



Universidad de Valladolid



## **GUIDE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A THESIS UNDER THE REGIME OF INTERNATIONAL CO-SUPERVISION**



This is an open document<sup>1</sup> whose objective is to guide the thesis supervisor in the process of initiating, processing, and finalizing a doctoral thesis (Ph.D.) under the regime of international co-supervision. The regulations affecting this case are so numerous and varied that our experience has suggested that this document may well be useful in facilitating the successful management of this specific process.

Last review date of the document: 11<sup>th</sup> June 2019

Summary of the laws affecting theses under international co-direction:

- Royal Decree 99/2011 of January 28<sup>th</sup> regulating the official doctoral studies in Spain.
- Royal Decree 195/2016 modifying Royal Decree 99/2011.
- Regulations for the presentation and defense of the Ph.D. in the University of Valladolid, approved by the Governing Board in the session of June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2016.
- Law 40/2015 concerning the Legal System of the Public Sector.
- Law 25/2014 concerning Treaties and other International Agreements.
- Guide for processing agreements of the University of Valladolid.
- Annex I to the Regulations on the Processing, Approval, and Execution of Agreements with other universities or foreign institutions approved by the Governing Board of March 30<sup>th</sup>, 1999 concerning the co-supervision of doctoral thesis.
- Agreement of the Steering Committee of the Doctoral School of October 31<sup>st</sup>. 2018 concerning the procedure for counting the votes cast by the Ph.D. jury, for the concession of “cum laude”, as well as the average mark of scores should the doctoral candidate opt for an outstanding doctoral award.
- Agreement of the Doctoral Commission of June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2018 concerning the interpretation of the articles 3.2 and 4.1 of the University of Valladolid’s regulations governing the admission and defense of a doctoral thesis.
- Agreement of the Steering Committee of the Doctoral School of the University of Valladolid, in the session of February 17<sup>th</sup>, 2014, concerning the accreditation of research experience prior to the assignation of the supervisor of a doctoral thesis by the academic committees of the doctoral programs.

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<sup>1</sup> In order to be coherent with the values of gender equality assumed by the University of Valladolid, all the terms in this document that appear as masculine will be understood to refer indistinctly to both genders, unless they are replaced by generic terms.



- Agreement of the Governing Board of June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2016 establishing the Regulations concerning the concession of the Outstanding Doctoral Award in the University of Valladolid.
- Agreement of the Steering Committee of the Doctoral School of February 20<sup>th</sup>, 2019 establishing the procedure for processing doctoral thesis under the regime of international co-supervision.

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## **WHAT IS INTERNATIONAL CO-SUPERVISION?**

Co-supervision is an international agreement between two universities by which a single original joint work of research and a single defense will be recognized to award the doctoral candidate two titles.

The procedure approved by the Steering Committee of the Doctoral School to process this type of agreement can be downloaded from [link](#).

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## **PRIOR TO THE PROCESS**

Conducting a PhD<sup>2</sup> in a regime of international co-supervision is agreed and advocated by a professor from the University of Valladolid (UVa) and another professor from a foreign university. The doctoral candidate should be registered in both universities at the start of the process.

Before initiating the process, the following steps must be taken:

1. At the moment of admission to the doctoral program, the Academic Commission (AC) should assign the supervisors, as well as the supervisor in the foreign university, including their data in the SIGMA application. If the directors are not assigned at that moment, this should be done within three months using the form available at this [url](#). The AC will be given the CV of the professor of the other institution in order to verify that he complies with the requirements of the Royal Decree on directing doctoral thesis, that is, that he possesses merits equivalent to a recognized research period.

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<sup>2</sup> A compendium of all the documents mentioned in the guide that are needed to do a doctoral thesis can be found in the [webpage](#) of EsDUVa.



2. The external supervisor should also sign the [supervision commitment](#)<sup>1</sup>.
3. If the external professor is not already included in Sigma, it is necessary to present the corresponding [file](#) to obtain the credentials to access the application.
4. If the doctoral candidate enters the program from studies in a country outside the European High Education Area, he must apply for the [study check](#) using the corresponding form. At the moment of registering, the documentation should be legalized through diplomatic offices. An official translation into Spanish must accompany all the documents issued in a foreign language. A document can be downloaded from the same link with the regulations for legalization, official translation, and an updated list of recognized translators/interpreters.
5. Information concerning the [administrative procedures](#) for registration can be found in the webpage of EsDUVa. It is compulsory for all students, whether Spanish or foreigners residing legally in Spain, aged 28 years or under, to present their National Insurance number (número de Seguridad Social (NUSS)) upon registration.

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## **TO INITIATE THE PROCESS**

Once the doctoral candidate has been registered, the process of signing the bilateral co-supervision agreement can be started. In the UVa, this will be done by the International Relations Service in coordination with the EsDUVa. The supervisor of the doctoral thesis, as the promoter of the specific agreement, must present the following documents to the said Service:

1. [Proposal to sign the agreement](#), which will include a report justifying the reasons for signing the said agreement.
2. **Draft of the agreement and its annex:**
  - a) It is recommended that the promoter of the agreement: 1) should negotiate the draft before the doctoral candidate formalizes his registration and 2) that he should work on the model for agreements<sup>2</sup> of the UVa (available in Spanish, English, and French), as this text already has the pertinent legal and technical endorsements:

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<sup>1</sup> Available in Spanish and English.

<sup>2</sup> These models can be modified and may be temporarily unavailable online.



Document	Spanish version	English version	French version
Draft	<a href="#">link</a>	<a href="#">link</a>	<a href="#">link</a>
Annex	<a href="#">link</a>	<a href="#">link</a>	<a href="#">link</a>

The draft and the annex proposed by the UVa may be translated in versions faithful to the original as, while preserving the signature in other languages, the agreement must always be signed in Spanish (Art. 38.3 Law 25/2014).

- b) If another model of the agreement is provided<sup>3</sup>, the final draft should be revised by the Legal Services of the UVa, which could delay the process.

In any case, the draft of the agreement must include the following information :

- Where the doctoral thesis will be defended.
- Requirements for choosing the jury.
- Qualification systems at both universities.
- The planned program of activities.

- c) If the doctoral thesis is defended in the other university, the agreement must guarantee:

- That the members of the jury and the external evaluators, if there are any, must have merits equivalent to a recognized research period.
- That the candidate can opt for *cum laude* and request the outstanding award.

Furthermore, in this case, if the draft is written in a language that is not Spanish, a Spanish translation should be presented that faithfully follows the original version. The agreement may be signed in a language that is not Spanish, but Spanish law requires a faithful copy in Spanish to be deposited.

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## **TO FINALIZE THE PROCESS**

1. The signing of the agreement should be finalized during the first academic year of the doctoral candidate registration.

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<sup>3</sup> The other university may have its own agreement models.



2. Exceptionally, the process may be started or finalized in the second academic year of registration. In this case, it should be authorized by the Doctoral Commission, following a reasoned application to be written and presented by the promoter of the agreement.
3. The process is considered to be finalized when the documents concerning the agreement, together with all the required signatures are deposited with the International Relations Service. The said Service will indicate the required number of copies of the signed agreement.

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### **FINALIZATION PROCESS OF THE PhD**

The establishment of a specific agreement for a doctoral thesis under the regime of international co-supervision requires the simultaneous fulfillment of the academic requirements of each institution.

The circumstances that must prevail are as follows:

1. The agreement should be in force at the moment the thesis is deposited. The agreements signed under the current legislation will have a maximum duration of 4 years. If necessary, the duration can be extended, but any such extension must be requested before the agreement expires.
2. The doctoral candidate must be registered in the University of Valladolid for at least two academic years, which must also include the moment the thesis is deposited.
3. The doctoral candidate must have stayed at the other university for a minimum period of 6 months. The stay can be in a single period or in several periods and could be greater than 6 months if the regulations of the other university require so. This should be established in the co-supervision agreement. The candidate must upload to the Document of Activities the signed co-direction agreement, the certificate of stay at the other university, and all the planned activities, in all cases indicating that these activities support the co-supervision. The follow-up guide can be found [here](#).

**If the thesis is defended in the UVa**, the established procedure for the deposit of the doctoral thesis and the appointment of the jury shall be followed. The equivalent organ to the Doctoral Commission of the other institution should also report on the appointment of the jury. After the act of defence, the other institution shall be sent a verbatim copy of the act and the documents which have been established in the agreement.



**If the thesis is defended in the other university**, the following will be taken into account:

1. The composition of the jury shall follow the regulations of the other institution. However, the procedure of the UVa for depositing the thesis must be also followed. When the procedure reaches the Doctoral Commission, the AC must make a proposal for the jury, indicating that it is done under a co-supervision agreement. Although the composition of the jury may be different from what is set out in the UVa procedure, the members of the said jury should comply with the criteria of the regulations of the UVa and the AC should check that it is so. That is, the members of the jury should comply with the merits equivalent to a recognized research period.
2. If the thesis is presented in a language other than the official one in Spain, a summary must be included in Spanish, endorsed by the director or directors of the thesis, which contemplates the objectives, the methodology, the principal results and the conclusions of the work.
3. Even though the thesis is defended in the other institution, the agreement should also guarantee that the procedure of the UVa will be complied with so that the candidate can opt for “cum laude”, as well as having the marks emitted by the jury should the candidate opt for the outstanding doctoral award. The director will ensure that the said procedure is complied with, as established by the agreement of the Steering Committee of the EsDUVa.
4. Once the defense of the doctoral thesis has finished in the other university, the jury in charge of evaluating the doctoral thesis must send to the Doctoral School of UVa a verbatim copy of the act and the other original reports of the activities as established in the agreement.
5. Once the specific procedures for issuing the title have been carried out, the UVa will include, on the reverse side of the title, the stamp of «Thesis under the regime of co-direction» and the name of the other university.

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### **Explanatory note:**

Doing a doctoral thesis under the regime of international co-supervision does not automatically suppose the acquisition of an international mention, as the requirements are different. If the candidate should comply with the said requirements, he may request the said international mention.