparing teaching materials for lessons. In the part-time form of doctoral study, doctoral students may perform teaching activities for a maximum of four hours per academic year. The teaching activities shall take place at the VŠZaSP Training Workplace. If a doctoral student is employed at another university, their teaching may be credited towards their teaching activities pursuant to the individual study plan. The doctoral student must prove the range of their teaching activities and the place of performance.
- (14) If the Dissertation Thesis is written in a foreign language, the abstract and the summary shall be in Slovak language.

## **Art. 6**

### **Rights and duties of the doctoral student**

- (1) The doctoral student has, notably, the following rights<sup>18</sup>:
- a) study in the study programme in which they were admitted,
  - b) create an individual study plan together with the supervisor in accordance with the study programme<sup>19</sup>,
  - c) participate in the research activities and other creative activities of VŠZaSP,
  - d) apply for possible study visits abroad or scientific exchange programmes abroad (or research stage at a foreign workplace) and perform part of the doctoral study abroad,
  - e) exploit information and consultation services relating to the studies.
- (2) The doctoral student has, notably, the following duties<sup>20</sup>:

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18 Article 70 of the Act.

19 Article 51 paragraph 4 of the Act.

20 Article 71 of the Act.

- a) once compiled in cooperation with the supervisor, the individual study plan shall be submitted by the doctoral student to the Expert Committee, within 30 days from the date of registration. Once the individual study plan is approved, the doctoral student shall deliver it to the PhD. office of VŠZaSP,
- b) the doctoral student shall deliver on a yearly basis the state of fulfilment of their individual study plan, or modification of the individual study plan,
- c) fulfil their study obligations in accordance with their individual study plan and the academic year calendar,
- d) provide the supervisor with basic documents concerning the study part and scientific part of the individual study plan, for the purpose of the annual evaluation of the doctoral student (copies of publication activities, grants, stays abroad, etc.), including the proposal for credits attained. Then, the doctoral student shall also send the signed annual evaluation in due time to the PhD. office of VŠZaSP,
- e) successfully attend all compulsory courses, pursuant to the individual study plan,
- f) select and attend (amongst the study units) compulsory elective and optional courses, as defined in the individual study plan,
- g) obtain credits for performing individual creative activities in the area of science, according to the individual study plan,
- h) observe the study regulation, this directive, and the other internal provisions of VŠZaSP,
- i) notify to the to the PhD. office of VŠZaSP a concrete address intended for the delivery of documents, as well as changes to personal data, immediately after such changes occur,
- j) consult with the supervisor about publishing activities,
- k) submit the research project of the Dissertation Thesis to the VŠZaSP Ethics Committee for approval and ensure compliance with the university's Code of Ethics,
- l) attach to the Dissertation Thesis the consent and the number of the statement of the Ethics Committee of VŠZaSP (mode of data management and data storage),
- m) ensure that the research project is approved by the Ethics Committee of VŠZaSP (the approval and reference number of the Ethics Committee's statement must be included in every scientific research publication by doctoral students),

- n) submit to the approval of the Ethics Committee the request of grant/project on which the doctoral student shall work during the studies; if the Dissertation Thesis project is carried out within the frame of a healthcare facility or social institution, it will be necessary to have the consent of the Ethics Committee of the concerned facility/institution (and in this case it is not necessary to have the consent of the Ethics Committee of VŠZaSP),
- o) for the grants/projects, provide proof of consent and the number of the VŠZaSP Ethics Committee's statement; method of data management and data archiving,
- p) register their publication outputs in the VŠZaSP library, according to the category of classification of publication activities in compliance with the Decree of the Slovak Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport n. 397/2020 Coll. regarding the centralised register of publication activities and the centralised register of artistic activities,
- q) ensure that every publication by a doctoral student is affiliated with VŠZaSP and with the relevant study field (in case of study at an external educational institution, also affiliation with such institution),
- r) submit a written application for the dissertation defence to the competent PhD. study Office of VŠZaSP/faculty,
- s) submit an application for authorisation to defend the Dissertation Thesis; submit the completed Dissertation Thesis to the competent PhD. study Office of VŠZaSP/faculty,
- t) in case of a full-time doctoral students, engage in teaching activities for a maximum of 4 hours per week (on average) during the academic year in which the teaching takes place.

## **Art. 7**

### **Supervisor function**

- (1) The supervisor for the relevant field of study may be a teacher of VŠZaSP or another expert in the field or an external expert approved by the Scientific Board of VŠZaSP<sup>21</sup>. Requests for the

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21 Article 54 paragraph 4 of the Act.

approval of supervisors are submitted to the Scientific Board by the chairperson of the Expert Committee, the dean or the rector. Together with the aforementioned request it is necessary to annex a description of scientific-pedagogical features of the person who is supposed to hold the function of supervisor.

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The function of supervisor may be held by a person with the academic charge of "professor", "associate professor" or researcher with a PhD. title and with acknowledged Ila qualification level or with a DrSc. title. The supervisor can also be a person acting in the functional position of professor or functional position of associate professor.
- (3) The function of supervisor for topics proposed by external educational institutions may be held by a person approved by the relevant external educational institution, as long as this person meets the requirements reported in paragraph 2. The external educational institution shall inform the Scientific Board of VŠZaSP about the scientific-pedagogical characteristics of its supervisors.
- (4) The supervisor has especially the following duties:
  - a) provides professional guidance to the doctoral student during their doctoral studies,
  - b) prepares the individual study plan of the doctoral student (in cooperation with the doctoral student) at the beginning of the studies; then submits such document to the Expert Committee for approval, in compliance with this directive,
  - c) manages and ensures the proper implementation of the doctoral student's individual study plan, by providing feedback on its implementation once a year,
  - d) determines the extent of the doctoral student's teaching activities,
  - e) determines the focus of the Dissertation Thesis project and, together with the doctoral student, finalises its topic,
  - f) assigns to the doctoral students the relevant amount of credits according to the credit system (i) within yearly evaluation, (ii) for each completed stage, (iii) for successful completion of Dissertation Examination, and (iv) for the Dissertation Thesis after its successful defence,
  - g) summarises credits for the study and scientific parts, as well as for teaching activities,

- h) is responsible for the scientific quality level of the doctoral student's published work,
  - i) proposes to the rector/dean possible study stay of the doctoral student in other national or foreign institutions according to the relevant study field,
  - j) assists the doctoral student in arranging consultations with other experts,
  - k) submits a proposal to the rector/dean to expel a doctoral student from the programme,
  - l) expresses their opinion on the doctoral student's request to suspend their studies; expresses their opinion on the doctoral student's request to change the form of study,
  - m) submits (to the Expert Committee) the doctoral student's request to change the form of study, or modification of the topic of the Dissertation Thesis,
  - n) elaborates a written opinion (report concerning the written work for the Dissertation Examination), which is to be attached to the application of the doctoral student for admission to Dissertation Examination,
  - o) may recommend to the chairperson of the Expert Committee an opponent for the written part of the Dissertation Examination,
  - p) is a member of the Dissertation Examination Committee as well as of the Committee for the defence of Dissertation Thesis,
  - q) approves and (by means of the PhD. study offices of VŠZaSP) submits to the chairperson of the Expert Committee the annual evaluation of the doctoral student,
  - r) is obliged (at least once every 3 years) to release a topic for Dissertation Thesis,
- (1) The function of supervisor for a given doctoral student shall end in the case the the doctoral student interrupts their studies.
  - (2) Change of supervisor (if need be) during the doctoral studies is subject to the approval of the rector/dean, on the basis of a proposal by the chairperson of the Expert Committee. In case of change of supervisor or termination of the function of supervisor, the rector/dean shall promptly designate another supervisor, on the basis of a proposal by the chairperson of the Expert Committee.
  - (3) The function of the supervisor ends upon: (i) the supervisor's voluntary resignation; (ii) dismissal by the Scientific Board for failure to fulfil duties or (iii) termination of employment with the university/faculty.

- (4) The specialist supervisor for the relevant study field can be a teacher of the VŠZaSP or another expert in the given field. The specialist supervisor is proposed by the supervisor with the consent of the study programme guarantor. After the approval by the Scientific Board, the specialist supervisor is officially appointed by the rector.
- (5) The professional qualification of the specialist supervisor must be compliant with the topic of the Dissertation Thesis. The individual study plan and the scientific plan shall determine the areas and the extent of cooperation with the specialist supervisor, within the frame of guidance provided to the doctoral student.
- (6) The guidance of a doctoral student by a specialist supervisor does not contribute to the criteria for obtaining the title of associate professor.
- (7) The specialist supervisor may:
  - a) take part in the elaboration of the individual study plan and scientific plan of the doctoral student,
  - b) ensure professional and scientific preparation of the doctoral student, in cooperation with the supervisor,
  - c) participate in the gradual and yearly evaluation of the doctoral student,
  - d) contribute to the tuition of a maximum of one doctoral student,
  - e) propose an opponent for the written part of the Dissertation Thesis, after agreement with the supervisor,
  - f) the specialist supervisor does not have right to vote within their participation to the works of the Examination Committee for the Dissertation Examination
  - g) and within the defence of the Thesis by the doctoral student.

## **Art. 8**

### **Credit system of the doctoral student and assessment of study results**

- (1) The doctoral studies are evaluated according to the principles of the credit system, in compliance with the Decree of the Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic about the study credit system and with the Directive on doctoral studies.
- (2) The credit is the measuring unit of the working load of the student. One ECTS equals to 25-30 working hours.
- (3) The credit system is applied both to the full-time study form and to the part-time form of doctoral studies. Number of credits necessary to successfully complete the studies, for doctoral study programme:
  - a) in the full-time form of study, with standard study duration of three academic years = 180 credits; four academic years = 240 credits.
  - b) in the part-time form of study, with standard study duration of four academic years = 180 credits; five academic years = 240 credits.
- (4) The standard workload of a doctoral student during one academic year is considered to be the successful completion of activities corresponding to 60 credits for both full-time and part-time study, i.e. 30 credits per semester<sup>22</sup>.
- (5) A doctoral student may earn credits for a given course only once, and the activities are non-transferable.
- (6) During the course of the studies, the doctoral student shall receive credits for:
  - a) attendance of subjects of the study part according to the individual study plan,
  - b) Dissertation Examination,
  - c) defence of Dissertation Thesis,
  - d) scientific part according to the individual study plan,
  - e) teaching activities.

The doctoral student must obtain at least 60 credits for the study part and 110 credits for the scientific part, and 5–10 credits for the teaching activities (within the 180-credit study programme).

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22 Article 62 paragraph 4 of the Act

- (7) By the deadline of the Dissertation Examination the student must obtain at least 80 credits.
- (8) The doctoral student shall get 20 credits for Dissertation Examination, after successful completion.
- (9) For successful defence of Dissertation Thesis, the doctoral student shall get 30 credits.
- (10) In order to pass to the next academic year of studies, the doctoral student must get at least 40 credits.
- (11) In the last academic year of doctoral studies, the doctoral student (in both forms of study – full-time 3 years and part-time 4 years) must get at least 150 credits before the defence of Dissertation Thesis. After successful defence of Dissertation Thesis, the doctoral student gets 30 credits. In total, the doctoral student shall get 180 credits, which is a requirement for successful completion of studies.
- (12) In the last academic year of doctoral studies, the doctoral student (in both forms of study – full-time 4 years and part-time 5 years) must get at least 210 credits before the defence of Dissertation Thesis. After successful defence of Dissertation Thesis, the doctoral student gets 30 credits. In total, the doctoral student shall get 240 credits, which is a requirement for successful completion of studies.
- (13) If, during the relevant academic year, the student does not get the required amount of credits, they shall be excluded from the studies for not meeting the requirements. The doctoral student can get a maximum of 90 credits per academic year.
- (14) The amounts of credits for single activities are reported in the Annex of this directive (Credit Load and selection of subjects for the individual study plan).
- (15) If the doctoral student has completed part of their studies in another workplace (e.g. abroad), the credit obtained in that workplace shall be counted in full, as long as the doctoral student was sent to the given workplace within the frame of fulfilment of their study plan.
- (16) In case of change of doctoral study form, it is possible to acknowledge to the doctoral student the credits that they have so far obtained, provided that this is in line with their new study plan.
- (17) The doctoral students who were transferred from another university or institution may apply for credit recognition for their completed study activities during the previous

doctoral studies, provided that no more than five years have elapsed since their completion. The recognition of credits obtained in another university or institution are subject to approval of the chairperson of the Expert Committee for the relevant study programme. The credits obtained during doctoral studies at the VŠZaSP within the due deadline shall be automatically recognised, provided that no more than five years have elapsed since their completion.

## **Art. 9**

### **Annual evaluation of the doctoral student and control stages of studies**

- (1) The level of scientific education of the doctoral student is progressively checked during the studies, within the frame of the control stages and at the end of each single academic year, by submitting the annual evaluation of the doctoral student (Annex 4).
- (2) The control stages (within the study programme) are implemented by means of checks of the amount of credits obtained for the completed subjects that the doctoral student must prove (in order to continue their studies) at the end of the academic year by 31. 8.
- (3) In order to continue their studies in the next year of doctoral studies, the doctoral student must get at least 40 credits in both forms of doctoral studies (full-time and part-time).
- (4) Failure to meet the requirements of the control stage of doctoral studies, or failure to meet the requirements of the individual study plan, constitutes grounds for the supervisor to formulate and submit a proposal to the chairperson of the Expert Committee, in the doctoral student's annual evaluation, to expel the doctoral student from the programme, according to Article 66 paragraph 1 letter c) of the Act.
- (5) The annual evaluation of the doctoral student shall include:
  - a) assessment of status, deadlines, and level of scientific work of the doctoral student, incl. publication activities,
  - b) control of fulfilment of the terms of the tasks in the doctoral student's individual study plan,
  - c) adaptation of the individual study plan (if need be).
- (6) At the end of each single academic year, by 31 August, the doctoral student shall send the annual evaluation of the fulfilment of the study plan to the competent PhD. office of VŠZaSP. The annual evaluation is to be submitted in three copies (one copy for the doctoral student; one for the supervisor; and a third one to be archived in the doctoral student's records). If the doctoral student does not submit the annual evaluation, it will be considered as failure to meet their requirements and it may lead to exclusion from

studies.

- (7) The supervisor shall declare whether they recommend or do not recommend continuation of studies, or extension of studies. The supervisor shall assess the results achieved by the doctoral student during the academic year and the level of fulfilment of the study plan and observance of deadlines; the supervisor shall decide about the awarding of credits that the supervisor grants to the doctoral student in accordance with Article 7 of this directive. If need be, the supervisor submits a request of adaptation of the individual study plan, which they record in writing, in collaboration with the doctoral student, in the annual evaluation protocol.
- (8) The doctoral student, together with the supervisor, is responsible for the accurate filling of the annual evaluation. By signing, they confirm whether or not they have fulfilled their obligations deriving from the individual study plan.
- (9) On the basis of the annual evaluation of the doctoral student, the chairperson of the Expert Committee shall decide whether the doctoral student can continue their studies (or about possible changes of the individual study plan). On the basis of the doctoral student's annual evaluation, approved by the chairperson of the Expert Committee, after fulfilling the minimum number of credits for the relevant academic year, the competent VŠZaSP PhD. office (after having ascertained that all conditions have been met, incl. the payment of all fees) shall enrol the student to the next academic year of studies. After consultation, the Expert Committee shall propose measures to remove insufficiencies and shall decide about modifications of the individual study plan.
- (10) The decision according to the previous paragraph contains a written justification; the student has the right to submit an appeal against it in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Study Regulation.

## **Art. 10**

### **Dissertation Examination**

- (1) The Dissertation Examination is a condition to be fulfilled for successful completion of doctoral studies. The Dissertation Examination is held before the defence of the Dissertation Thesis. The Dissertation Examination is classified amongst the State

Examinations<sup>23</sup>.

- (2) The doctoral students in the three-year form of doctoral studies shall apply for the Dissertation Examination within 18 months of the beginning of studies; the doctoral students in the four-year form of doctoral studies shall apply for the Dissertation Examination within 24 months of the date of enrolment in the doctoral studies,
- (3) The doctoral students in the four-year external form of doctoral studies shall apply for the Dissertation Examination within 24 months of the beginning of studies; the doctoral students in the five-year form of doctoral studies shall apply for the Dissertation Examination within 30 months of the date of enrolment in the doctoral studies.
- (4) 

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 Interruptions in doctoral studies do not count towards the deadline for registering for the Dissertation Examination.
- (5) Together with the application form regarding the Dissertation Examination, the doctoral student is obliged to submit also the written work for the Dissertation Examination.
- (6) The written application form shall be submitted by the doctoral student to the competent PhD. office. The Dissertation Examination application form is available on the university/faculty website.
- (7) A condition for granting permission to take the Dissertation Examination is the attainment of at least 80 credits, completion of the study part subjects of the doctoral studies in accordance with the individual study plan, and passing the language examination.
- (8) If doctoral students do not register for their Dissertation Examination by the specified deadline and fail to submit the Dissertation Thesis, it will be considered that they have failed to fulfil their obligations, which constitutes grounds for their exclusion from the programme.
- (9) The doctoral students shall attach the following documents to the application form for the Dissertation Examination:
  - a) written Dissertation Thesis in two printed copies (comb binding),
  - b) annual evaluation – number and structure of obtained credits,

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23 Article 54 paragraph 3 of the Act.

- c) individual study plan,
  - d) photocopies of published works according to the individual study plan, with affiliation to VŠZaSP/FZaSP,
  - e) copies of VŠZaSP/FZaSP grants/projects,
  - f) citation feedback on published works,
  - g) proof of active participation in conferences relating to the individual study plan,
  - h) professional CV,
  - i) protocol about the result of language test,
  - j) supervisor's consent with performance of Dissertation Examination and supervisor's written opinion - report on written work, consent of the Ethics Committee with regard to the research project,
  - k) confirmation of the payment of the fee for the Dissertation Examination.
- (10) The written work for the Dissertation Examination is made up of the following items: (i) outline (project) of the future Dissertation Thesis, containing the theoretical foundations of the future Thesis approach; (ii) current state of research on the topic; (iii) topic's analysis; (iv) methodological approach to address the issue; (v) list of reference literature. The extent of the work is 45–50 standard pages (81,000–90,000 characters). The doctoral student will prepare a presentation of their outline of dissertation project in the application PowerPoint for max. 7-10 min.
- (11) The doctoral student submits the completed part of the Dissertation Thesis for defence in the official language, namely Slovak. Upon supervisor's request, after previous opinion of the chairperson of the Expert Committee, and with the consent of the rector, the doctoral student can submit the relevant work in the language in which the study programme is conducted.
- (12) The opponent will prepare a review of the written work concerning the Dissertation Examination. The opponent is appointed by the rector or dean upon the recommendation of the supervisor and with the consent of the chairperson of the Expert Committee.
- (13) If the opponent is unable to attend the Dissertation Examination for serious reasons,

their report shall be read aloud in its full version by the chairperson of the Committee.

- (14) The opponent shall process the opponent's report within 3 weeks from acceptance of the written work for the Dissertation Examination. If the opponent is unable to process the opponent's report, they must inform the chairperson of the Expert Committee within 1 week. If the opponent's report is not sufficiently processed, the chairperson of the Expert Committee (or the Committee) may return it to the opponent for further revision or may propose another opponent.
- (15) The role of opponent (for written works in Dissertation Examinations) can be held only by a person with academic title prof., doc., PhD. or scientific title DrSc., CSc. or a person acting in the functional position of professor or associate professor. The opponent cannot be a person who acts in the Training Workplace/university of the doctoral student, cannot have common publication with the doctoral student, cannot be a family member of the doctoral student, direct superior or subordinate in an employment relationship
- (16) The doctoral student has the right to be informed about the report no later than three business days before the date of the Dissertation Examination.
- (17) The Dissertation Examination consists in: (i) scientific part (written part of the Dissertation Examination) comprising a discussion of the written work for the Dissertation Examination, during which the doctoral candidate answers questions from the opponent and members of the examination committee; (ii) oral part (examination concerning the profile compulsory subjects and compulsory elective subjects, in compliance with the description of the study programme and individual study plan). The list of subjects for the single study programmes is reported in the Annex 5 of this directive.
- (18) The Dissertation Examination is held before the Expert Committee, consisting of at least four members. It consists of a chairperson, an opponent, and two other members, one of whom is a member of the relevant Expert Committee.

- (19) The chairperson of the Examination Committee shall introduce the doctoral student and evaluate their progress so far in the study part, structure and credits earned, as well as the student's research activities to date.
- (20) The chairperson and the other members of the Committee for the Dissertation Examination are appointed by the rector/dean on the basis of a proposal by the chairperson of the Expert Committee. At least two members of the Examination Committee are university teachers acting in the functional position of professor or associate professor; the other members are researchers with recognised scientific qualification degree I. At least one member of the Examination Committee is from another higher education institution/university (not from the Training Workplace of the doctoral student). The opponent who is a member of the Examination Committee is invited to the Dissertation Examination and has the right to comment on the evaluation of the doctoral student. The opponents reads aloud the opponent's report and expresses their opinion about the level of the Dissertation Thesis.
- (21) The supervisor cannot be a member of the Committee. However, the supervisor is invited to the Dissertation Examination and has the right to comment on the evaluation of the doctoral student. At the same time, the supervisor assesses the fulfilment of doctoral student's study plan (or, in need be, state the reasons for non-compliance or changes to the doctoral student's study plan).
- (22) For a valid decision on the outcome of the Dissertation Examination, a majority of the members of the Examination Committee must be present. The supervisor does not have the right to vote. The members of the Committee (incl. the opponent) have the right to vote. At least one member of the Examination Committee who is not from VŠZaSP must participate in voting.
- (23) Voting is conducted by means of secret ballots.
- (24) Results of the examination are determined by the Examination Committee in a closed session by a majority vote of the members present.
- (25) The course of both parts of the Dissertation Examination is evaluated comprehensively by the Examination Committee using the terms "passed" or "failed". The Examination Committee shall also provide assessment with a grade according to the grading scale

- "A" – "FX". If the opponent submits a negative report, then the opponent's participation shall be a mandatory condition for the Dissertation Examination to take place.
- (26) The written part of the Dissertation Examination shall be evaluated with grading scale "A" – "FX".
- (27) If the reports are evaluated negatively and classified as "FX", the doctoral student cannot take the Dissertation Examination on the scheduled date. If the defence of the written work (outline) is evaluated negatively (grades as "FX"), the doctoral student cannot be admitted to the Dissertation Examination oral part.
- (28) The Dissertation Examination is recorded in the minutes. The minutes are signed by the chairperson and by the present members of the Examination Committee. If the Dissertation Examination is carried out on-line (video conference), the minutes shall be signed by the chairperson of the Committee. By virtue of their signature, the Committee chairperson confirms the participation of all other members of the Examination Committee.
- (29) The VŠZaSP shall release a certificate confirming the performance and the results of the State Dissertation Examination. The certificate shall state whether the doctoral student has "passed" or "failed" the Examination.
- (30) If, for serious reasons, the doctoral student unable to take the Dissertation Examination on the given date and if they provide previous justification to the Committee chairperson, then the Committee chairperson may determine an alternate date. The doctoral student must send their justification within 48 hours before the Examination date. In case they are unable to reach the place of the Examination for serious reasons, then they must justify this circumstance within 48 hours after the date of the Examination. If a doctoral student withdraws from the Examination or is absent without a valid justification, the result is recorded as "failed".
- (31) If a doctoral student fails the Examination, they may retake it only once, at the earliest after three months and at the latest within one year (provided that the duration of their studies under the study programme does not exceed the standard study duration, depending on the study form). Repeated failure in the Dissertation Examination is a reason for exclusion from doctoral studies.

**THIRD PART -  
DISSERTATION  
THESIS**

**Art. 11**

**Application for permission to defend the Dissertation Thesis**

- (1) The application for permission to defend the Dissertation Thesis (together with the elaborated Dissertation Thesis) must be submitted by the doctoral student no later than three months before the expected date of completion of studies. The application can also be submitted by the doctoral student at the end of the standard study period, according to the study programme, provided that they have previously submitted a request to extend their studies. The full-time studies (according to the study programme) cannot exceed its standard duration by more than two years. The part-time studies (according to the study programme) cannot exceed its standard duration by more than three years.
- (2) The doctoral student may submit their application for permission to defend the Dissertation Thesis to the chairperson of the Expert Committee via the competent PhD. office, after having met all the necessary requirements – namely:
  - a) they earned the prescribed number of credits according to this directive,
  - b) they have published 3 original, full-length scientific papers in recognised, indexed international/national databases (e.g.: WOS, SCOPUS, ERICH, ProQuest, PubMed/Medline, SpringerLink, ScienceDirect- Elsevier), which are related to the topic the doctoral student has addressed,
  - c) in one of the original scientific papers related to the topic addressed by the doctoral student, the doctoral student must be the first author,
  - d) publications with complete bibliographic information (publications in conference proceedings and abstracts shall not be accepted),
  - e) if the articles were accepted, the author must provide confirmation from the editor of the relevant journal that the article had been accepted for publication; the

recommendation for defence is issued by the supervisor and approved by the chairperson of the Expert Committee.

- (3) The doctoral student generally submits their dissertation for defence in Slovak or in the language<sup>24</sup> in which the study program is conducted.
- (4) The Dissertation Thesis if the Final Thesis<sup>25</sup>; together with its defence, it constitutes a single subject; the Dissertation Thesis defence rank amongst State Examinations<sup>26</sup>.
- (5) The doctoral student shall attach the following documents to the application for permission to defend the Dissertation Thesis:
  - a) The Dissertation Thesis in hard cover once; the doctoral student must upload the Dissertation Thesis to the EZP system. In printed form with comb binding, as required by the opponents and the supervisor, usually 2–4 copies,
  - b) one printed copy of the Dissertation Thesis synopsis and one electronic copy in PDF format,
  - c) a list of published works with complete bibliographic information and citations, processed according to the Decree No. 397/2020 Coll. of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic on the Central Register of Publication Activity and the Central Register of Artistic Activity,
  - d) all copies of published works submitted by the doctoral student to the relevant PhD. office, which must be submitted in person along with the Dissertation Thesis,
  - e) research projects/grants in which the doctoral student took part (number, project/grant title, principal investigator/co-investigator, project duration); the list must be accompanied by supporting documentation,
  - f) justification of the discrepancies between the original and the submitted dissertation (if, following an unsuccessful defence, the doctoral student submits a new Dissertation Thesis in the same doctoral study field),
  - g) structured and signed CV of the doctoral student,
  - h) the report of the Training Workplace is required from the doctoral students with full-time form of study,
  - i) result of the protocol of originality check and Licence Agreement, analytical sheet (extract from EZP).
- (6) A condition for the defence of the Final Thesis is the student's consent with the publication and

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24 Article 51 paragraph 3 of the Act.

25 Article 51 paragraph 3 and Article 54 paragraphs 3 of the Act.

26 Article 51 paragraph 3 of the Act.

public access to Final Thesis, for the duration of its retention and without claim to remuneration<sup>27</sup>. If the doctoral student continues in their research, they may withhold publication of their work in the EZP for up to two years.

## **Art. 12**

### **Formal requirements of Dissertation Thesis**

- (1) The Dissertation Thesis has the nature of a qualification, scientific written work, by means of which the doctoral student shows their ability and readiness to work independently and creatively in the field of research, or readiness for individual theoretical and creative work, to solve theoretical and practical problems in the study field.
- (2) The Dissertation Thesis is generally written and defended in the official State language.
- (3) With the consent of the university/faculty, the doctoral student may write and defend their Dissertation Thesis in a language other than the official State language; however, they must submit a written request for approval to the relevant Expert Committee. On the basis of the answer from the Expert Committee, the rector/dean may approve the elaboration of the Dissertation Thesis in the language in which the study programme is conducted. The abstract and the summary must be written in the official State language. The summary constitutes 10% of the Dissertation Thesis.
- (4) The Dissertation Thesis generally contains the following parts:
  - a) Introduction,
  - b) Theoretical foundations of the issue under consideration,
  - c) Work methodology,
  - d) Research results,
  - e) Discussion,
  - f) Recommendations for practice,
  - g) Conclusion,
  - h) List of abbreviations,
  - i) List of tables and graphs,
  - j) Bibliographic references,

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<sup>27</sup> Article 63 paragraph 7 - 9 and Article 51 paragraphs 3 of the Act.

k) Annex.

- (5) The extent of the Dissertation Thesis is determined by the internal provision "Directive on the requirements for Final Theses, Rigorosum Theses, and Habilitation Theses, their bibliographic registration, originality checks, archiving, and publication".
- (6) The doctoral student may submit as Dissertation Thesis also their own independently published work or a collection of independently published works that, through their content, explore the issues addressed in the Dissertation Thesis topic or monograph. If the doctoral student submits a collection of independently published works, they will supplement it with a detailed introduction in which they will clarify the current state of the issue, the goals of the Dissertation Thesis, and conclusions which emerged from the analysis of the topic of the Dissertation Thesis. If all the included publications are the work of several authors, then the doctoral student will usually attach also a statement from the co-authors regarding their contribution to the work. The Dissertation Thesis is a protected work subject to copyright law.
- (7) If the Dissertation Thesis is part of a team work, the doctoral student will introduce only their own results, and in the discussion they will contextualise them with the results of other team members.
- (8) The extent of a Dissertation Thesis is usually 5 to 7 standardised units of text length (100-140 standard pages). Images, diagrams, tables, and similar items, which may be included in the annexes, are not counted toward the total number of units of text length. The bibliography is also not included. The Dissertation Thesis is submitted in hard cover. One copy of the Dissertation Thesis must be submitted to the VŠZaSP library, in electronic form as a PDF file. The electronic version must be identical to the printed version.

### **Art. 13**

#### **Dissertation Thesis synopsis**

- (1) The synopsis is a brief summary of the main findings of the Dissertation Thesis, outlining

its contribution and providing information on its response. The Dissertation Thesis synopsis should be in A5 format and should be no more than 20 standard pages in length (36,000 characters, including spaces).

- (2) The doctoral student shall submit to the PhD. office the synopsis if the official State language (Slovak language). The abstract is written in one of the world's major languages. If the Dissertation Thesis is written and defended in a different language than the official State language, then the synopsis shall be submitted in the relevant foreign language. The abstract is written in the state official language (Slovak).
- (3) The first and the second page of the synopsis must be modified exactly according to the template reported on the VŠZaSP website.
- (4) The structure of the synopsis is determined by the structure of the Dissertation Thesis which includes: introduction, current state of the addressed issue, goal of the Thesis, materials and methods, results, discussion, recommendations and practical implications, conclusion. The synopsis shall also include:
  - a) a list of all the doctoral student's published works related to the subject under investigation,
  - b) feedback on published works, including precise bibliographic details,
  - c) list of reference literature,
  - d) summary in at least one foreign language (English/German), including the title of the Dissertation Thesis, approximately 50 lines in length,
  - e) the doctoral student will submit the synopsis in PDF format and in hard copy.
- (5) One copy of the synopsis in printed form shall be sent to the relevant PhD. office. The synopsis shall be sent also in electronic PDF format to the e-mail address of Committee members, Dissertation Thesis opponents, supervisor, and Expert Committee members.

#### **Art. 14**

##### **Preparation of the defence of the Dissertation Thesis**

- (1) After the acceptance of the Dissertation Thesis and of the application for permission to defend the Dissertation Thesis, the PhD. office shall check the fulfilment of formal requirements for the defence. Moreover, the PhD. office shall submit the Dissertation Thesis to the president of the Expert Committee to be examined and recommended (or not) to defence. As for the form of submission of the Dissertation Thesis, the competent

PhD. office shall decide together with the president of the Expert Committee.

- (2) If the president of the Expert Committee detects that the Dissertation Thesis fulfils the formal and qualitative requirements, they will ask the rector/dean to set up a Committee for the defence (Defence Committee). If the Dissertation Thesis does not meet the requirements of a Dissertation Thesis, the chairperson of the Expert Committee shall urge the doctoral student to remedy the deficiencies within a specified time frame. If the doctoral student fails to eliminate the deficiencies within the specified time limit, the relevant Expert Committee will decide whether or not to recommend the Thesis for defence.
- (3) After having received the proposal from the chairperson of the Expert Committee, the rector/dean appoints a Committee for the defence of Dissertation Thesis, incl. its chairperson and the three opponents of the Dissertation Thesis (hereinafter "Committee").
- (4) The rector appoints the opponents on the basis of a proposal of the chairperson of the Expert Committee, which may in turn stem from a proposal by the supervisor. The opponents are usually selected amongst expert in the relevant or closely related field or in a specialisation of the field of the doctoral student.
- (5) The members of the Committee are experts in the study field or closely related field of the doctoral studies. At least one member of the Committee must act in the function of professor or must have a DrSc. title, or must be a researcher with "Ila" level. The other members of the Committee can be persons acting in the functional position of associate professor or significant experts with PhD. academic title in the field of the doctoral studies or closely related field.
- (6) The defence of Dissertation Thesis is conducted before the Examination Committee. The Examination Committee for the defence of Dissertation Thesis is made up of a chairperson and at least three other members. The chairperson and at least one member may be appointed by the rector/dean on the basis of a proposal from the Expert Committee.
- (7) Members of the Committee who are entitled to vote on the outcome of the defence include also the three opponents. The supervisor of the doctoral student does not have

voting right, cannot be a member of the Examination Committee for the defence of the Dissertation Thesis, and has the right to express their opinion within the frame of the evaluation of the doctoral student's Thesis.

- (8) The dissertation defence may take place if no more than one of the opponents is absent. If an opponent states (in their report) that the Thesis does not meet the requirements for a dissertation, then the presence of this opponent is mandatory at the Thesis defence.
- (9) The competent PhD. office shall send the Dissertation Thesis to the appointed opponents together with a request of elaboration of a report and with the appointment decree. After notification of all reports by the opponents, the PhD. office shall transmit the doctoral student's application for defence of Dissertation Thesis (together with all formal documents and the reports of the opponents) to the chairperson of the Defence Committee.
- (10) The supervisor and the three appointed opponents will prepare their written reports by the specified deadline and then they will upload them to the EZP. If no more than one of the four expert reports is negative, the defence may proceed. In case of two or more negative assessment, it is not possible to perform the defence of the Thesis.
- (11) The competent PhD. office, after relevant agreement with the chairperson of the Defence Committee, shall propose to the rector/dean the concrete time, date, place, and mode of conduction of the Dissertation Thesis defence.
- (12) At least 14 days before the defence, the competent PhD. office shall ensure publication of a notice regarding the defence of the dissertation<sup>28</sup>, which shall include, in particular:
  - a) name and surname of the author of the Dissertation Thesis,
  - b) academic titles, scientific-pedagogical titles, artistic-pedagogical titles or academic degrees of the author of the Dissertation Thesis,
  - c) themes of Dissertation Thesis,
  - d) name of the study programme where the author of the Dissertation Thesis is registered,
  - e) name of the study field where the programme takes place according to letter d),
  - f) date, time, place, and mode of performance of the defence of the Dissertation Thesis.

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28 Article 54 paragraph 21 of the Act.

- (13) All those interested in the topic under study and in the defence of the Dissertation Thesis may submit their statements to the chairperson of the Committee no later than one week before the defence (or they may present their comments orally during the defence). During the defence of Dissertation Thesis, the doctoral student shall comment on such statements or remarks.
- (14) The doctoral student may withdraw the submitted Dissertation Thesis and the application for permission to defend the Dissertation Thesis, no later than 48 hours before the defence.
- (15) A maximum of five doctoral students may defend their Theses before the same Committee on a single day.

## **Art. 15**

### **Opponents of the Dissertation Thesis and their reviews**

- (1) The Dissertation Thesis is assessed by three opponents from the relevant field in which the doctoral student has studied. Only one of the opponents can come from VŠZaSP. Two opponents must be from a different institution. The opponents are appointed by the rector/dean upon proposal of the Expert Committee.
- (2) At least one opponent must act in the functional position of professor in the relevant study field or must have a DrSc. title or must be a "level I" researcher. The other opponents can be persons in the functional positions of professor or associate professor, relevant expert with PhD. title (or older equivalent title) or also other qualified experts from the practical field subject to approval of the VŠZaSP Scientific Board.
- (3) For the nomination of opponents of Dissertation Theses having interdisciplinary nature, the provisions of Article 15 paragraph 2 of this directive shall apply. In case of interdisciplinary Dissertation Thesis it is possible to appoint opponents even from other relevant study fields.
- (4) The opponent cannot be a co-author of the doctoral student in a publication, a family member, direct superior or subordinate in an employment relationship (or analogous labour relationship). In case of doctoral students from an external educational

institution, the opponent cannot be an employee of the concerned external educational institution.

- (5) By means of the PhD. office, the rector/dean will send to the opponents a request to prepare a report on the Dissertation Thesis. Members of the Examination Committee and opponents must receive the synopsis (which may be sent as a printed copy or via e-mail).
- (6) The opponent is informed that if they are unable to prepare the report, they may return the Dissertation Thesis within 10 days of receiving it.
- (7) If the opponent fails to submit their report within the time limit specified in paragraph 6, the rector/dean shall appoint a new opponent without undue delay and upon the recommendation of the chairperson of the Expert Committee.
- (8) The opponent is informed of the deadline for submitting the written review. The written review of the Dissertation Thesis must be completed no later than 30 days after receipt of the Thesis.
- (9) The opponent shall evaluate the Dissertation Thesis according to the scientific level of development in the area of the study field of the doctoral studies, at the time when the doctoral student submitted their request of authorisation to defend their Thesis. The opponent shall then elaborate their independent review.
- (10) The opponent's review shall contain an objective and critical analysis of the submitted Dissertation Thesis. The review shall be concise and shall not reiterate the content of the Dissertation Thesis. The opponent will mainly express opinions on:
  - a) relevance of the chosen topic,
  - b) methodological approach and chosen data processing methods,
  - c) achieved results, by stating the new knowledge brought up by the Dissertation Thesis,
  - d) benefit for further development of science, practice, and relevant field,
  - e) whether the Dissertation Thesis reached the pursued objective,
  - f) result of originality protocol.
- (11) At the conclusion of the opponent's review, each single opponent shall clearly state whether they recommend or not recommend the Thesis for defence, and whether the Thesis meets or does not meet the criteria for Dissertation Theses in the given field. At

the same time, the opponent shall declare whether, on the basis of the submitted Dissertation Thesis, they propose or do not propose the granting of the academic title of "philosophiae doctor" (abbreviated as "PhD"). If the aforementioned statements are not reported at the conclusion of the review, it is not possible to consider the review as completed.

- (12) If the opponent's review does not comply with conditions established in paragraphs 10 and 11, the rector/dean shall return the review to the opponent in order to supplement it or rework it. The rector/dean shall also set a deadline for repeated submission of the opponent's review (no longer than 15 days).

## **Art. 16**

### **Defence of Dissertation Thesis**

- (1) Through the defence of Dissertation Thesis the doctoral student shows their ability and preparedness to conduct independent scientific and creative activities in the research and development area<sup>29</sup>. The defence of Dissertation Thesis is publicly open. In some exceptional cases, when the public attendance could threaten secrecy of information protected by a specific law or safety in general, then the rector/dean may impose that the defence of Dissertation Thesis is not to be open to public. The defence can take place in-presence or on-line (video conference) via certified IT systems. The defence shall be held on-line in critical situations and in cases of students and opponents from abroad. The audio/video recording shall be available for further listening.
- (2) The defence of Dissertation Thesis shall take place by the end of the standard term at the latest.
- (3) The defence can take place only in the presence of a majority of all Committee members eligible to vote on the dissertation defence, incl. the three opponents. At least one present opponent and at least one other member of the Committee must be from a different institution than the educational institution of the doctoral student and his/her supervisor. Should some (one) of the opponents be unable to attend the defence for

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29 Article 54 paragraph 14 of the Act.

serious reasons and their evaluation is positive, the absent opponent shall propose the classification degree "Passed" and the granting of the academic title "PhD.". Then, the defence can take place also without the aforementioned opponent, provided that all present members of the Dissertation defence Committee agree to it. In this case, the chairperson of the Committee or a member of the Committee designated by the chairperson shall read the report in its entirety.

- (4) If the doctoral student, for serious reasons, is unable to attend the defence within the due deadline, then they must inform the PhD. office about their unavailability (no later than 48 hours before the date of the defence). The PhD. office, in cooperation with the chairperson of the Committee, shall set an alternate date for the defence.
- (5) The defence is led by the chairperson of the Dissertation defence Committee. In exceptional cases, the chairperson may delegate the conduct of the defence to another member of the Dissertation defence Committee who is also a member of the Expert Committee. The opponent and the supervisor are not allowed to lead the defence, even if they are members of the Expert Committee.
- (6) The defence of Dissertation Thesis is held as an academic debate between the doctoral student, the opponents, the members of the Dissertation defence Committee and other participants in the defence. The subject of the debate is the acquired knowledge and the benefit of the Dissertation Thesis. During the defence of the Dissertation Thesis, the validity and credibility of the conclusions contained in the Dissertation Thesis are also examined.
- (7) With regard to the defence of the Dissertation Thesis, the following procedure is generally followed:
  - a) the chairperson of the Committee will begin the defence; chairperson of the Committee will present a brief biography of the doctoral student, or the doctoral student will introduce themselves, present the topic of their Dissertation Thesis, assess whether the criteria have been met, and provide an overview of their scientific publications and feedback.
  - b) the supervisor will present the doctoral student and their work performance, by evaluating their academic progress,

- c) in their presentation, the doctoral student shall briefly outline the main content of their Dissertation Thesis, its findings, and its practical implications,
  - d) the supervisor and opponents shall present the main points of their reports; in the absence of the supervisor or opponent, the chairperson or a Committee member designated by the chairperson shall read the report in full,
  - e) the doctoral student shall respond to the opponents' reports; in particular, they will respond to all objections and comments and answer all questions,
  - f) the chairperson of the Committee shall open the discussion, and all those present may participate; the aim of the discussion is to examine the accuracy, validity, scientific originality, and significance of the findings presented in the Dissertation Thesis, as well as the accuracy and appropriateness of the reports provided by the supervisor and by the opponents,
  - g) during the discussion, the doctoral student shall answer all questions regarding the Dissertation Thesis and shall respond to all comments, questions, and objections raised by the participants.
- (8) After the defence is concluded, a closed-door meeting of the Dissertation defence Committee is held, attended by its members, including the opponents and the supervisor. They shall evaluate the course and result of the defence. The Committee members and the opponents shall decide by secret ballot whether to recommend conferring the academic title to the doctoral student. The supervisor takes part in the defence, is not a member of the Committee, and does not have the right to vote. The result of the Dissertation Thesis defence is evaluated by the Examination Committee with the verdict "passed" or "failed".
- (9) Voting under paragraph 8 shall be carried out by ballot, either in person or on-line. The ballots shall contain the following data: doctoral student's first and last name, date and location of the Dissertation Thesis defence, and the text "I agree to the conferral of the academic title - I do not agree to the conferral of the academic title". The voting Committee member shall circle the text with which they agree; any other method of submitting the ballot is not valid.
- (10) In order to submit a proposal for the conferral of the academic title, a majority of all

Committee members eligible to vote must participate in the vote; moreover, the proposal to confer the academic title must be approved by the majority of the members present. If the votes are tied, the chairperson has the deciding vote.

- (11) The results of the vote shall be proclaimed by the chairperson of the Examination Committee at its public session.
- (12) If the result of the vote is positive, the chairperson of the Dissertation defence Committee shall announce it at the public session of the Committee.
- (13) If the result of the vote is negative, the Committee shall agree, in a closed session, on the grounds for the proposal not to confer the academic title. Such grounds shall be reported in the minutes about the voting results. The results of the vote shall be proclaimed by the chairperson of the Committee at its public session, including the rationale behind the voting result.
- (14) The doctoral studies shall end with the defence of the Dissertation Thesis.
- (15) A record will be made about the Dissertation Thesis defence (the minutes). In the case of an on-site form, the minutes are signed by the chairperson and all members of the Committee. In the case of an on-line form (if the Committee members do not have an electronic signature) the chairperson shall sign the attendance list by confirming the attendance of the other Committee members present. A recording of the on-line defence shall be made and archived by the relevant PhD. offices. The minutes of the defence shall be submitted by the chairperson of the Committee to the relevant PhD. office.
- (16) The doctoral student (whose application for the academic title was not approved by the Dissertation defence Committee on the basis of the results of the Dissertation Thesis defence) is entitled to submit a revised Dissertation Thesis and re-apply for admission to the same study programme no sooner than one year after the date on which the defence of their Dissertation Thesis took place or was scheduled to take place and no later than two years after the expiration of the standard duration of study. The defence must be recommended by the original supervisor and may only be repeated once.
- (17) The alternative date for the defence will be set by the chairperson of the Expert Committee; and then the rector/dean shall notify it (in writing) to the doctoral student who failed in their defence. The repeated failure of a doctoral student to pass the

Dissertation Thesis defence during a rescheduled defence constitutes grounds for the student's exclusion from the doctoral study.

- (18) A doctoral student who fails to attend the Dissertation Thesis defence without a valid excuse is also entitled to one re-examination.
- (19) If the doctoral student has registered for a Dissertation Thesis topic offered by an external educational institution, the defence of the Dissertation Thesis shall be carried out before a Committee in which members appointed by the university and members appointed by the external educational institution are appropriately represented. On the basis of a specific agreement, the defence of Dissertation Thesis can be carried out on the premises of the external educational institution. The university diploma shall also include the name of the external educational institution.
- (20) The university may establish an agreement with a foreign university regarding joint defences of Dissertation Theses in accredited doctoral study programmes, provided that this is permitted by the laws of the country in which the foreign university operates.
- (21) The defence of Dissertation Thesis by a doctoral student of a university located in the Slovak Republic (that has established an agreement on joint defences of Dissertation Theses with a university abroad) may be carried out on the premises of the foreign university, before a relevant Committee for the defence of Dissertation Thesis in which members from the Slovak side and members appointed by the foreign university are represented in equal numbers. The same proceeding shall be followed also in the case of defence of Dissertation Thesis by a doctoral student of a foreign university on the premises of a university located in the Slovak Republic.
- (22) Defended Dissertation Thesis are archived through the relevant PhD. office.

## **Art. 17**

### **Decisions on the conferral of the academic title**

- (1) The chairperson of the Committee for the defence of the Dissertation Thesis shall submit the doctoral student's complete materials to the rector/dean, together with the minutes of the defence and the vote, within 15 days of the date of the defence.

- (2) The chairperson of the Committee for the defence of the Dissertation Thesis shall submit (to the VŠZaSP rector/dean) a proposal to confer the academic title of PhD. to the doctoral candidate, "doctor" ("philosophiae doctor" abbreviated as "PhD."),
- (3) If the rector/dean finds that during the Procedure the provisions of this directive were not observed, they shall order a new defence.
- (4) If the rector/dean finds that during the Procedure the provisions of this directive were observed and if the Examination Committee for the defence proposes to confer the title to the doctoral student, then the defence material is forwarded to the rector/dean together with the proposal to confer the academic title to the doctoral student.
- (5) The rector/dean sends to the doctoral student a written notice about the conferral or non-conferral of the academic title; and issues a certificate of study completion within 30 days from the successful completion of studies. The notice must be delivered in person.
- (6) In the case of a doctoral study programme conducted in cooperation with an external educational institution, the name of this institution is also listed on the university diploma.

## **Art. 18**

### **Documents confirming completion of studies**

- (1) Graduates of doctoral studies are awarded documents certifying completion of their studies pursuant to Article 68 paragraph 1 letter c) of the Act no. 131/2002 Coll. on universities.
- (2) The documents certifying completion of a doctoral study programme in a study field are the following ones: certificate of completion of the State Dissertation Examination, university diploma, and diploma supplement issued by VŠZaSP.
- (3) The diploma supplement provides a standardised description of the level, content, context, and status of the studies successfully completed by the student. The diploma supplement contains the required details in accordance with the template for the diploma supplement, pursuant to Decree no. 614/2002 Coll. of the Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic on the credit system for studies. The diploma supplement provides transparency and enables academic and professional recognition of qualification. The diploma supplement is published in two languages, usually Slovak and English.
- (4) The student who successfully complete the doctoral studies is awarded the academic title "doctor" ("philosophiae doctor", abbreviated as "PhD."). The certificate of the conferral of the title "doctor" ("philosophiae doctor" or "PhD.") is issued by VŠZaSP.
- (5) A university diploma is usually conferred during an academic ceremony or delivered in person.

## **FOURTH PART - COMMON**

### **AND FINAL PROVISIONS**

## **Art. 19**

### **Change of study programme, change of study form**

- (1) The change of study programme, within the frame of the same study field, may be authorised by the rector/dean on the basis of a written request by the student. It is not

carried out as an Admission Procedure.

- (2) The student can apply for a modification of the study programme at the earliest after the conclusion of the winter semester in the first year of studies or before the beginning of the academic year, after successful completion of the first year of studies, no later than 31 August. The student must fulfil the academic requirements for the completed portion of the programme.
- (3) The change of study programme may be requested by the student no later than the date of submission of the application for the Dissertation Examination.
- (4) The change to the study programme must be made in accordance with the provisions of the specific regulation.
- (5) Admission Procedure is required to change the study field.
- (6) In case of serious reasons, the doctoral student may request the rector/dean to authorise the change of study form (from full-time to part-time or vice versa), within the relevant study programme. A change of study form is regarded as a change of study programme.
- (7) In case of study form modification, a proportionate portion of the doctoral studies completed prior to the change shall be credited.
- (8) During the doctoral studies it is possible to change study form, study programme, supervisor, topic of Dissertation Thesis or Training Workplace on the grounds of justified reasons, in particular if this creates more favourable conditions for the doctoral student to complete the study programme (but no later than upon taking the Dissertation Examination). The changes must be accompanied by a statement from the chairperson of the Expert Committee and the supervisor.
- (9) For successful completion of studies, the doctoral student must fulfil the conditions established in the study programme after the modification.

## **Art. 20**

### **Suspension, extension, transfer, and termination of doctoral studies**

- (1) According to Article 64 of the Act, the studies in the third-level study programme may be suspended on the basis of a request by the doctoral student. The study suspension is

subject to authorisation by the rector or dean, if the doctoral studies are taking place at the faculty<sup>30</sup>. The supervisor and the chairperson of the Expert Committee shall issue their statement about the request of study suspension.

- (2) Suspension of studies for a doctoral student who has registered for a Dissertation Thesis topic offered by an external educational institution shall be authorised by the rector/dean following a positive recommendation from the director of the relevant external educational institution. In reasonable cases, the rector or dean may suspend the studies upon recommendation of the supervisor. The rector's/dean's decision to approve or disapprove suspension of studies is definitive. No appeal may be filed against it.
- (3) During suspension of studies, the doctoral student does not have the rights and obligations of a student. Full-time doctoral students shall not be entitled to scholarship.
- (4) During suspension of studies, the supervisor's role is also suspended.
- (5) The doctoral student who suspends their studies shall cease to be a student as of the date specified in the decision approving the suspension of studies. If the reasons for the suspension of studies cease to exist, the doctoral student may request that the suspension be terminated even before the suspension period expires. After the suspension period has expired, the doctoral student is required to re-enrol in the studies without delay at the relevant office for doctoral studies. They shall become a student as of the date of re-enrolment in the doctoral studies.
- (6) The re-enrolment also serves as enrolment in the next phase of the studies. If the doctoral student fails to appear for re-enrolment, the faculty will send them a written notice requesting that the student appear for enrolment within 10 business days of receiving the relevant notice.
- (7) The doctoral student who (pursuant to Article 66 of the Act) fails to appear after receiving a re-enrolment notice or fails to request an extension of the deadline (for health reasons or other reasons preventing them from attending the enrolment) shall lose student status; the day on which the student was supposed to re-enrol shall be considered as the day on which they withdrew from their studies.

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30 Article 64 of the Act.

- (8) The doctoral student may also withdraw from the studies by submitting a written statement. This written statement shall be notified to the PhD. study office which will record this fact in the electronic record-keeping system for students.
- (9) The reasons for interrupting doctoral studies are the following: maternity leave, health or other serious personal reasons of the doctoral student, or a study stay abroad by the doctoral student (if it is not part of the doctoral study programme or of individual study plan). In the case of part-time study, a long-term work stay abroad may also be a reason for suspension of doctoral studies.
- (10) Suspension of studies without providing a reason is limited to a maximum of 12 months.
- (11) Suspension of studies for 36 months is permitted due to maternity leave, parental leave, or serious health problems.
- (12) The total duration of all suspensions of doctoral studies may not exceed 24 months over the entire period of full-time study (or 36 months over the entire period of part-time study).
- (13) Study according to a study programme in the full-time form may not exceed its standard duration by more than two years. Study according to a study programme in the part-time form may not exceed its standard duration by more than three years. The standard length of studies does not include any periods of suspension of doctoral studies.
- (14) The transfer of a student from another university (admitted to a study programme within the same study field) is subject to authorisation of the university rector/faculty dean, according to Article 59 paragraph 4 of the Higher Education Act.
- (15) Here below we report a list of the documents to be provided by the student of another university together with their application for transfer and enrolment to studies within the same study field:
  - a) decision (by the other university) regarding admission to a doctoral study programme; the text of this decision shall include study field, study form, and topic of Dissertation Thesis (the topic of the student's Dissertation Thesis shall correspond to the supervisors' areas of expertise within the given study field),
  - b) documents confirming successful completion of the Dissertation Examination

certified by another university within the doctoral study programme,

c) annual evaluations of the student by the supervisor within the doctoral study programme at another university,

d) list of subjects completed within the study part of the doctoral study programme (incl. information sheets), with number of credits earned and with confirmation from the other university,

e) The doctoral student may request recognition of subjects completed, provided that the following conditions are fulfilled: (i) no more than five years have elapsed since the date of the assessment; (ii) the subjects are graded as "completed" or "passed"; (iii) the subjects are in accordance with the new individual study plan under the current study programme,

f) the doctoral student transferred from another university shall apply for recognition of completed subjects, immediately upon transfer,

g) decision on recognition of subjects completion is made by the rector/dean following the opinion of the chairperson of the Expert Committee,

h) confirmation of the fact that the student has not left, suspended, or been excluded from the university from which they are requesting a transfer.

(16) Successful completion of doctoral studies is deemed to be the completion of studies according to the relevant study programme and the defence of the Dissertation Thesis.

(17) The doctoral studies are ended:

a) upon successful completion of studies,

b) in case of discontinuation of studies,

c) in case of failure to complete studies by the deadline specified under Article 65 paragraph 2 of the Act,

d) exclusion from study, particularly for failure to meet the requirements arising from the individual study plan, study programme, and university study regulation,

e) exclusion from study according to Article 72 paragraph 2 letter c) of the Act.,

f) student's death,

g) cancellation of study programme (if the student does not accept the university's offer to continue studying in another study programme),

h) if the student fails to register for the next period of study, fails to re-enrol after study suspension, or fails to register even after receiving a written notice within ten

business days of the notice's delivery,

i) if the student fails to enrol within the set period after receiving the notice (nor will they request an extension of this deadline for health reasons that prevent them from attending the enrolment); the date on which the deadline expires is considered the date on which the student withdrew from the studies.

## **Art. 21**

### **Fees related to the studies**

The VŠZaSP (as Training Workplace) requires part-time doctoral students to pay tuition fees and other study-related fees. The amount of the fees is determined for each academic year by the "***Directive on the amount of fees and charges associated with studies in the given academic year***", which is published on the VŠZaSP website.

## **Art. 22**

### **Transitional provision**

The doctoral studies commenced in the 2025/2026 academic year, prior to the effective date of this directive and prior to the effective date of the conditions for doctoral studies contained therein, shall be completed in accordance with this internal provision.

## **Art. 23**

### **Repeal and Final Provisions**

- (1) In compliance with the Directive no. 10/2011 on doctoral study at the St. Elisabeth University of Health and Social Work in Bratislava
- (2) This internal provision was approved by the Academic Senate of VŠZaSP as of 15. 12. 2025.
- (3) This internal provision shall become valid on the date of its signature by the rector of the university, after its approval by the Academic Senate of VŠZaSP, and shall become effective on the date of its publication on the VŠZaSP website.

Bratislava, 15. 12. 2025

the rector of the St. Elisabeth University of Health Care and Social Work in Bratislava

the chairperson of the Academic Senate of VŠZaSP

**ANNEXES of the Directive on doctoral studies**  
**St. Elisabeth University of Health Care and Social Work in Bratislava**

## **Annex 1**

### **St. Elisabeth University of Health Care and Social Work in Bratislava**

Topic of Dissertation Thesis  
Outline of Dissertation Thesis

Name and surname of the  
candidate Address of the candidate  
E-mail  
Study programme  
Study field  
Supervisor

The outline of Dissertation Thesis should be 4–10 pages (A4) in length

The outline must contain:

1. introduction to the topic – current state of the issue, theoretical foundations,
2. Thesis goals,
3. research methodology, research aims, research questions, expected working hypotheses, research modes, selection of respondents, statistical data processing, hypothesis testing,
4. expected outcomes and practical benefits,
5. bibliography used to develop the theoretical bases of the outline of the Dissertation Thesis (domestic and international sources).

## Annex 2

### Credit Load and selection of subjects for the individual study plan

<b>Compulsory subjects with specialised nature</b>				<b>Amount of credits: max. 20</b>
Subject code	Subject	Academic year	Amount of credits	Termination
<b>Compulsory subject for all study programmes</b>				
	Language Examination		5	S
<i>In each single study field it is necessary to register the subjects according to the Description of the study programme</i>				
<b>Compulsory subjects with specialised nature</b>				<b>Amount of credits: max. 36</b>
				A
<i>In each single study field it is necessary to register the subjects according to the Description of the study programme</i>				
<b>Compulsory subject for all study programmes</b>				
	Dissertation Examination		20	S
<b>This list applies for all study programmes</b>				
<b>Compulsory subjects in the scientific-research part</b>				<b>Amount of credits: 85–70</b>
	Dissertation Thesis - defence		30	S
	Article in a scientific-specialised peer-reviewed journal 1. author/co-author		10/5	Z

	Scientific publication in a journal indexes in international databases 1. author/co-author		20/15	Z
	Scientific publication in a journal indexes in national databases 1. author/co-author		15/10	Z
	International scientific conference 1. author		10	Z

**A/Compulsory elective subjects with specialised nature** **Total amount of credits: 4**

Subject code	Subject	Academic year	Amount of credits	Termination

*The doctoral student shall choose at least 1 subject - In each single study field it is necessary to register the subjects according to the Description of the study programme*

**This list applies for all study programmes**

**B/Compulsory elective subjects – teaching activity**

**Amount of credits: min. 5 – max. 10**

	Chapter in the university manual		5	Z
	Script		10	Z
	Guidance in Bachelor's Thesis		3	Z
	Preparation and creation of teaching materials		2	Z
	Pedagogical activity: teaching 4 hours per academic year		2	A

	Pedagogical activity: teaching 2 hours per academic year		1	A
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**This list applies for all study programmes**

**C/Compulsory elective subjects - scientific-research activity Total amount of credits: 20**

	Scientific publication in indexed registered databases, author		10	Z
	Scientific publication in indexed registered databases, co-author		5	Z
	Chapter in monograph		10	Z
	Monograph		15	
	Grant project submitted - principal investigator		5	Z
	Grant project accepted - principal investigator		10	Z
	Grant project co-investigator		3	Z
	Conference - scientific works		3	A
	Scientific output category V2 (poster from event, abstract from event, article from event)		3	A
	Foreign short-term stage 5-28 days		10	A

*The doctoral students must obtain min. 20 credits*

**This list applies for all study programmes**

<b>Optional subjects of credits up to 180</b>		<b>Total amount of credits: to supplement the amount</b>		
Subject code	Subject	Academic year	Amount of credits	Termination
	Internal grant project - author		5	Z
	Scientific output category V3 (poster from event, abstract from event, article from event)		2	A

	Specialised output - category O1		4	Z
	Specialised output - category O2		3	Z
	Specialised output - category O3		2	Z
	Scientific conference - co-author		2	A
	International scientific conference 1st author		8	A
	International scientific conference - co-author		5	A
	Study stay abroad at university		15	A
	Guidance in Bachelor's Thesis		3	Z
	Opponent in Bachelor's Thesis		1	Z
	Chapter in monograph		10	Z
	Scientific works published by national publishers, author		10	Z

	Scientific works published by national publishers, co-author		5	Z
	Scripts and learning materials		15	Z
	Citations in indexed databases		5	Z
	Citations in non-registered databases		2	Z
	Pedagogical activity: teaching 2 hours per academic year		1	A
<i>Evaluation: A – completed, S – examination, Z – credited</i>				

## Annex 3

### St. Elisabeth University of Health Care and Social Work in Bratislava

#### Individual study plan of the doctoral student

<b>Name and surname of PhD student</b>	
<b>Study programme</b>	
<b>Form of study</b>	
<b>Contact address: e-mail:</b>	
<b>Telephone</b>	
<b>Workplace</b>	
<b>Supervisor</b>	
<b>Supervisor's workplace</b>	
<b>Specialist supervisor</b>	
<b>Specialist supervisor's workplace</b>	
<b>Beginning of doctoral studies</b>	
<b>Scheduled deadline for termination of studies</b>	
<b>Theme of Dissertation Thesis</b>	
<b>Date of approval of the individual study plan</b>	
<b>Chairperson of the Expert Committee</b>	

The individual study plan is drawn up by the supervisor together with the doctoral student. It is drawn up for the whole duration of the doctoral studies.

The supervisor submits the individual study plan for approval to the Expert Committee of the relevant study field, within one month from the registration.

The individual study plan is subject to approval and must be signed by the doctoral student, supervisor, and chairperson of the Expert Committee.

The outputs from the scientific part are classified under single categories according to Decree 397/2020. After admission to doctoral studies, the doctoral student must submit one grant/project, or must co-participate in the investigation in one grant/project.

Assessment of subjects: A – completed, S – examination, Z – credited

#### **Individual study plan - amount of credits for:**

Compulsory subjects: During the doctoral studies, the doctoral student must have all subjects registered in their individual study plan.

Compulsory elective subjects: From each single category the doctoral student shall choose at least 1 subject.

Optional subjects: The doctoral student shall choose subjects to supplement the missing credits. The doctoral student shall obtain at least 40 credits in order to pass to the next year.

<b>Academic year</b>				
Subject code	Subject	Amount of credits	Date	Termination
<b>Total amount of credits per academic year .....</b>				

<b>Academic year</b>				
Subject code	Subject	Amount of credits	Date	Termination
<b>Total amount of credits per academic year .....</b>				

<b>Academic year</b>				
Subject code	Subject	Amount of credits	Date	Termination
<b>Total amount of credits per academic year .....</b>				

<b>Academic year</b>				
Subject code	Subject	Amount of credits	Date	Termination
<b>Total amount of credits per academic year .....</b>				

**Total amount of credits for the whole course of the doctoral studies**

Opinion and evaluation of the supervisor .....

Opinion of the doctoral student .....

Signature of the doctoral student .....

Proposal of continuation/exclusion from doctoral studies Reasons

for exclusion from doctoral studies

Signature of the supervisor ..... Signature of the chairperson of the Expert Committee  
.....

Bratislava, .....



<b>Evaluation by the supervisor</b>		
I recommend	I do not recommend	continuation in PhD. studies
<b>Signature of the supervisor</b>		

## **Annex 5**

### **List of subjects for Dissertation Examination in the single study fields**

#### **Social work**

- Theory and methods of social work
- Theory and methodology of science
- Research in social work

#### **Nursing**

- Nursing management
- Nursing
- Science and research in nursing

#### **Public health**

- Epidemiology and hygiene
- Prevention
- Protection and support of health

#### **Laboratory testing methods / Healthcare sciences**

- Molecular biology
- Biochemistry
- Microbiology

#### **Missionary, charitable and development activities**

- Missiology
- Theory and methods of social work
- Methodology of research in social sciences