



PHD REGULATIONS OF THE UNIVERSIDAD PONTIFICIA COMILLAS

(Approved by the Governing Board in the session held on 28 March 2022)

Rules adapted to RD 822/2021, of 28 September

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM.....	2
CHAPTER I. GENERAL PROVISIONS	2
Article 1. Purpose and Bodies of the PhD Studies	2
Article 2. PhD Programmes	3
Article 3. Length of the Studies	3
Article 4. Organisation of PhD Training	3
Article 5. Access Requirements to the PhD Programme	4
Article 6. Criteria for Selection and Admission to a PhD Programme	4
Article 7. Enrolment	5
Article 8. Tutor of the PhD Thesis	5
Article 9. Supervisor of the PhD Thesis	6
Article 10. Registration of Activities	6
Article 11. Follow-Up of the PhD Student	7
Article 12. Documentary Commitment	7
Article 13. Dispute Settlement Procedure	7
CHAPTER II. PhD THESIS.....	8
Article 14. The PhD Thesis	8
Article 15. PhD Thesis Drafting	8
Article 16. Format.....	8
Article 17. The Thesis as a Compendium of Publications	8
Article 18. Submission and Filing of the PhD Thesis	9
Article 19. The PhD Thesis Examining Board	10
Article 20. Defence and Evaluation of the PhD Thesis	11
Article 21. Remote intervention of members of the examining board in the act of defence of the thesis, by telematic means	11
Article 22. PhD Thesis Filing	11
Article 23. International Mention and Industrial Mention in the Doctorate Degree	12
CHAPTER III. BODIES OF PhD STUDIES.....	12
Article 24. Determination of the Bodies for PhD Studies.....	12
Article 25. Comillas International Study for Doctorate	12
Article 26. General PhD Committee and Steering Committee of the International PhD School.....	12
Article 27. The Academic Committee of each PhD Programme	13
Article 28. Coordinators of the PhD Programmes.....	14
TRANSITIONAL PROVISION	14
DEROGATING PROVISION	14
FINAL PROVISION	14



Rules adapted to RD 822/2021, of 28 September

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

The new scenario introduced by Royal Decree 99/2011, of 28 January, which regulates official PhD studies, makes it necessary to redefine the PhD education system, as well as the development and updating of all university academic regulations governing these studies.

With these PhD regulations, Universidad Pontificia de Comillas adapts the structure of its PhD studies to the aforementioned new scenario, while leveraging the opportunity for change to introduce some aspects that reinforce the academic quality of the University's PhD programmes and their connection with society and business. Universidad Pontificia de Comillas believes in the essential role of the PhD as an element of social progress.

The most noteworthy aspect is the creation of the Comillas International PhD School, responsible for the organisation and management of PhD studies and activities at Universidad Pontificia de Comillas, and reporting to the Vice-Rector for PhD Studies. The main objective of the School is to coordinate the different PhD programmes, their procedures, training activities and the monitoring of students' progress. Such coordination should lead to synergies in the use of resources and an intensification of the interdisciplinary training of PhD students. Likewise, the School will constitute the University's single point of reference for PhD studies, which will facilitate its integration in inter-university networks such as the Aristós Campus Mundus programme, cooperation agreements with national and foreign research entities, or the attraction of international talent to the PhD programme.

A second noteworthy aspect is the fact that the PhD programmes now depend directly on the PhD School, and not on the Centres. This facilitates the creation of inter-centre or inter-university transversal programmes, which stimulates interdisciplinarity and the adaptation of these programmes to the demands of society, and makes it possible to mobilise the potential of the university and its research networks. In this sense, the participation of representatives of companies or other institutions in the academic committees of the programmes is foreseen, and this link is recognised by means of an industrial mention in the PhD degree. In any case, the regulations guarantee the participation of the Centres in the decision-making processes that concern them, as essential partners in the programmes.

Thirdly, these rules incorporate good management practices, aimed at standardising administrative procedures and the processes for monitoring and assessing PhD students. Thus, common requirements are established for access to the programmes, and homogeneous procedures for the selection and admission of students, or the assignment of a tutor or supervisor. In addition, a single document is established for the registration of the activities carried out by the PhD student and common requirements for the research plan, which is constituted as the PhD student's evaluation system.

Fourthly, mechanisms have been introduced to ensure the quality of PhD theses defended at Comillas. In addition to the aforementioned periodic evaluation and monitoring procedure, it establishes the need to request reports from external experts to accredit the quality of the thesis; a public presentation procedure that is extended to all PhD students at the University; a more robust procedure for awarding the "cum laude" mention; and the creation of a Scientific Committee to advise the Director of the PhD School.

Finally, and as a further novelty, the regulations open up the possibility of submitting a thesis as a compendium of publications, for which both the requirements and the necessary precautions are established to guarantee the quality of the thesis in these cases.

CHAPTER I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article 1. Purpose and Bodies of the PhD Studies

1. The purpose of these regulations is to regulate the organisation of PhD studies at Universidad Pontificia de Comillas, in accordance with the provisions of Royal Decree



- 99/2011, of 28 January, which regulates official PhD studies, and articles 19 and 20 of Royal Decree 822/202, of 28 September, which establishes the organisation of university studies and the procedure for quality assurance.
2. Doctorate is understood as the third cycle of official university studies leading to the acquisition of competences and skills concerning quality university research and its development.
 3. These are the bodies of the PhD programmes at Universidad Pontificia de Comillas:
 - a) The Comillas International PhD School, reporting directly to the Vice-Rector responsible for PhD studies.
 - b) The General PhD Committee, composed of the members of the School's Steering Committee.
 - c) The academic committee of the PhD programme
 - d) The Coordinator of each PhD programme.

Article 2. PhD Programmes

PhD studies are organised through programmes under the terms established in these regulations and in accordance with the criteria established in Royal Decree 99/2011, of 28 January, which regulates official PhD studies.

A PhD programme is a set of activities leading to the acquisition of the competences and skills necessary to obtain a PhD degree. The aim of this programme will be to develop the different training aspects of the PhD student and will establish the procedures and lines of research for the development of PhD theses.

Article 3. Length of the Studies

1. The duration of the PhD studies will be a maximum of three years, full-time, from the admission of the PhD student to the programme until the application for the deposit of the PhD thesis is made.
2. Notwithstanding the above, and with the prior authorisation of the academic committee responsible for the programme, part-time studies may be undertaken. In this case, such studies may have a maximum duration of five years from admission to the programme until the application for submission of the PhD thesis.
3. The calculation of these periods shall be interrupted in the case of duly justified sick leave or maternity leave, and during the period for which they are extended.
4. The PhD student may apply to leave the programme temporarily for a maximum period of one year, which may be extended for a further year. This request must be addressed and justified to the academic committee responsible for the programme, which will decide whether the student's request can be granted. If the absence is not due to illness or maternity leave, the calculation of the time limits shall not be interrupted.
5. If after the three-year period the application to deposit the thesis has not been submitted, the academic committee responsible for the programme may authorise the extension of this period for a further year, which, exceptionally and with the approval of the Directorate of the International PhD School, may be extended for an additional year, under the conditions established in the corresponding PhD programme. In the case of part-time studies, the extension may be authorised for a further two years, which may also, exceptionally, be extended for an additional year, again with the approval of the Directorate of the International PhD School.

Article 4. Organisation of PhD Training

PhD training at Universidad Pontificia de Comillas will be organised in accordance with the provisions of article 4 of Royal Decree 99/2011.



Article 5. Access Requirements to the PhD Programme

1. In general, to access an official PhD programme, an official Spanish University Decree, or equivalent, and an Official Master's degree are necessary.
2. Likewise, candidates can be admitted if one of the following applies:
 - a) Holding an official Spanish university degree, or from another country belonging to the European Higher Education Area, which implies having passed a minimum of 300 ECTS credits in official university studies, of which at least 60 must be at master's level (in the terms established in art. 16 of the now repealed Royal Decree 1393/2007).
 - b) They hold an official Spanish degree which, in line with European Law, is made up of at least 300 ECTS credits. Such graduates must obligatorily undertake the training complements outlined in section 6.3 herein, unless the syllabus of the relevant Undergraduate Degree includes research credits equivalent to research credits in a Master's Degree in terms of training value.
 - c) They have an official university degree that has obtained the equivalent to level 3 of the Spanish Framework of Qualifications for Higher Education, as set out in the established procedure in Royal Decree 967/2014 of 21 November which establishes the requirements and procedure for the validation and attestation of the equivalence of a degree certificate and of the accreditation of studies realised outside of the European Higher Education Area, and the process to determine the equivalence to the levels of the Spanish Framework of Qualifications for Higher Education of the official qualifications of Architecture, Engineering, Technical Architecture, Technical Engineer and Diplomas.
 - d) Graduates who have successfully completed at least two years of training in a program leading to the obtainment of an official degree of any of the specialties in Health Science after obtaining a training position through the relevant access examination for specialised sanitary training.
 - e) They hold a degree from a foreign education authority, which does not need to be validated due to it having previously been checked by the General PhD Committee that it certifies the level equivalent to an official Spanish Master's degree and that in the issuing country it grants access to PhD studies. Admission by this route shall not imply, in any case, that the previous degree has been recognised for any other purpose than undertaking this PhD programme.
 - f) They have a Spanish Doctorate qualification which was achieved under the previous university system.
 - g) They are PhD students that started their programme in line with university system previous to Royal Decree 99/2011.
 - h) They are graduates, architects and engineers that had a Diploma in Advanced Studies achieved according to that established in Royal Decree 778/1998 of 30 April, or that had completed the sufficient amount of research as regulated in Royal Decree 185/1985 of 23 January.

Article 6. Criteria for Selection and Admission to a PhD Programme

1. Selection to a PhD programme shall be made by the academic committee of the PhD programme concerned.

In order to make the selection, the academic committee will use the criteria previously established in the verification report, which, in any case, will include:

 - a) Assessment of the academic curriculum.
 - b) An assessment of the merits of particular relevance or significance in relation to the PhD programme applied for.
 - c) Any other criterion or procedure previously explained and justified, which, in the opinion of the academic committee, allows the suitability of the applicant to follow these studies to be ascertained.



- d) The admission to a programme of a student who has previously left it definitively will require, in order for the calculation of the deadlines to start again, that the new research be objectively and significantly different from that carried out in the previous stage, which must be verified and approved by the academic committee in an explicit manner. A different address from the above will also be required. If these conditions are not met, the readmission shall take into account, for the purpose of calculating time limits, the time already spent in the previous stage.
2. Admission to a PhD programme is decided by the Rector, or the person he/she delegates, at the proposal of the academic committee of the corresponding PhD programme and with the approval, in all cases, of the Dean or Director of the Centre or Centres that provide human or material resources to the programme.
3. Admission to PhD programmes may include the requirement for specific additional training in the terms set out in the verification report, the completion of which shall not be taken into account for the purposes of calculating the limit established in Article 3 of these regulations.
4. At least 5 percent of the places offered will be reserved for students with a recognised degree of disability equal to or greater than 33 percent, as well as for students with permanent educational support needs associated with personal circumstances of disability, who in their previous studies have required resources and support for their full educational inclusion, in accordance with article 20 *in fine* of Royal Decree 822/2021.

Article 7. Enrolment

1. PhD students admitted to a PhD programme shall enrol for the academic supervision of the PhD programme every six months.
2. This registration fee must be paid until a favourable decision on the admission to the defence of the PhD thesis has been taken. Failure to pay the registration fee by any of the deadlines established for this purpose will result in the loss of student status and, therefore, the definitive withdrawal of the PhD student, except where the temporary withdrawal request provided for in articles 3.3 and 3.4 has been submitted and granted prior to such non-payment. If the student applies for readmission to the programme once this definitive withdrawal has taken place, the provisions of article 6.1 d) of these regulations shall apply.

Article 8. Tutor of the PhD Thesis

1. At the time of admission, the academic committee of the respective programme will assign a tutor to the PhD student. The appointment of a tutor may be modified at any time by the academic committee, after hearing the PhD student and, where appropriate, the tutor, provided that there are justified reasons.
2. The tutor is responsible for ensuring that the student's training and research activity is in line with the principles of the programmes and the PhD School.
3. The tutor must hold a PhD and have accredited research experience and be a member of the faculty of the PhD programme. The tutor is responsible for ensuring the interaction of the PhD student with the corresponding academic committee. To this end, it is assigned the following functions:
 - a) To regularly review, together with the thesis supervisor, the PhD student's personalised activities document.
 - b) To approve, together with the thesis supervisor and before the end of the first year, the research plan drawn up by the PhD student.
 - c) To sign the documentary commitment together with the University, the PhD student and the supervisor.
 - d) To issue and submit annually to the academic committee the report provided for in article 11.7 of Royal Decree 99/2011.



4. The University may sign a co-supervision agreement with another foreign University, which determines the supervision of the thesis by two or more PhDs, the activities to be carried out by the PhD student and the terms of the stay of the PhD student in the foreign institution for a minimum period of 6 months. The international co-supervision of the thesis will be stated in the PhD degree, in accordance with the provisions of art. 11.6 of RD 1002/2010 of 5 August, on the issuing of official university degrees.

Article 9. Supervisor of the PhD Thesis

1. At the time of admission, the academic committee of the respective programme shall assign the PhD student a PhD thesis supervisor who shall also assume the duties of tutor, unless a supervisor from a different programme is appointed, in which case a tutor shall be appointed in accordance with the provisions of the previous article. The appointment of the PhD thesis supervisor may be modified by the academic committee at any time during the student's PhD studies, provided that there are justified reasons.
In the event that a thesis supervisor is not assigned at the time of admission, the academic committee must appoint a thesis supervisor within a maximum of three months after enrolment.
2. Any PhD holder, Spanish or foreign, with accredited research experience, regardless of the university, centre or institution in which he/she works, may be the Supervisor or Co-Supervisor of a thesis.
3. The thesis supervisor is responsible for the overall management of the student's research work, the coherence and suitability of the training activities, the impact and novelty of the subject of the PhD thesis in his/her field and the guidance in the planning and its adaptation, where appropriate, to that of other projects and activities in which the student is involved. To this end, it is responsible for at least the following functions:
 - a) To regularly review, together with the tutor, the PhD student's personalised activity document.
 - b) To approve, together with the tutor and before the end of the first year, the research plan drawn up by the PhD student.
 - c) To sign the documentary commitment together with the University, the PhD student and the tutor.
 - d) To issue and submit annually to the academic committee the report provided for in article 11.7 of Royal Decree 99/2011.
 - e) If applicable, to endorse the stay and activities required for the inclusion, if applicable, of the "International PhD Mention", in accordance with the provisions of article 15.1.a) of Royal Decree 99/2011.
4. With the prior authorisation of the academic committee, the thesis may be co-supervised by other PhDs when there are academic reasons that justify it, such as thematic interdisciplinarity or programmes developed in national or international collaboration. Authorisation may be requested at any time during the development of the thesis, and may be revoked at a later date if, in the opinion of the academic committee, the co-supervision does not benefit the development of the thesis.

Article 10. Registration of Activities

1. Once enrolled in the programme, a personalised activity document must be drawn up for each PhD student for the purposes of the individualised control register referred to in article 2.5 of Royal Decree 99/2011. All the activities of interest for the development of the PhD student must be registered therein in accordance with the criteria established by the General PhD Committee and it must be regularly reviewed by the tutor and the thesis supervisor and evaluated annually by the academic commission responsible for the PhD programme.
2. The personalised activity document shall conform to the model contained in Annex (I) of these rules.



Article 11. Follow-Up of the PhD Student

1. Before the end of the first year, the PhD student must draw up a research plan, endorsed by the tutor and the supervisor, which will include at least the following sections:
 - a) Identification details of the PhD student and the supervisor or co-supervisors of the thesis.
 - b) Title of the thesis proposal.
 - c) Summary of the proposal.
 - d) Methodology to be used.
 - e) Objectives to be achieved.
 - f) Means and timetable for achieving the proposed objectives and, where appropriate, mention of the specific additional training to be undertaken.
 - g) Bibliography.

This plan must be sent to the programme's academic committee by the established deadline and in the established form, and may be improved and detailed throughout the PhD student's stay on the programme.

2. Annually, the academic committee of the programme will evaluate the research plan and the activities document together with the reports that the tutor and the supervisor must issue for this purpose. The result of the assessment, favourable or unfavourable, signed by the chair of the committee, will be included in the PhD student's file. A favourable evaluation is a prerequisite for continuation in the programme. In the event of an unfavourable evaluation, which shall be duly motivated, the PhD student shall be re-evaluated within a maximum period of six months, for which purpose he/she shall draw up a new research plan. In the event of a new unfavourable evaluation, the PhD student will be permanently withdrawn from the programme. To this end, the Rector, or the person appointed by him/her, shall issue the appropriate resolution, at the proposal of the academic committee responsible for the PhD programme and following a report from the General PhD Committee.

Article 12. Documentary Commitment

1. The supervision of PhD students shall be established by means of a documentary commitment signed by the Vice-Rector responsible for PhD studies, the PhD student, his/her tutor and his/her supervisor or co-supervisors. The commitment must be signed at the time of the assignment of the Supervisor.
2. The documentary commitment shall include a procedure for conflict resolution and shall cover aspects relating to intellectual or industrial property rights that may arise in the field of PhD programmes, as set out in Annex (II) of these rules. The commitment document, once signed by the participants, is filed in the PhD student's file.

Article 13. Dispute Settlement Procedure

1. In the event of non-compliance with any of the points included in the commitment document or of any other disagreement related to the development of the PhD programme with respect to each PhD student, any of the parties may inform the coordinator of each PhD programme, who will act as mediator with a view to reaching a unanimous agreement that will put an end to the controversy. In case the conflict is related to the academic committee or the programme coordinator, the Directorate of the International PhD School will mediate.
2. If mediation has not led to a resolution of the conflict within one month of the mediation being notified, the matter shall be referred to the General PhD Committee, which shall issue a decision within one month, after hearing the parties and the coordinator of the PhD programme.



3. An appeal may be lodged with the Rector against the decision of the General PhD Committee.

CHAPTER II. PhD THESIS

Article 14. The PhD Thesis

The PhD thesis will consist of an original research work carried out by the PhD student in any field of knowledge. The thesis must enable the PhD student to work independently in the field of R&D&I.

Article 15. PhD Thesis Drafting

1. The PhD student may choose to write and, where appropriate, defend his/her thesis in Spanish and/or in English.
2. At the request of the PhD student, the General PhD Committee may authorise the writing and, where appropriate, defence of the thesis in a language other than Spanish and English, if there is justification that this language is customary for scientific communication in the field of knowledge in question. This requires a favourable report from the academic committee responsible for the PhD programme.
3. The application to write and, where appropriate, defend the thesis in a language other than Spanish and English must be submitted to the General PhD Committee prior to the submission of the thesis.
4. By way of exception and without the need for prior authorisation, PhD theses in the fields of translation and interpreting may be written and, where appropriate, defended in the language corresponding to the speciality in question.
5. The title of the thesis must appear in the original language in which it was written and in Spanish, on the cover and on the title page.
6. In the event that the language of writing is other than Spanish, the thesis must contain a summary in Spanish. This abstract must be at least 2,000 words in length and must be bound as part of the thesis.

Article 16. Format

The preparation of the PhD thesis must be verified in accordance with the formal requirements determined in Annex (III), in order to establish rules that guarantee uniformity of presentation, cover pages, electronic formats of the thesis, access permissions to its content and others that are considered relevant.

Article 17. The Thesis as a Compendium of Publications

1. PhD students may choose to present their thesis as a compendium of publications if, in the period between the approval of their research plan in accordance with article 11.6 of Royal Decree 99/2011 of 28 January and the presentation of their thesis, and with the express authorisation of their thesis supervisor or co-supervisors, they have received a favourable report from the academic committee of the PhD programme, which will decide on a case-by-case basis in view of the research merits of each PhD student. Papers may be previously published or in the process of publication. In any case, these publications must have scientific value in their own right and, at the same time, they must form a scientific unit. The PhD student must be the main author of each paper.
2. Prior to the presentation of the thesis and accompanied by a favourable and reasoned report from the thesis supervisor or co-supervisors, the PhD student must apply to the academic committee of the PhD programme for authorisation to present the PhD thesis as a compendium of publications.



3. In order to obtain authorisation from the academic committee of the PhD programme, the PhD student must provide the following documentation:
 - a) Copy of published or contributed works.
 - b) Report by the thesis supervisor, justifying the presentation of the compendium of publications as a PhD thesis.
 - c) Responsible declaration by the PhD student confirming that he/she is the main author of all the papers, and specifying his/her contribution to each article. The declaration must be endorsed by the thesis supervisor and by the other authors of the corresponding work.
4. The provisions of Article 15 regarding the wording of theses and the language of the thesis shall apply to theses formulated in the form of a compendium of publications.
5. Theses submitted in the form of a compendium of publications must necessarily contain the following additional sections:
 - a) A general introduction, presenting the work and justifying the scientific unity of the thesis.
 - b) An overall summary of the research objectives and final conclusions, unifying the partial results presented in each of the papers.
 - c) A complete copy of the work (articles, book chapters, book chapters, etc.). The full reference of the work, the personal details of all authors and, where appropriate, the journal or medium in which the work has been published must be included. The PhD student must specify what contribution he/she has made to the work included.
6. Each PhD programme may establish in the verification report the additional criteria it considers appropriate for the admission of PhD theses in the modality of compendium of publications.
7. In any case, the submission of the thesis by compendium of publications must follow the procedure established in Article 18.

Article 18. Submission and Filing of the PhD Thesis

1. Once the PhD thesis has been completed, the PhD student will request authorisation to deposit it in writing addressed to the academic committee of the PhD programme, which must be accompanied by the thesis:
 - a) Favourable supervisor's report, and, if appropriate, favourable co-supervisor's report. If none of them has academic links with Universidad Pontificia de Comillas, a favourable report will also be required from the tutor.
 - b) A copy of the PhD thesis.
 - c) The resolution of the academic committee of the programme approving the Application for approval of the data processing and ethical aspects of the PhD thesis.
2. Once authorisation has been requested, the academic committee of the PhD programme will request a report on the PhD thesis from a minimum of two doctors who are experts in the subject from outside the programme and, having received the reports, will proceed to summon the PhD student to present the thesis before it. The academic committee may call upon other experts whose opinion it considers appropriate to hear. The academic committee will also obtain a report on the originality of the thesis, which will be included in the PhD student's transcript.
3. The experts' reports must decide in one of the following four ways: favourable to the defence, unfavourable, favourable with significant modification requiring further review, or favourable with some minor modification, without requiring further review. In the event that an expert's report is favourable with significant modifications, the PhD student will have a maximum period of six months to complete or modify the sections or contents of the thesis, in the terms indicated by the experts. In the case of a favourable decision with minor modifications, the PhD student will have a maximum period of one month to introduce the minor changes indicated by the experts. In the event that the report of only one of the experts is unfavourable, the report of the other expert being favourable with or without minor modification, the



- academic committee of the PhD programme may decide to request a new report from a third expert. If this report is again unfavourable, it will be considered that the expert assessment of the PhD thesis has not been passed positively.
4. Once the student's complete dossier has been evaluated, including the activities document, the academic committee of the PhD programme will authorise, where appropriate, the deposit of the thesis, issuing a decision within a maximum period of one month. In the event that authorisation is refused, the PhD student may appeal to the Rector, who will decide on the basis of a report from the General PhD Committee.
 5. Once authorisation has been obtained, the academic committee shall make a proposal for experts in the field who may form part of the panel responsible for judging the thesis in accordance with Article 19. This proposal must be accompanied by a reasoned report on the suitability of the proposed experts, indicating the proposed chairperson and secretary of the thesis examining board.
 6. Once the deposit of the PhD thesis has been authorised, the academic committee of the PhD programme will send the following documentation to the secretary's office of the School for PhD Studies:
 - a) The PhD student's activities document, with the training activities carried out by the student.
 - b) A copy of the PhD thesis.
 - c) The resolution of the academic committee of the programme approving the Application for approval of the data processing and ethical aspects of the PhD thesis.
 - d) The authorisation by the Academic Committee of the PhD programme.
 7. Once the dossier has been received, the secretary's office of the PhD School will:
 - a) Check the formal validity of the file.
 - b) Communicate the presentation of the thesis to all the doctors of the University.
 - c) Order that the copy of the thesis be deposited at the Academic Management and Qualifications Service for a period of fifteen school days, so that it may be examined by any doctor.
 8. Once the public exhibition period has elapsed, the academic committee of the programme will decide on the authorisation of the defence of the thesis. In the event that authorisation is refused, the PhD student may appeal to the Rector, who will decide on the basis of a report from the General PhD Committee.
 9. Once the defence of the thesis has been authorised, no more than three months may elapse before the defence of the PhD thesis, unless, for serious and duly justified reasons, the Vice-Rector responsible for PhD studies authorises otherwise.

Article 19. The PhD Thesis Examining Board

Once the defence of the PhD thesis has been authorised, the examining board to assess it shall be proposed by the academic committee of the programme in accordance with the provisions of this article.

The following should be taken into account when appointing the selection board:

- a) It shall be composed of five full members: a Chairperson, a Secretary and three members, as well as two alternates. Exceptionally, the Rector may authorise the composition of a board of three full members.
- b) The majority of the members of the selection board must be external to the University.
- c) All members must have a doctorate degree and accredited research experience. Professors or researchers who have obtained the recognition of at least one six-year research period or equivalent, or who have sufficient projects and/or publications in the field, shall be understood to have this status. Retired doctors may sit on the selection board, provided that they can provide evidence of recent research in the field.
- d) The Supervisor or Co-Supervisor of the thesis may not form part of the examining board, except in cases of international co-directorships where this is required by the



regulations of the corresponding country, and provided that this is established in the co-directorship agreement.

- e) The Chairperson of the selection board shall be the member with the highest academic standing, or the one most distinguished in terms of research.
- f) The Secretary of the examining board will always be one of the professors of Universidad Pontificia de Comillas.

Article 20. Defence and Evaluation of the PhD Thesis

1. The PhD thesis is assessed at the defence.
2. The defence of the thesis must take place on a working day or days in accordance with the University's academic calendar and will be convened by the chair of the examining board and communicated by its secretary to the other members, the PhD student and the PhD School at least ten days in advance of the event.
3. Once the examining board has been constituted, the defence and evaluation must take place in a public session and consist of a presentation by the PhD student of the work carried out, the methodology, the content and the conclusions, with special mention of their original contributions.
4. The PhD student's training activities document cannot give rise to a quantitative score, but it can constitute a qualitative evaluation instrument that complements the evaluation of the PhD thesis.
5. The members of the examining board may ask as many questions as they consider appropriate, to which the candidate must reply. Likewise, the doctors present at the public ceremony may ask questions at the time and in the manner indicated by the chairperson of the selection board.
6. The examining board will issue a report and the overall grade awarded to the thesis according to the following scale: "Fail", "Pass", "Merit" and "Outstanding".
7. The examining board may award the mention of "cum laude" if the overall grade is outstanding and a unanimous positive secret ballot is cast in that sense. The vote cast by each member of the examining board will be kept by the secretary of the examining board, who will send it to the PhD School so that it can be counted in a session other than the one corresponding to the defence of the PhD thesis.
8. The result of the evaluation must be recorded in minutes that must be sent to the Vice-Rector responsible for PhD studies, stating the result of the vote and accompanied by the votes cast. This report will be sent immediately to the Academic Management and Qualifications Service for inclusion in the student's file.

Article 21. Remote intervention of members of the examining board in the act of defence of the thesis, by telematic means

Exceptionally, the Vice-Rector responsible for PhD studies may, at the request of the coordinator of the PhD programme, authorise a member of the examining board, who may not be the chairperson or the secretary, to verify by telematic means his/her participation in the defence of the thesis. This authorisation shall also indicate the appropriate measures to be taken by the thesis selection board to verify the identity of the person concerned and to ensure that the signature on the thesis reading report and the vote to be cast secretly are kept at the disposal of the secretary of the selection board.

Article 22. PhD Thesis Filing

1. Once the PhD thesis has been approved, the university will file it in electronic format, preferably open, in the university's institutional repository and will send a copy of the thesis, also in electronic format, together with all the complementary information required, to the Ministry responsible for universities and for the appropriate purposes in accordance with the terms established by the latter.
2. In addition, a printed copy of each approved PhD thesis must be kept and sent to the University's Office of the Archive.

Article 23. International Mention and Industrial Mention in the Doctorate Degree

In order to obtain the International or Industrial Mention in the PhD degree, the provisions of article 15 of Royal Decree 99/ 2011 shall apply.

CHAPTER III. BODIES OF PhD STUDIES

Article 24. Determination of the Bodies for PhD Studies

The PhD teaching bodies at Universidad Pontificia de Comillas are those listed in Article 1 of these regulations.

Article 25. Comillas International Study for Doctorate

1. The Comillas International PhD School was created under the Vice-Rector for PhD Studies to organise and manage the teaching and activities of PhD studies corresponding to the PhD programmes implemented at Universidad Pontificia de Comillas. The School and its affiliated programmes should ensure leadership and a sufficient critical mass of PhD professors and PhD candidates in their field of knowledge.
2. The Director of the Comillas International PhD School shall be appointed by the Rector for a period of 3 years. He/she must be a professor or researcher of recognised prestige, a condition that must be supported by proof of at least three periods of recognised research activity in accordance with the provisions of Royal Decree 1086/1989 of 28 August 1989. In the event that the researcher occupies a position where the aforementioned evaluation criterion does not apply, he/she must provide evidence of merits comparable to those mentioned above.
3. The Director of the School shall represent the School in all cases in accordance with the criteria of the Vice-Rector responsible for PhD studies and assisted by a Scientific Committee made up of researchers of recognised prestige from areas in which the University has PhD programmes, appointed for this purpose by the Vice-Rector responsible for PhD studies.
4. The Comillas International PhD School will have internal regulations approved by the Governing Board at the proposal of the Vice-Rector responsible for PhD studies, which will establish, among other aspects, the rights and duties of PhD students, in accordance with the provisions of the Student Statute approved by Royal Decree 1791/2010, of 30 December, the rights and duties of tutors and thesis supervisors, as well as the composition and functioning of the academic committees of its programmes.
5. The Comillas International PhD School will formulate and adopt a code of best practices to be subscribed to by all its members.
6. Other universities, centres, organisations, institutions and entities with R+D+I activities, whether public or private, national or foreign, may participate in the Comillas International PhD School under the terms authorised by the Vice-Rector, after consulting the General PhD Committee.

Article 26. General PhD Committee and Steering Committee of the International PhD School

1. The Steering Committee of the Comillas International PhD School exercises the duties relating to the organisation and management of the School and shall act as the General PhD Committee for the development of the functions listed in section 3 of this article.
2. The General PhD Committee is made up of:



- a) The Vice-Rector with responsibility for PhD studies, who chairs it.
 - b) The Director of the PhD School.
 - c) The coordinators of the PhD programmes.
 - d) The student delegate of the PhD School, elected by the delegates of the different programmes, and
 - e) The Secretary General, who shall act as Secretary.
3. The duties of the General PhD Committee are:
- a) To advise the Rector on the proposal for the implementation of new PhD programmes, as well as on their termination, where appropriate.
 - b) To issue the mandatory report for the Rector to resolve appeals against the refusal of authorisation for the defence of PhD theses.
 - c) To propose common admission and enrolment deadlines related to PhD studies.
 - d) To award honorary prizes for the best theses defended in each PhD programme, in accordance with its specific regulations.
 - e) To assist the Rector in the admission to PhD programmes of students with non-accredited degrees from university systems in countries outside the European Union.
 - f) To approve the planning of activities common to the PhD programmes.
 - g) To seek and obtain resources.
 - h) To establish the conditions under which theses may be read in exceptional circumstances of confidentiality.
 - i) Any other duties that may be attributed or delegated to it by the competent bodies of the University.

Article 27. The Academic Committee of each PhD Programme

1. Each PhD programme will have an academic committee which, in accordance with Royal Decree 99/2011, will be made up of doctors, with the following composition:
 - a) The chairperson, who shall be the coordinator of the PhD programme.
 - b) At least two members appointed by the Vice-Rector responsible for PhD studies and chosen from among professors with proven research experience.
 - c) Where appropriate, one or more representatives of the companies and institutions involved in the programme, appointed by the Vice-Rector responsible for PhD studies, provided they hold a PhD degree.
2. The duties of the academic committee of each PhD programme are as follows:
 - a) To approve the proposal for the selection of students.
 - b) To authorise ordinary extensions of the three-year (full-time) or five-year (part-time) period for the completion of the thesis.
 - c) To authorise part-time studies.
 - d) To assign a tutor to each PhD student, once he/she has been admitted to the programme.
 - e) To assign a thesis supervisor or co-supervisors to each PhD student within a maximum period of six months from their enrolment in the PhD programme.
 - f) To modify the appointment of the tutor or PhD thesis supervisor, provided that there are justified circumstances.
 - g) To annually evaluate the research plan and the document of activities of the PhD students, together with the reports that the tutor and the director must issue for this purpose.
 - h) To authorise the presentation and defence of the PhD thesis.
 - i) To formulate a proposal for the appointment of thesis tribunal members, for authorisation by the Rector, with the approval of the Vice-Rector responsible for PhD studies.
 - j) To draw up the proposal for the training activities of the respective PhD programme.
 - k) To resolve requests for approval of data processing and ethical aspects of the PhD thesis.
 - l) Any others assigned to it in accordance with the applicable regulations.



Article 28. Coordinators of the PhD Programmes

1. Each PhD programme, whether official or ecclesiastical, shall have a coordinator, appointed by the Rector after hearing the opinion of the Centres that contribute resources to the programme, from among lecturers and researchers with proven experience in research and in directing research work.
2. The duties of the coordinator of the PhD programme are as follows:
 - a) To act on behalf of the academic committee to which he/she belongs before the General PhD Committee.
 - b) To chair the academic committee.
 - c) To coordinate the development of the programme and its follow-up.
 - d) To coordinate the activity of the PhD programme with the centres where the lecturers and researchers participating in the PhD programme are located.
 - e) To submit to the Vice-Rector responsible for PhD studies a request for authorisation, on an exceptional basis, for the remote intervention of members of the thesis committee in the thesis defence by telematic means, and to notify the Director and PhD candidate of its concession, if applicable.
 - f) Any others assigned to it by the applicable regulations or delegated to it by the General PhD Committee.

TRANSITIONAL PROVISION

Once the new PhD programmes have been approved and implemented in accordance with the provisions of Royal Decree 99/2011, new PhD students will not be admitted to existing programmes implemented and governed in accordance with previous regulations.

DEROGATING PROVISION

The Academic Regulations for Official Postgraduate Studies: PhD Studies approved by the Governing Board at its meeting held on 17 December 2007 are hereby repealed .

FINAL PROVISION

These rules shall enter into force on the day following their approval by the Governing Board of the University.