



Université
de Lille



Institut
Pasteur
de Lille



Doctoral School of Biology and Health
(n°446)

Articles of Association/Rules of Procedure

Introduction

This document sets out the role, powers and function of the Doctoral School of Biology and Health of Lille (the “DS”), in accordance with the French Order dated 25 May 2016 which lays out the national training framework and the conditions for awarding national doctoral degrees.

In order to train future research professors, researchers at public scientific and research institutions, hospital and university hospital practitioners, senior scientists in the pharmaceutical, bio-technology and agri-food industries and their foreign counterparts, the DS relies on the skills and scientific excellence of its attached Research Units (“RU”).

In accordance with the French Order dated 25 May 2016, these RU:

- must be recognised after a national evaluation (article 10, title II); and
- must only participate in one doctoral school, except if the scientific scope is broad enough to justify being divided between several doctoral schools.

The DS is based around 7 thematic axes to which the RU are attached, within the framework of institutional contracts and with some exceptions:

- Neuroscience
- Drugs science and Health technologies
- Cancer
- Glycobiology
- Metabolic and cardiovascular diseases
- Immunology, inflammatory and infectious diseases
- An emerging axis and teams including Sport and Health

The DS’s main work is to enable doctoral students to prepare and present their theses under the best possible conditions by:

- implementing policies for the selection of doctoral students and the funding of theses based on clear and publicly available criteria;
- ensuring the standard of doctoral student supervision by the RU and ensuring compliance with and implementation of the Doctoral Charter which is common to all Doctoral Schools in the Lille Nord de France Doctoral College;
- offering doctoral students training within their disciplinary field, interdisciplinary and transversal training which is useful for their research projects and future careers, and the necessary training to give them broader scientific knowledge;
- defining a career support system for doctoral students, in both the public and private sector, established with the organisations and associations that contribute to this same objective and including an assessment of the skills acquired;
- arranging career follow up with post-doctoral students;
- providing European and international openings in close collaboration with the Lille Nord de France Doctoral College, particularly through the international co-supervision of theses.

Geographical Scope - Accreditation

The University of Lille (a support institution) has been granted accreditation by the DS. There are two associated institutions:

- Lille University Hospital; and
- Lille Pasteur Institute

Fields of Discipline

The DS covers:

principally, the fields of Life and Environmental Sciences, in particular in the field of Biology and Health, namely:

- Molecular and cellular aspects of biology;
- Biomolecules, pharmacology, therapeutics;
- Physiology and the Biology of organisms, populations and their interactions;
- Clinical research, technological innovation, public health; and
- Life and health sciences.

Secondly, the field of Chemistry and sub-fields of Psychology and Sciences and Techniques of physical and sporting activities (Humanities and social sciences), Mathematics and their interactions and Signal and Image processing (Science and technology).

DS Governance

The DS is headed by a director, who is a research professor or researcher (as defined in article 6 of Title 1 of the French Order dated 25 May 2016) in one of the RU attached to the DS which is authorised to direct research. They are assisted by a deputy director. The director, and, where necessary, the deputy director are appointed by the heads of the institutions after a ballot in which the researchers, research professors and research directors (*HDR*) or equivalent from the RU attached to the DS participate.

DS Board

The DS board is made up of

23 full Members:

14 representatives of the institutions, research units or research teams (one member can represent both a field of research and an institution):

Representatives of the DS's thematic axes (8);

Research vice-presidents from co-accredited or associated institutions or their representatives (3);

The Director of the DS (1);

A co-director of the DS (1); and

Representatives of staff assigned to the RU or the DS (2),

• **Representatives of the doctoral students**, with a maximum of two (2) from the RU from each site (Health Campus, Pasteur Institute, Faculty of Science and Technology), and at least 1 enrolled in the first year of doctoral studies (5).

• **Members external to the DS (3 to 4),**

Guest members without voting rights depending on the agenda:

- Project managers; and
- People with knowledge of specific points on the agenda.

The DS Board meets at least 3 times per year.

Initial doctoral registration and prerequisites

To register, the candidate must:

- have obtained a masters of research, within one of the DS's disciplinary fields, and have obtained a final grade equal to 12/20 or an equivalent recognised degree (any exception must be discussed by the DS board);

- show evidence of sufficient financial resources for the duration of the doctoral studies (the benchmark being an amount equivalent to the doctoral contract; candidates receiving funding from a foreign country must have, perhaps through additional funding, resources above the poverty line, i.e. 50% of the average standard of living in France); and

- carry out their thesis under the supervision of a thesis supervisor who holds a research directorship (*HDR*) or equivalent.

Given the specificities of the Biology Health field, one thesis supervisor shall supervise a maximum of 3 (three) physical doctoral students, including a maximum of one or two co-supervisions maximum. These doctoral students may not be enrolled in the same year of doctoral studies.

A thesis director who has not yet been awarded their research directorship (*HDR*) may be accepted on an exceptional basis if their *HDR* dissertation has been submitted to the university and has an expected date to present and defend the thesis within the next 6 months.

Joint supervisions (by a university doctor who does not hold an *HDR*) are encouraged to allow researchers and research professors to prepare for their *HDR*. The joint supervisor is invited to sign the thesis charter.

The training and work of candidates who do not hold a Masters of Research are subject to assessment by the DS Board. Working for at least 6 months in a research laboratory, with a detailed report from the laboratory director, and/or the existence of scientific publications are the basis on which an exemption might be granted. Certain candidates may be redirected towards prior validation of all or part of a Masters of Research within the DS's disciplinary field. The documents necessary to register on an exceptional basis must arrive at the DS before 15 June in the year before the registration sought, and imperatively before the signing of an agreement between an institution of the candidate's country of origin and the university.

No matter what the form of financing linked to the thesis or if the doctoral student has a salaried activity, a thesis proposal, of 6 pages maximum including bibliography, must be submitted with the initial registration. It should set out the scientific context, the question(s) posed, the research strategy (accessibility of study material, methodology and feasibility in the unit's scientific environment, particularly if it requires the validation of new methodologies or study materials not available in the research unit, or in the case of a clinical research project, recruitment possibilities and the power of the study), the results expected and the proposed timetable. The thesis proposal will serve as a basis for the constitution of the individual monitoring committee as defined below.

A training contract is entered into at registration and shall be modified during the doctoral studies.

The authorisation for registration requires a favourable decision from the thesis supervisor (or two co-supervisors), the director(s) of the research unit and the DS director. It is delivered by the head of the institution where the registration is made.

How to register - duration of doctoral studies - viva voce/defence of the thesis

The thesis is the result of original and formative research, the feasibility of which is within the time limit set. The benchmark duration for a thesis prepared full-time in initial training, including presentation, or defence, at the oral exam (*viva voce*), is three years.

Re-enrolment in the second and third years of the thesis is compulsory at the beginning of the university year and is governed by the procedures specific to each establishment.

At the end of the second year, the foreseeable deadline for presenting and defending the thesis must be discussed.

Since the start of the academic year 2010/2011, the Doctoral School has set up a consultative tool. The **Committee for Thesis Supervision (CST)** has become the **Individual Monitoring Committee (CSI)**, which from September 2016 has been in charge of reconciling the respect of thesis deadlines with the mission of training doctoral students and preparing them for the start of their professional careers.

The objectives of the thesis committee, which is appointed by the DS based a joint proposal by the doctoral student and their thesis supervisor, shall be to contribute to the supervision of the doctoral student's research work, to reinforce the tutoring functions of the thesis supervisor, and to advise the student on their career plan and the means to achieve it (training). If there are technical or interpersonal difficulties, the *CSI* will mediate or inform the Doctoral School.

The *CSI* shall consist of at least two scientists from outside the RU (or the team if it concerns a multi-thematic research unit accredited by the supervisory authorities such as the INSERM Research Centre, etc), at least one of whom shall be from outside the Lille Nord de France Doctoral College, and shall meet at least twice (once for international joint supervisors): at the end of the first year and at the end of the second year of full-time doctoral studies. For part-time doctoral studies, the *CSI* shall meet at the end of each year.

If presentation of the thesis cannot be envisaged before the end of the 3rd year of a full-time thesis, an additional meeting of the *CSI* shall be held before mid-June of the 3rd year. The DS shall be given notice of the meeting at least 15 days in advance and may appoint a scientist to join the *CSI*.

Any request for an extension to a thesis must be submitted to the DS secretariat, accompanied by a report from the *CSI* president before June of the current year.

Extensions must be exceptional, except in cases explicitly mentioned in the doctoral charter or doctoral agreement or in the case of international joint supervision and are not systematically granted for 12 months.

Extension Requests must be accompanied by information about funding provided for in the *CSI* report.

The DS Board will assess, depending on the arguments presented, if it is possible to grant an exception and will transmit the request to the university.

After the supervision or joint supervision of 2 consecutive theses of 6 months longer than normal, a blank year will be attributed to the thesis supervisor without any new supervisions or joint supervisions allowed.

In accordance with the Doctoral Charter, the presentation and defence of the thesis requires at least one publication, either accepted or with minor revision, signed as lead author or lead joint author, taken from the thesis work, in an international peer-reviewed journal, or a patent. In case of a thesis presented on the basis of a patent submission, a request for the scientific admissibility must be submitted and discussed with the DS Board.

Otherwise, the request for authorisation to present and defend the thesis shall be examined by the DS Board after hearing an argued opinion from the *CSI*.

Authorisation to present the thesis, the appointment of members of the doctoral committee and jury are announced by the head of the institution following recommendations from the DS director, having taken advice from the Doctoral Supervisor and the RU Director.

If there is a particular difficulty or disagreement, a mediation procedure, as set out in the Doctoral Charter, can be initiated.

Institutional Funding (Doctoral Contracts and Contracts jointly financed by the Regional Council of the Hauts-de-France)

Doctoral contracts offered by the universities to which the students belong and contracts jointly financed by the regional council are awarded on merit, after pre-selection of candidates on the basis of a masters of research having obtained a ranking in the top two thirds of their class if the class has at least 12 students, or an average grade in the second year of the masters (Masters 2) at least equal to 13/20 or after prior examination of their curriculum vitae.

Selected candidates must submit a written research proposal, and are then interviewed by the DS jury whose composition is detailed in the Entrance Exam Rules of Procedure.

The jury composition shall be communicated to candidates, posted at the site and posted on the EDBSL website at least 15 days before the jury sits.

The following may sit as observers:

- the 5 student representatives from the DS Board; and
- Staff representatives from ITARF.

Observers may not take part in jury deliberation or decisions.

The competitive entrance procedure for doctoral contracts is set out in the annex "Competitive Entrance Rules of Procedure, which is also part of the applicable rules at the Doctoral School of Biology and Health. These rules may be updated after approval by the DS Board.

In case of unforeseen or particular circumstances, the jury remains valid if the quorum of half the members is reached.

Presidential Quota contracts or contracts jointly financed by the Regional Council:

If an institution head defines the disciplinary field and/or the RU (signposting) which will benefit from a doctoral contract as part of the "presidential quota", or the thesis subjects meet the criteria set by the Regional Council, the candidate for this contract will present their research project before the DS jury at the same time as candidates for "ordinary" doctoral contracts. If the candidates are not selected by the jury, the DS will send to the head of institutions with this type of contract a complementary list of the candidates selected at the end of the entrance procedure, from which they will be able to select the beneficiary of the contract, depending on the institution's research policy or the criteria set by the Regional Council.

Doctoral teaching/courses

The DS has set up a complementary training system for doctoral students during their doctoral studies. The obligation to validate at least sixty credits for the D1s from the start of the 2014/2015 academic year, before presentation of their thesis, goes hand in hand with a great deal of choice left to the doctoral student as advised by their supervisor:

- specialised or multidisciplinary scientific training: courses organised as part of the local Masters programme, doctoral teaching modules, mini-symposiums organised across three Lille sites, etc;
- external symposiums, congress and seminars;
- the André Verbert doctoral students' day, organised by a committee of research professors or researchers and the doctoral students themselves, with presentations in the form of posters or oral presentation on their thesis subjects, by 2nd year doctoral students;
- specific training (languages, bio-informatics, bioethics, clinical investigation, animal experimentation, etc);
- training in research ethics and rules of conduct (5 credits minimum);
- professional training; and
- any training or internship which might be offered, in agreement with the thesis supervisor, for approval by the DS.

These training courses are clearly not intended to replace scientific activities (seminars, literature review sessions, conferences, etc) offered to the doctoral student in their host RU.

The training courses chosen will be indicated if possible in the training contract and must be included in the doctoral student's portfolio.

In order to validate their training plan, doctoral students must provide evidence of their participation in the chosen training courses (attendance registers, certificates of participation in conferences, etc) and may be required to participate in evaluations requested by the trainers. Failure to do so may result in the student not being allowed to defend their thesis.

Any enrolment for a doctoral training course or teaching financed or jointly financed by the DS must be submitted for prior approval.

The doctoral student commits in writing to follow the complete training module.

In order to reduce absenteeism which is worryingly detrimental to the quality of the training courses and the financial participation of the DS, negative credits will be awarded to doctoral students who are absent from a training course without informing the organiser and the DS at least one week in advance. The number of credits will be the same as the amount that would have been generated by participating in the course.

The practicalities of the credit system are set out in the annex "Training Pathway", which is also part of the applicable rules at the Doctoral School of Biology and Health. These rules may be updated after approval by the DS Board.