

	The Slovak Medical University in Bratislava Limbová 12 833 03 Bratislava 37	P/6/2023 Printout No. 1 Archiving period: 10 y.
	The Study Order of doctoral studies at the Slovak Medical University in Bratislava	



STUDY ORDER OF DOCTORAL STUDIES AT THE SLOVAK MEDICAL UNIVERSITY IN BRATISLAVA

The Rector of the Slovak Medical University in Bratislava (hereinafter referred to as „SMU“) in accordance with provisions of the para 15 section 1 letter c) of the Higher Education Act and provision of the Article 54 section 2 letter h) and the Article 7 section 2 letter a) point 1 of the SMU’s Statute issues the Study Order of doctoral studies at the Slovak Medical University in Bratislava.

The Internal Regulation was elaborated by: Support Centre of Internal Quality System in co-operation with vice-rectors of the university	Signature:	Date of elaboration: 16. 06. 2023
The Internal Regulation was approved by: The Academic Senate of the SMU		Date of approval: 26.06.2023
Date of Issue:	Validity since: 21.8.2023	In effect since: 1.9.2023

Bratislava 2023

Content

Article 1	3
Introductory provisions	3
Article 2	3
Admission procedure for doctoral studies	3
Article 3	5
Transfer and change of form of doctoral study	5
Article 4	6
Student of doctoral studies	6
Article 5	7
Tutor	7
Article 6	8
The credit system of doctoral studies and evaluation of study results	8
Article 7	9
Schedule of doctoral studies	9
Article 8	10
Individual study plan and evaluation of study results of student in doctoral studies	10
Article 9	11
Annual evaluation of student in doctoral studies	11
Article 10	12
Dissertation exam	12
Article 11	14
Request for permission for a defence of dissertation thesis	14
Article 12	15
Particulars of dissertation thesis	15
Article 13	15
Preparation of dissertation thesis defence	15
Article 14	17
Opponents of dissertation thesis and their opinions	17
Article 15	18
Defence of dissertation thesis	18
Article 16	20
The interruption of doctoral studies	20
Article 17	20
Decision on award of academic title	20
Article 18	20
Tuition fees and fees related to doctoral studies, non-standard length of study	20
Article 19	21
Work conditions of doctoral students, work time, study leave, business trips	21
Article 20	21
Using of information-communication technologies	21
Article 21	21
Transitional and final provisions	21

Article 1

Introductory provisions

- (1) The doctoral study program as a third-level study program (Section 54 para 1 of the Higher Education Act) focuses on acquiring knowledge based on the current state of scientific knowledge and especially on the student's own contribution to it, which is the result of scientific research and independent creative activities in the field of science. Graduates of the doctoral study program receive a third-level university education.
- (2) Doctoral studies are the third level of higher education within accredited study programmes listed in the register of study fields ¹.
- (3) Doctoral study programmes at the Slovak Medical University in Bratislava take place at the faculties².
- (4) Doctoral studies are carried out in full-time and part-time form. A university or an external educational institution provides a full-time scholarship to a student in a doctoral study programme.³
- (5) The rules for the organization of doctoral studies are generally regulated by the Higher Education Act.⁴
- (6) The dean of the faculty where the study programme is carried out establishes a Study Field Committee for each study programme. Based on an agreement with other universities, the SMU can form joint Study Field Committees within individual fields of study. If the doctoral studies are carried out in cooperation with an external educational institution, the external educational institution has adequate representation in the relevant Study Field Committee.⁵
- (7) The Study Field Committee is appointed by the dean after approval in the Scientific Board of the faculty where the study programme is conducted or in an external educational institution with which the university has an agreement in accordance with Article 1, paragraph 3. As a rule, the Study Field Committee has 5 members, from which the committee elects its chairman. The Study Field Committee consists of a chairman and, as a rule, four other members. At least one of the members of the committee must have a scientific-pedagogical title of professor and be a professor in a functional position, a scientific-pedagogical title of associate professor and be an associate professor working in a study programme in a functional position. The composition of the Study Field Committee is regulated by the university's internal regulation. ⁶
- (8) The work of the Study Field Committee is regulated by the internal regulation of the university.⁶

Article 2

Admission procedure for doctoral studies

- (1) The dean of the faculty where the study programme is carried-out, on the proposal of the tutors of the relevant study programme, will list the topics of dissertations in Slovak and English, which can be applied for in the admissions process, no later than two months before the deadline for submitting applications for doctoral studies; if it is a topic listed by an external educational institution, it will also state the name of this institution. The name of the study programme, usually a brief description in Slovak and English, the name of the tutor, the form of study (full-time or part-time), the deadline for submitting applications and the expected date of the admission procedure is given for each listed topic. Dissertation topics are approved by the Study Field Committee of the relevant study field. Dissertation topics together with the above requirements are published on the university's website in the domain of the faculty that implements the given study programme.

¹ section 2 para 5 of the Higher Education Act

² section 2 para 7 of the Higher Education Act

³ section 54 para 18 of the Higher Education Act

⁴ section 54 of the Higher Education Act

⁵ section 54 para 17 of the Higher Education Act

⁶ Guideline of the SMU on the establishment of Study Field Committees at the SMU in Bratislava

- (2) The application is submitted electronically through the MAIS system and in writing on the ŠEVT form (as available from ŠEVT stores) to the address of the dean of the faculty (application for third-level university studies). Mandatory attachments to the application for doctoral studies are:
 - a) certified (officially authorised) copies of documents - a diploma of the highest (level of) education achieved (master's degree, rigorous exam) and a Diploma supplement, if it forms its annex (master's), a state exam certificate or a document of recognition of education (does not apply if the student is a graduate of the SMU)
 - b) professional CV (Europass format), including telephone and e-mail contact,
 - c) an overview of published works and other activities confirming the applicant's professional profile, if any,
 - d) a certified copy of the state exam in world language, of the achieved minimum level of B2 language skills assessment according to the Common European Reference Framework (if the applicant has it),
 - e) the name of the chosen topic of the dissertation, which is applied for and the framework project of the applicant for the topic of the dissertation, if required,
 - f) proof of payment of the administrative fee for the admission procedure.
- (3) Based on a complete application, the faculty will notify the applicant for doctoral studies in writing of the date and thematic focus of the entrance exam, no later than 14 days before it takes place.
- (4) The dean of the faculty at which the study programme is carried-out will invite the applicant to the entrance exam within the deadline set in the conditions for the admission procedure, while also informing him/her of its content focus.
- (5) The admissions committee is composed of a chairman and at least two members who are appointed by the dean of the faculty at which the study programme is carried-out, on the proposal of the person responsible for the implementation, development and quality of the study programme (hereinafter referred to as the "study program guarantor"). At least one of the members of the committee must have a scientific-pedagogical title of professor and be a professor, at least one of the members of the committee must have a scientific-pedagogical title of associate professor and be an associate professor or researcher with a recognized scientific qualification level IIa. Other members may be associate professors and university teachers and researchers who hold the academic title of PhD. respectively CSc. or scientific degree DrSc. If the applicant's admission procedure is for a topic advertised by an external educational institution, a representative of this institution is also a member of the admissions committee.
- (6) The admissions committee will comprehensively evaluate the results of the admission exam and the applicant's professional profile at a closed session. The committee rather writes a report on the result of the admission procedure, with a recommendation to accept or not to accept the candidate for doctoral studies. If several applicants were registered for one topic, the admissions committee will determine their order, according to the result of the subsequent study and the state exam, success in the admission exam, especially for full-time and part-time doctoral studies. When determining the order, the admissions committee considers the quality of the dissertation project, also considers the scope and quality of the applicant's professional publication activity and the results of his/her other professional activity (e.g. results in ŠVOČ - student scientific professional activity competitions, participation in projects, etc.). Based on the evaluation of individual candidates for doctoral studies, the admissions committee will determine the order of their success.
- (7) Minutes will be drawn up about the result of the admission exam, which will be signed by all members of the admissions committee and the chairman will submit it to the dean within 3 days of the admission exam.
- (8) The Admissions Committee submits a proposal for admission of the successful applicant to the dean of the faculty where the study programme is carried-out. If it is a topic advertised by an external educational institution, it must express its agreement with the acceptance of the applicant.
- (9) The dean of the faculty at which the study programme is carried-out shall, based on the results of the admission exam, decide on the admission of the applicant within 30 days from the date of verification of the fulfilment of the conditions for admission to study according to the provisions of section 58 para 7 of the Higher Education Act. If he/she decides to accept the applicant, he/she will

- also state the name of the tutor and the topic of the dissertation in his/her decision.
- (10) In addition to the above, the written decision must contain a statement, justification, instruction on the possibility of submitting a request for review of the decision. The decision is delivered to the applicant hands. The applicant, whose place of residence is unknown, is served by publishing the decision on the official notice board of the university or the relevant faculty within 15 days. The last day of this period is considered the day of delivery.
 - (11) An applicant who has received a decision not to be admitted to doctoral studies may submit a request for a review of this decision within eight days from the date of its delivery.⁷
 - (12) The dean of the faculty considers the approved number of places for the given academic year when deciding on the number of admitted applicants for full-time doctoral studies.⁸
 - (13) An accepted applicant becomes a doctoral student (hereinafter referred to as a "doctoral student") on the day of registration, the date of which is determined by the dean of the faculty where the study programme is carried out.
 - (14) The faculty will return the application and the attached documents to the applicant if the applicant does not meet the conditions specified in the requirements for the admission procedure (e.g. if the applicant is applying for doctoral studies in a field of study that the faculty does not provide; if the application is submitted after the deadline; the application is not complete filled in according to the pre-print; the application does not contain the required attachments).

Article 3

Transfer and change of form of doctoral study

- (1) Transfer is possible only to a study programme of the same level in the same field of study.
- (2) The transfer of a student from another university to study within the doctoral study programme at the faculty where the study programme is carried-out is permitted by the dean of the faculty where the study programme is carried-out and the dean of the other university from which the student is transferring, in the manner and for of the conditions specified in section 59 para 4, 5 and 6 of the Higher Education Act and subject to the fulfilment of these conditions:
 - a) the student has been admitted to a doctoral study programme at another university in the same field of study in which he/she is applying for enrolment at the faculty where the study programme is carried out,
 - b) the topic of the student's dissertation corresponds to the professional focus of tutors within the given field of study at the faculty where the study programme is carried out,
 - c) there is a sufficient number of tutors, which enables the appropriate tutor to take over training in relation to a student from another university,
 - d) in the event that a student from another university requests enrolment in a full-time doctoral study at the faculty where the study programme is carried-out, that the economic possibilities of the university enable the financing of the student's scholarship.
- (3) A student from another higher education institution, together with the request for transfer to study within the doctoral study programme at the faculty where the study programme is carried-out, must submit:
 - a) the decision of another higher education institution on admission to a doctoral study programme, which must contain the field of study, study programme, form of study and the topic of the doctoral thesis,
 - b) documents on completion of the dissertation exam at another higher education institution within the framework of the doctoral study programme, if it has already been completed,
 - c) annual evaluations of the student by the tutor within the doctoral study programme at another higher education institution,
 - d) a list of subjects completed, including information sheets, within the study part of the doctoral study programme with an indication of the number of credits obtained, confirmed by another higher education institution,
 - e) a positive statement from the head of the training workplace at the faculty where the study

⁷ section 58 para 8 of the Higher Education Act

⁸ section 45 para 4 letter j) of the Higher Education Act

- programme is carried-out, about the existence of the capacity of tutors and that the topic of the student's dissertation corresponds to the professional focus of the tutor,
- f) a positive statement by the university that the economic possibilities of the university enable the financing of the student's scholarship if the student requests full-time enrolment.
- (4) The dean decides on the doctoral student's request to transfer to the faculty, considering the successful completion of the exams in the study programme at another higher education institution.
- (5) When a student transfers from another higher education institution to the relevant faculty of the SMU, the doctoral student may, by decision of the dean, have the credits obtained from another higher education institution recognized if it is in accordance with his/her new study plan. A doctoral student who came from the workplace of another higher education institution with an incompatible credit system can be recognized with an adequate number of credits and, if necessary, prescribe the obligation for such a student to obtain additional credits for the activities he/she requests, e.g. for completing differential subjects completed by exam. The date of their implementation will be determined by the dean of the faculty where the study programme is carried out.
- (6) On the day of enrolment for the study programme, the doctoral student becomes a student of the relevant SMU faculty, and his/her previous studies are considered abandoned on the day preceding the day of enrolment.
- (7) Transfer from a full-time to the part-time form of doctoral studies and vice versa is permitted by the dean of the faculty where the study programme is being carried out based on a written request by the doctoral student, approved by the tutor of doctoral studies; in the case of a transfer to a full-time doctoral study, also based on the economic possibilities of the university.

Article 4

Student of doctoral studies

- (1) A doctoral student accepted for full-time study is an internal doctoral student and has all the rights and obligations of a university student.
- (2) The applicant becomes a doctoral student on the day of enrolment for studies. The academic year begins on September 1 of the current year and ends on August 31 of the following year. The academic year is divided into a winter semester, a summer semester and a vacation period.
- (3) The faculty provides a scholarship to a doctoral student in full-time study according to applicable regulations.
- (4) The doctoral student has the right in particular:
- a) study the study programme for which he/she was admitted,
 - b) create an individual study plan together with the tutor in accordance with this internal regulation,
 - c) apply for study abroad as part of his/her individual study plan, if it is in accordance with his/her individual study plan,
 - d) have representation in the self-governing bodies of the SMU and the faculty,
 - e) participate in the faculty's scientific activities.
- (5) Doctoral student responsibilities are mainly:
- a) to comply with the Doctoral Study Order and internal regulations of the faculty and university,
 - b) to fulfil study obligations in accordance with the individual study plan,
 - c) to participate in research activities at the faculty,
 - d) to participate in the implementation of pedagogical activities or other activities related to pedagogical activities (full-time doctoral student),
 - e) to indicate affiliation to the faculty in their publication outputs (in the case of studying at an external educational institution, affiliation to it),
 - f) to submit continuously photocopies of their publication outputs and citation responses to them to the SMU university library,
 - g) to submit a written request to conduct a dissertation exam, which also includes a list of publication activities,
 - h) to submit a written application for permission to defend the dissertation, which also includes a list of publication activities indicating as the author of at least one scientific work related to the

- topic of the dissertation as the first author of a scientific work in Q1 to Q3 or Impact factor according to the faculty's requirements,
- i) to keep an electronic monthly attendance report (full-time doctoral student).
- (6) A doctoral student studying full-time is entitled to a study leave of up to 8 weeks (i.e. 40 working days) per academic year with the written consent of the dean of the faculty and the prior written statement of the tutor.
- (7) The doctoral student is obliged to notify any personal change (change of marital status, change of address of permanent residence, change of health insurance company, birth of a child, taking of maternity and parental leave, etc.) within 7 days at the latest to the tutor and department/unit of doctoral studies at the faculty, on which the study programme is carried out, and for full-time doctoral students also to the human resources and law department.
- (8) The dean of the faculty may, at the doctoral student's own justified request, interrupt the doctoral studies after the statement of the tutor, for a maximum of 2 years in the full-time form of study and for 3 years in the part-time form of study. During the interruption of studies, a full-time doctoral student loses the rights and obligations of a university student and is not granted a scholarship. The provisions of the SMU Study Order apply to the suspension of doctoral studies accordingly.
- (9) A doctoral student loses the status of a student upon completion of studies, expiration of the time allotted for studies, dropping out of studies, or being expelled from studies.

Article 5 Tutor

- (1) Tutors⁹ for a given field of study or study programme of a doctoral study can be university teachers working in the functional positions of professors and functional positions of associate professors, at the faculty where the doctoral studies are carried-out, or a researchers with the achieved scientific qualification level IIa, or higher, or another practitioners with a scientific-pedagogical title of professor or associate professor, practitioners with a scientific qualification level of at least IIa after approval by the Scientific Board of the faculty where the doctoral studies are carried out¹⁰.
- (2) Tutor mainly
- a) guides in an expert way the doctoral student during his/her doctoral studies,
 - b) in collaboration with the doctoral student, compiles the individual study plan of the doctoral student, which consists of a study (to the extent of 1/3) and a scientific part (to the extent of 2/3) and submits it for approval to the Study Field Committee,
 - c) manages and professionally guarantees the fulfilment of the doctoral student's individual study plan and ensures that the doctoral student fulfils the tasks resulting from the approved individual study plan, including pedagogical activities, responsibly, qualitatively and on time,
 - d) checks the fulfilment of the doctoral student's individual study plan, and submits it to the Study Field Committee for assessment,
 - e) determines the focus of the dissertation project and specifies the topic of the dissertation together with the doctoral student,
 - f) awards the doctoral student the specified number of credits for the completed stages of the doctoral studies,
 - g) submits an annual evaluation of the fulfilment of the doctoral student's individual study plan to the relevant Study Field Committee and the dean, in accordance with Art. 9 paragraph 4,
 - h) submits a proposal to the dean to exclude a doctoral student from doctoral studies, stating the reasons for his proposal,
 - i) comments on the doctoral student's request to interrupt his/her studies and on the doctoral student's request to change the study programme of the doctoral study or to change the form of the doctoral study,
 - j) recommends the doctoral student if he/she is interested to conduct a study stay in other domestic or foreign institutions of science, research, technology, education,

⁹ IR SMU – rules for selecting teachers for individual subjects of study programmes and approval of supervisors of the final theses and tutors of final theses on the Slovak Medical University in Bratislava

¹⁰ section 54 para 4 of the Higher Education Act

- k) provides the doctoral student with consultations with other experts as needed,
 - l) participates in the dissertation exam of a doctoral student and has the right to express his/her opinion during its evaluation,
 - m) elaborates an assessment of the dissertation and work characteristics of the assigned doctoral student,
 - n) participates in the defence of doctoral student's dissertation and has the right to express himself/herself during its evaluation,
 - o) participates in the meetings of the relevant doctoral study committee, where the doctoral student's studies are evaluated, while the tutor has the right to comment on the evaluation of his/her doctoral student,
 - p) proposes to the guarantor of the doctoral study programme a tutor-consultant or his/her change, after discussion with the chairman of the relevant Study Field Committee.
- (3) A researcher approved by this institution with a scientific qualification level IIa or higher can be the tutor for topics listed by an external educational institution. A researcher with scientific qualification level IIa is also obliged to meet the criteria for obtaining the scientific-pedagogical title of associate professor at the relevant faculty. The external educational institution will provide the Scientific Board of the faculty with the characteristics of the tutor.
- (4) The tutor can simultaneously supervise a maximum of 3 doctoral students in the full-time form of doctoral studies and 5 in the part-time form of study. The proposal to change the tutor is approved by the dean of the faculty where the study programme is carried-out, on the proposal of the chairman of the Study Field Committee.

Article 6

The credit system of doctoral studies and evaluation of study results

- (1) The credit system is applied in both forms of doctoral studies.
- (2) A credit is a unit of a doctoral student's workload and is defined in doctoral studies analogously to bachelor's, master's, and doctoral studies.
- (3) The standard workload of a doctoral student in the full-time form of study during the academic year is considered to be the performance of activities that correspond to 60 credits. The standard load of a doctoral student in a part-time form of study corresponds to a maximum of 48 credits.
- (4) During his/her studies, the doctoral student receives credits for these activities:
- a) completion of the study part, which mainly consists of mandatory and mandatory optional subjects from specialized doctoral subjects according to the individual study plan of the doctoral student. The study plan is drawn up by the doctoral student with the tutor's approval from the offer of study programme subjects approved by the Study Field Committee in the prescribed structure. Subjects are graded "passed/failed" and study of other subjects and individual study of professional literature will be also evaluated,
 - b) study of scientific and professional literature; it cannot replace the completion of compulsory subjects determined by the study programme, nor the performance of pedagogical activities at a university or faculty,
 - c) independent creative activity in the field of science (publications, completion of a defined stage in one's own research work, etc.),
 - d) performance of pedagogical activity or other professional activity related to pedagogic activity¹¹ in the form of full-time study at a university or faculty (e.g. management of practical exercises, bachelor's theses, works within the framework of ŠVOČ, etc.) and treatment-preventive activities at the workplaces of the Faculty of Medicine,
 - e) passing the dissertation exam; for successful preparation (submitted and positively evaluated written work by the opponent), its defence and successfully completed dissertation exam,
 - f) elaboration of a dissertation thesis and its defence; if the dissertation thesis was accepted for defence and successfully defended.
- (5) The activities referred to in par. 4 of this article are mutually irreplaceable.

¹¹ section 54 para 2 of the Higher Education Act

- (6) If a doctoral student completed part of his/her studies abroad with the tutor's approval as part of fulfilling his/her study plan, based on the study contract and on the basis of the statement of study results drawn up for the student by the receiving higher education institution, he/she is credited in full.
- (7) If there is a change in the form of doctoral study, or in the study programme, the doctoral student can be recognized for the credits earned up until then, if it is in accordance with his/her new study plan.
- (8) The dean of the faculty decides on the recognition of credits after the statement of the guarantor of the study programme.
- (9) In full-time and part-time doctoral studies, a doctoral student must obtain at least 60 credits per study part and at least 90 credits for four consecutive semesters, including credits for scientific/creative activity, considering the recommended credit structure.
- (10) A doctoral student can register for the written dissertation exam if he/she has collected at least 70 credits, if the full-time study is three years and the part-time study is four years, or 90 credits if the full-time study is four years and the part-time study is five years.
- (11) A graduate of doctoral studies in full-time and part-time form must obtain at least 180 credits, including the credit evaluation of the defence of his/her dissertation; if full-time are three years and part-time studies are four years, or 240 credits if full-time studies are four years and part-time studies are five years.
- (12) If the doctoral student earns 150 or 210 credits, and after the tutor's recommendation, he/she can apply for permission to defend his/her dissertation thesis.

Article 7 Schedule of doctoral studies

- (1) Doctoral studies
 - a) start at the beginning of the winter semester of the academic year,
 - b) can start ¹² also at the beginning of summer semester of the academic year.
- (2) Doctoral studies are carried out according to an individual study plan, which is part of the study documentation of doctoral student.
- (3) The individual study plan consists of a study and scientific parts, it is drawn up by the tutor and approved by the Study Field Committee.¹³
- (4) The study part of the doctoral studies mainly consists of lectures, seminars and individual study of professional literature necessary from the point of view of the focus of the dissertation thesis.
- (5) The scientific part of the doctoral study consists of individual or team scientific work of the doctoral student, which is related to the topic of the dissertation thesis. The scientific part of the doctoral studies is professionally guaranteed by tutor.
- (6) Part of the doctoral study in full-time form is the pedagogical activity of the doctoral student or other professional activity related to pedagogical activity in the scope of no more than four hours per week on average for the academic year in which the teaching takes place.¹⁴
- (7) The condition for the proper completion of doctoral studies is the completion of the dissertation exam, which is one of the state exams, and the defence of the dissertation thesis. The dissertation thesis is the final thesis. The dissertation thesis together with its defence form one subject; the defence of the dissertation thesis belongs to state exams.

¹² section 61 para 3 second sentence of the Higher Education Act

¹³ section 54 paras. 8 and 17 of the Higher Education Act

¹⁴ section 54 para 11 of the Higher Education Act

- (8) If the doctoral student applied for a dissertation topic listed by an external educational institution, he/she performs the scientific part of the doctoral studies and the duties of the study part of the doctoral studies agreed with the faculty in this external educational institution. The faculty concludes an individual agreement with an external educational institution on the doctoral study of a doctoral student. It deals with issues related to the work of a doctoral student in an external educational institution, including reimbursement of the costs of an external educational institution¹⁵, and the conditions for carrying out teaching activities or other professional activities related to teaching activities are tied to the educational activities of the faculty where the study programme is carried out.
- (9) Article 8 of this Study Order regulates the details of the study plan.
- (10) Standard length of study for a doctoral study programme¹⁶:
- a) In a full-time form of study it is three or four academic years; the number of credits, the achievement of which is a condition for the proper completion of the study, for a doctoral study programme in the full-time form of study with a standard length of study:
 1. of three academic years it is 180 credits,
 2. of four academic years it is 240 credits,
 - b) there are four or five academic years in the part-time form of study; the number of credits, the achievement of which is a condition for the proper completion of studies, for a doctoral study programme with a standard length of study:
 1. of four academic years it is 180 credits,
 2. of five academic years it is 240 credits.

Article 8

Individual study plan and evaluation of study results of student in doctoral studies

- (1) The accredited study programme defines the prescribed composition of subjects. The individual study plan consists of a study part and a scientific part and also contains the dates in which the doctoral student must complete individual subjects and the dissertation exam.
- (2) The individual study plan is drawn up by the tutor and submitted to the Study Field Committee for approval;¹⁷ the tutor compiles an individual study plan in cooperation with the doctoral student. The approved individual study plan is part of the doctoral student's study documentation.
- (3) The doctoral student's study plan consists of a study part that ends with a dissertation exam, a scientific part, and a defence of the dissertation thesis.
- (4) Part of the full-time doctoral studies is the performance of teaching activities or related professional activities, and at the medical faculty in fields with specialization also therapeutic and preventive activities. In the part-time form of doctoral studies, teaching activities can be replaced by other professional activities that are related to teaching work, such as supervision of final theses, assignments within the framework of ŠVOČ, preparation of teaching aids and teaching texts, guidance of students in practical teaching and the like. If it is a doctoral student who is registered for a dissertation topic listed by an external educational institution, part of the faculty's agreement with this institution is also where and how the study part of the programme and the pedagogical activities of the doctoral student will take place.
- (5) During his/her studies, the doctoral student receives credits for these areas of activity:
 - a) subjects of the study part of the doctoral studies,
 - b) successfully completed dissertation exam, independent creative activity in the field of science and research (publication activity, completion of the stage of research work defined in the individual study plan, etc.), which is related to the topic of the dissertation thesis,
 - c) pedagogical activity at the SMU or the faculty (conducting exercises, seminars, etc.), or other practical activity carried out at the faculty or at a designated workplace, if required by the nature of the study,

¹⁵ section 54 para 12 of the Higher Education Act

¹⁶ section 54 para 2 of the Higher Education Act

¹⁷ section 54 paras 8 and 17 of the Higher Education Act

- d) dissertation thesis and its defence.
- (6) The doctoral student must obtain credits in the composition as determined by the recommended study plan and the principles of the organization of doctoral studies at the faculty where the study programme is carried-out.
- (7) Completion of subjects usually ends with an exam. Individual study of professional literature can be divided into stages, which are concluded by the tutor by awarding a specified number of credits. The doctoral student's individual study plan contains a list of thematic areas or subjects, including a professional foreign language, that the doctoral student must complete, a list of dissertation exam subjects selected from the list approved by the Study Field Committee, and a list of mandatory and recommended literature that the doctoral student must study as part of his individual preparation for the dissertation exam. The scientific part of the doctoral student's study plan consists of his/her individual or collective (team) scientific activity focused on the topic of the dissertation thesis.
- (8) The subjects of the doctoral study programmes of the study part of the doctoral studies, which the doctoral student has enrolled in, are evaluated verbally as passed or failed.
- (9) At the end of each year of study, the student elaborates a brief annual evaluation report summarizing the results achieved in the given year and the fulfilment of the individual study plan. In the annual evaluation report, the tutor comments on its fulfilment and suggests continuation of the study.

Article 9
Annual evaluation of student in doctoral studies

- (1) The control stage of doctoral studies is the end of each academic year of study.
- (2) To continue the doctoral studies, the student must
- a) obtain at least 60 credits in each year of study in a full-time form of doctoral studies,
 - b) obtain at least 45 credits in each year of study in the part-time form of doctoral studies.
- (3) To continue the doctoral studies, the student must
- a) in the full-time form of study, register for the dissertation exam and pass it no later than 24 months from the start of the study, and a student in the part-time form of study no later than 36 months from the start of the study; the period of interruption of the doctoral student's studies is not included in this period. A student who cannot register for the dissertation exam because he/she did not obtain the specified number of credits according to Article 6 has the option to request an interruption of his/her studies,
 - b) in the full-time form of study, complete the defence of the dissertation thesis by the end of the third or fourth year of study at the latest, and the student in the part-time form of study by the end of the fourth or fifth year of study at the latest; the period of interruption of the doctoral student's studies is not included in this period,
 - c) in the full-time form of study and the student in the part-time form of study must be the author of at least one scientific work related to the topic of the dissertation thesis, which is published and meets the requirements for inclusion in the category V3¹⁸ with Q1 to Q3 or with an impact factor according to the requirements, no later than the defence of the dissertation thesis of the relevant faculty; the period of interruption of the doctoral student's studies is not included in this period.
- (4) No later than July 15 of each year of study, the tutor will elaborate and submit to the relevant Study Field Committee for discussion an annual evaluation of the fulfilment of the doctoral student's individual study plan (hereinafter referred to as the "annual evaluation of the doctoral student") with a statement as to whether or not he/she recommends student's continuation in the study. The tutor evaluates the status and level of fulfilment of the doctoral student's individual study plan, compliance with deadlines, and, if necessary, submits a proposal to modify student's individual study plan. Annual evaluation of the doctoral student, discussed in the Study Field Committee, tutor subsequently, at the latest on August 31, submits to the dean. Based on the annual evaluation of the doctoral student according to Appendix 1, the dean decides whether the doctoral student can

¹⁸ Decree of the Ministry of education, science, research, and sport of the Slovak republic No. 397/2020 Coll. on central register for the evidence of publication activity

- continue his/her studies, as well as any changes in student's individual study plan.
- (5) Non-fulfilment of the conditions of the control stage of the doctoral studies specified in paragraphs 2 and 3 of this Article, non-fulfilment of the conditions of the individual study plan or non-fulfilment of the conditions specified in Article 6 par. 10 is the reason for the tutor in the annual evaluation of the doctoral student to submit a proposal to the dean to exclude the doctoral student from studies according to section 66 par. 1 letter c) of the Higher Education Act.

Article 10 Dissertation exam

- (1) The dissertation exam is a state exam and is public.¹⁹
- (2) A doctoral student in full-time doctoral studies registers for the dissertation exam no later than 24 months after the start of the studies. A doctoral student in the part-time form of doctoral studies registers for the dissertation exam no later than 36 months after the start of the studies. The period of interruption of the doctoral student's studies is not included in the deadline for registering for the dissertation exam. The doctoral student is obliged to submit, together with the application form for the dissertation exam, a written work prepared for the dissertation exam. The condition for granting permission to take the dissertation exam is the completion of the study part in the prescribed composition of subjects and obtaining the required number of credits.
- (3) To undertake dissertation exam in full-time and part-time form after this deadline is possible only in justified cases based on a written request of the doctoral student with the approval of the dean and the statement of the tutor's opinion. Failure to complete the dissertation exam within the set deadline is grounds for termination of studies by exclusion from the study for failure to meet the requirements arising from the individual study plan and the university's Study Order.
- (4) The doctoral student is obliged to submit a written thesis for the dissertation exam (hereinafter referred to as "written thesis") together with the application for the dissertation exam. The condition for granting approval to conduct the dissertation exam is the collection of credits, according to para 2 of this article, passing the subjects of the study part of the doctoral studies in the composition determined by the study program and the individual study plan.
- (5) Application for the dissertation exam with the appendix and the written thesis are submitted in writing to the dean through the department of doctoral studies. The faculty will publish details of the requirements for the application for the dissertation exam and the method of submitting it on the website of the relevant faculty and in other ways that are considered as usual at the faculty.
- (6) The written work for the dissertation exam is evaluated by the opponent. The opponent prepares a written assessment for the written work and proposes its evaluation by classification level "passed/failed". The doctoral student has the right to familiarize himself/herself with the assessment of the written work no later than three working days before the day of the dissertation exam.
- (7) The dean appoints the opponent of the written work on the proposal of the tutor and with the approval of the chairman of the Study Field Committee. The opponent is selected from among experts in the field of study of the doctoral study, who are:
 - a) professor in a functional place of a professor,
 - b) associate professor in a functional position of an associate professor,
 - c) researcher with a recognized scientific qualification level IIa.
 - d) practitioner with a third level of university education, who is not involved at the training workplace and do not have a common publication with a doctoral student in a period of more than 5 years, or
 - e) practitioner with a third level of university education, who is involved at the training workplace but do not have a common publication with a doctoral student for more than 5 years.
- (8) The opponent of the dissertation cannot be a close dependant of the doctoral student ²⁰.
- (9) No later than 3 weeks after receiving the written work for the dissertation exam, the opponent shall

¹⁹ section 54 para 3 of the Higher Education Act

²⁰ section 116 of the Act No. 40/1964 Coll. Civil code as amended

send the opponent's opinion to the chairman of the Study Field Committee or notify the chairman of the Study Field Committee within 1 week of receiving the appointment decree that he/she cannot prepare the opinion.

- (10) Dissertation exam consists of:
 - a) debates on written work
 - b) from an oral exam from the range of topics in the given field of study. The respective faculty is responsible for the subject areas.
- (11) Dissertation exam is held before an exam commission, which has at least four members.
- (12) Those university teachers working in the relevant study programme or in a group of study fields and the study programmes included in them, have the right to be in the exam commission²¹, holding a functional position of professors and associate professors as well as other professionals approved by the Scientific Board of respective faculty.²² The Chairman and members of the exam commission are nominated by dean on the proposal of the Study Field Committee.
- (13) The composition of the exam commission for the dissertation exam (hereinafter referred to as the "exam commission") and the exam commission for the defence of the dissertation (hereinafter referred to as the "exam commission") consists of members of the Study Field Committee and other important experts in the given field of study from other universities or faculties, Slovak Academy of Sciences workplaces, and other scientific research organizations in following numbers:
 - a) at least two members of the exam commission are university teachers working in the functional positions of professors or in the functional positions of associate professors.
 - b) at least one member of the exam commission is a significant expert in the given field of study from another university or faculty,
 - c) so that at least one third of the members of the exam commission are not members of the academia of the relevant faculty.
- (14) If the doctoral student has applied for a dissertation topic listed by an external educational institution, the dissertation exam is held before the exam commission, in which members from the university designated according to paragraphs 12 and 13 of this article and members designated by the external educational institution are equally represented.²³
- (15) The opponent of the written work can be a member of the exam commission if he/she is a person authorized to conduct state exams and was appointed as a member of the exam commission by the dean at the proposal of the Study Field Committee. If the opponent is not a member of the exam commission, he/she is invited to the dissertation exam and has the right to express himself/herself during its evaluation.
- (16) A tutor cannot be a member of the exam commission. The tutor is invited to the dissertation exam and has the right to comment during its evaluation but does not have the right to vote.
- (17) The exam commission has a quorum if the majority of all members of the exam commission are present, including the chairman of the exam commission and at least one member of the exam commission who is not from the training workplace of the doctoral student.
- (18) The course of the dissertation exam and the announcement of its results are public. The exam commission's decision on the result of the dissertation exam will take place at a closed session of the exam commission.
- (19) The dissertation exam is evaluated as a whole with the "pass/fail" grading scale. Individual parts of the dissertation exam are not evaluated separately.
- (20) Minutes of the dissertation exam are drawn up. The minutes are signed by the chairman of the exam commission and the members of the exam commission, who are present at the dissertation

²¹ Decree of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sports of the Slovak Republic No. 244/2019 Coll. on the system of study fields of the Slovak Republic - Appendix no. 2 point c) Medical sciences and health sciences

²² section 63 para 3 of the Higher Education Act

²³ section 54 para 13 of the Higher Education Act

- exam.
- (21) Regarding the result of the dissertation exam, the faculty will issue a state exam certificate to the doctoral student (Section 68, paragraph 1, letter b) of the Higher Education Act) on the completion of the dissertation exam. If the doctoral student was evaluated by the classification grade and failed the dissertation exam, he/she has the right to one correction term. A doctoral student can take the dissertation exam in the remedial period at the earliest after three months from the dissertation exam in which he/she failed, but at the latest by the end of the penultimate year of the standard length of doctoral studies.
 - (22) Failure to pass the classification grade at the remedial date of the dissertation exam is a reason for the exclusion of the doctoral student from the studies according to section 66 para 1 letter c) of the Higher Education Act.

Article 11 **Request for permission for a defence of dissertation thesis**

- (1) A doctoral student may apply for permission to defend a dissertation thesis if he/she
 - a) obtained at least 150 credits (in a study programme for which the proper completion is a condition of achieving 180 credits), if the full-time study is three years and the part-time study is four years, or 210 credits, if the full-time study is four years and the part-time study is five years, without inclusion of credits allocated for the defence of the dissertation thesis.
 - b) meets the conditions set by the individual study plan and is the author of at least two scientific works (the definition of the term can be found in Article 4, paragraph 5, letter h)) related to the topic of the dissertation thesis.
- (2) The request for permission to defend the dissertation thesis is submitted in writing to the dean through the doctoral study department/unit. The application is submitted no later than five months before the end of the standard length of study; if the doctoral studies exceed the standard length of study, the application is submitted no later than three months before the planned end of the doctoral studies. The faculty will publish details of the application and procedure of its submission on the faculty's website and in other ways which are considered as usual at the faculty.
- (3) The doctoral student shall attach to the application:
 - a) dissertation thesis in three copies,
 - b) dissertation thesis summary in 20 copies, originality control protocol from Central register of final theses (CRZP), license agreement
 - c) in one version, copies of all publications and other elaborations, if they are not part of the dissertation thesis; if the doctoral student attaches an output from the SMU publishing activity database, he/she does not need to submit copies of the publication,
 - d) list of published works with full bibliographic data and unpublished scientific works and performances of the doctoral student, as well as responses to them, and possibly also opinions about them,
 - e) justification of the differences between the original and submitted dissertation, if the doctoral student submits a new dissertation in the same field of doctoral study after an unsuccessful defence,
 - f) professional CV,
 - g) tutor's opinion and tutor's proposal for 3 opponents.
- (4) Dissertation thesis summary is a brief summary of its objectives, main results and definition of their contribution. Dissertation thesis summary contains no more than 20 pages in A5 format and is submitted in the Slovak language, divided into: introduction, brief overview of the issue, theses of the dissertation thesis, selected processing methods, achieved results, contribution to the further development of science and practice, and a resume in English or another foreign language. Part of the dissertation thesis summary is also a list of the literature used and a list of all published works of the doctoral student organized according to the evidence of publication activity outputs and feedback received²⁴. The first and second pages of the dissertation thesis summary must be in accordance with the required SMU template.²⁵

²⁴ Decree of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sports of the Slovak Republic No. 397/2020 Coll. on the Central register of evidence of publication activity (CREPČ) and the central register of evidence of artistic activity

²⁵ Guideline of the SMU Rector on the details of final and qualifying theses, their bibliographic registration, originality control, storage, and

- (5) Before submitting the application, the doctoral student is obliged to send the dissertation for an originality check to the CRZP and sign a license agreement.
- (6) The doctoral student is obliged to submit the result of the originality check to the relevant department of doctoral studies as part of the documentation for the defence. The procedure for assigning work and its publication in the CRZP, as well as the details of the license agreement, is governed by a special regulation. The faculty at which the study programme is carried out will ensure that the opponent's evaluations are sent to the CRZP.

Article 12

Particulars of dissertation thesis

- (1) The doctoral student submits the dissertation in four hardcover copies in the Slovak language. With the consent of the dean of the faculty where the study programme is carried out, a student can present and/or defend his/her dissertation thesis in a language other than Slovak. If the final thesis is prepared in a foreign language, it contains a summary in the Slovak language in the scope of usually 10% of the scope of the dissertation thesis.²⁶
- (2) A doctoral student may also submit as a dissertation thesis his/her own published work or a set of his/her own published scientific works, the content of which elaborates the issue of the topic of the dissertation thesis. If the doctoral student submits a set of his/her own publications, he/she will supplement it with a detailed introduction, in which student explains the current state of the issue, the goals of the dissertation thesis, his/her own contribution to the topics addressed and the conclusions that arose from solving the topic of the dissertation thesis. If the attached publications are the work of several authors, the doctoral student will also attach a declaration of the co-authors about his/her authorship share.
- (3) As a rule, the dissertation thesis contains an introduction, the current state of the solved issue at home and abroad, the share of which should make up a maximum of 30% of the work. Work objectives; clearly, succinctly and accurately characterize the subject of the solution. It also includes elaborated sub-goals that condition the achievement of the main goal; Work methodology and research methods; Achieved results, their statistical evaluation; Discussion: comparison of published results of scientific research projects and established conclusions in the scope of 30% of the text of the thesis, proposal of recommendations in the context of the solved issue and established results with an emphasis on the contribution to education and practice in the field; list of used literature. The attached part consists of the approval of the ethics commission and the full text of the empirical methods used.
- (4) If the dissertation thesis is part of a collective work, the doctoral student will state his/her own results and put them in context with the results of other members of the collective in the discussion.
- (5) The scope of dissertation thesis is 80 to 120 pages.

Article 13

Preparation of dissertation thesis defence

- (1) After receiving the application for permission to defend the dissertation thesis, the dean will immediately forward the doctoral student's application together with the dissertation thesis to the chairman of the Study Field Committee. Within 15 days, the chairman of the Study Field Committee will comment on whether the dissertation thesis meets the level and form of the requirements set for the dissertation theses and whether he/she recommends it for defence. If the opinion of the chairman of the Study Field Committee is positive, the Study Field Committee proposes to the dean to present the composition of the exam committee for the defence of the dissertation thesis as well as three opponents of the dissertation thesis for approval by the Study Field Committee. If the opinion of the chairman of the Study Field Committee is negative, the fulfilment of the requirements for the level and form of the dissertation thesis will be reviewed by the Study Field Committee.

access.

²⁶ Methodological guidelines of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sports of the Slovak Republic No. 56/2011 on the requirements of final theses, their bibliographic registration, storage and access

- (2) If the chairman of the Study Field Committee or the Study Field Committee itself finds that the doctoral student's application for permission to defend the dissertation thesis or the dissertation thesis itself does not meet the prescribed content and formal requirements, the chairman will invite the doctoral student to eliminate the deficiencies within the specified period.
- (3) The doctoral student may withdraw the submitted dissertation thesis and the request for permission to defend it no later than the time of publication of the notice on the defence of the dissertation thesis. The dean will decide on the further procedure, as well as on the resolution of any disputed questions, on the proposal of the Study Field Committee.
- (4) Opponents proposed by the chairman of the Study Field Committee are appointed by the dean of the faculty where the study programme is carried out, to whom the chairman forwards the doctoral student's dissertation thesis and dissertation thesis summary with a request for an assessment.
- (5) The opponent shall forward the opponent's opinion to the chairman of the Study Field Committee no later than 4 weeks after receiving the dissertation thesis or inform the chairman of the Study Field Committee within 1 week of the delivery of the appointment decree that he/she cannot prepare the opinion. If the opponent does not deliver the opponent's opinion on the dissertation thesis within the set deadline and does not do so within 10 days after receiving a reminder from the dean of the faculty where the study programme is carried-out, a new opponent will be appointed on the proposal of the chairman of the Study Field Committee.
- (6) The chairman of the Study Field Committee, after receiving all opinions from the opponents and after approval by the Study Field Committee, will immediately propose to the dean of the faculty where the study programme is conducted, the chairman of the exam commission for dissertation exam and at least three other members of the exam commission for the defence of the dissertation thesis, the date and place dissertation defence. The chairman and members of the exam commission for dissertation exams are usually proposed from among the members of the Study Field Committee. The defence of the doctoral thesis of a doctoral student from an external educational institution takes place before an exam commission, in which the members of the faculty are designated according to section 63 para 4 of the Higher Education Act as well as members appointed by an external educational institution. The chairman of the Study Field Committee will propose to the dean the date of the defence so that the defence takes place before the date of the end of the doctoral studies.
- (7) The exam commission for the defence of the dissertation thesis must have at least four members in addition to the opponents. It consists of the chairman, at least three other members and a maximum of three opponents.
- (8) The defence of the dissertation thesis is held before the exam commission. The right to examine the defence of the dissertation thesis is held by university teachers working in the functional position of professor and in the functional position of associate professor and other experts approved by the Scientific Board of the faculty. The chairman and members of the exam commission for dissertation thesis exams are appointed by the dean of the faculty at which the study programme is carried-out, on the proposal of the Study Field Committee.
- (9) The opponent of the dissertation thesis may be a member of the exam commission for dissertation thesis exams, if the opponent is a person authorized to examine at the state exam and was appointed by the dean of the faculty where the study programme is carried-out, on the proposal of the Study Field Committee. If the opponent is not a member of the exam commission for dissertation exams, he /she is invited to defend the dissertation and has the right to express himself/herself during its evaluation.
- (10) A tutor cannot be a member of the exam commission. The tutor is invited to the defence of the dissertation and has the right to comment without the right to vote during its evaluation.
- (11) After receiving all the opinions from the opponents of the dissertation thesis, the dean will immediately forward the doctoral student's request for the defence of the dissertation thesis together with all the necessary information, including the opinions of the opponents, to the chairman of the exam commission.

- (12) Within 15 working days after receiving the materials according to the previous paragraph, the chairman of the exam commission for dissertation exams will propose to the dean the time and place of the defence of the dissertation thesis. The place and time of the defence of the dissertation thesis is determined by the dean of the faculty where the study programme is carried out.
- (13) The dean shall invite in writing the members of the exam commission for dissertation exams, the opponents, the tutor and the doctoral student to the defence of the dissertation thesis.
- (14) The faculty will publish on the faculty's website and on the faculty's official notice board no later than 10 working days before the designated day of the dissertation defence a notice about the time and place of the dissertation defence, containing information on where and how interested parties can familiarize themselves with the dissertation.
- (15) Anyone can submit suggestions, comments, or statements on the dissertation thesis to the chairman of the exam commission before the defence of the dissertation thesis. During the defence of the dissertation thesis, the doctoral student takes a position on the suggestions, comments or statements submitted.

Article 14

Opponents of dissertation thesis and their opinions

- (1) The dean appoints the opponents of the dissertation thesis based on the proposal of the chairman of the Study Field Committee, which may be based on the tutor's proposal. Opponents are chosen from among experts in the field of doctoral studies. There can be no more than one opponent from the faculty or external educational institution where the training workplace is located; the provision of paragraph 3 of this article is not affected by this.
- (2) The dissertation thesis is assessed by three opponents. At least one opponent must have the scientific-pedagogical title of professor and work in the position of professor or the scientific-pedagogical title of associate professor and work in the position of associate professor and have the scientific rank of Doctor of Sciences or have a recognized scientific qualification level IIa or I. Other opponents can be persons who meet the qualification requirements for a member of the Study Field Committee.
- (3) The opponent of the dissertation cannot be a close dependant²⁷ of a doctoral student or person with a conflict of interest. There can be no more than one opponent from the training workplace or the tutor's workplace.
- (4) The dean of the faculty where the study programme is carried out forwards the dissertation thesis to the opponent together with a request for an assessment.
- (5) The opponent's opinion contains an objective and critical analysis of the benefits and shortcomings of the submitted dissertation thesis, is brief and does not repeat its content. In the opinion, the opponent will comment in particular:
 - a) on the topicality of the chosen topic,
 - b) on chosen methods of elaboration,
 - c) on the achieved result, indicating what new knowledge the dissertation thesis brings,
 - d) on contribution to the further development of science and technology,
 - e) whether the dissertation thesis met the set goal.
- (6) The opponent assesses the dissertation thesis according to the state of development of the scientific field of doctoral studies at the time when the doctoral student submitted the application for permission to defend it. At the end of the written assessment, the opponent will comment on whether he/she recommends the dissertation thesis for defence and suggest a pass or fail classification. The opponent's opinion at the end contains a clear statement of the opponent, whether based on the submitted dissertation thesis proposes or does not propose the award of the academic title PhD. Without this statement, the opponent's opinion cannot be considered complete.

²⁷ section 116 of the Law No. 40/1964 Coll. Civil code as amended

- (7) Compliance with the requirements of the opponent's assessment according to paragraphs 5 and 6 of this Article will be assessed by the chairman of the exam commission. If the opponent's assessment does not meet the stated conditions, the dean, on the proposal of the chairman of the exam commission, returns it to the opponent for addition or revision. At the same time, it will set a deadline for its resubmission, which should not be longer than 15 days. If the opponent does not submit his assessment within the specified period and does not do so even five days after receiving the re-challenge, the dean will appoint a new opponent.

Article 15 **Defence of dissertation thesis**

- (1) Doctoral studies end with the successful defence of the dissertation thesis. The defence of the dissertation thesis demonstrates the ability and readiness for independent scientific and creative activity in the field of research or development or for independent theoretical and creative activity.
- (2) The defence of the dissertation thesis can be held after fulfilling the conditions for doctoral studies and the student's obligations arising from section 71 para 3 letter b) of the Higher Education Act.
- (3) The defence of the dissertation thesis is a state exam and must be completed no later than August 31²⁸ / than January 31²⁹ in the last academic year of the standard length of doctoral studies. The defence of the dissertation in the non-standard length must take place no later than two years in the full-time form or three years in the part-time form, as from the end of the standard length of study, while it must take place no later than August 31 of the second or third year of its non-standard length of study. In this case, the doctoral student in the full-time form of doctoral studies does not receive a scholarship, pays tuition fees for the non-standard length of study and continues to perform tasks at the training workplace.
- (4) The notification about the time and place of the defence of the dissertation contains data:
- a) name and surname of the author of the dissertation thesis,
 - b) academic titles, scientific-pedagogical titles, or scientific ranks of the author of the dissertation thesis,
 - c) title of dissertation thesis,
 - d) the name of the study programme for which the author of the dissertation thesis is enrolled,
 - e) the name of the field of study in which the study programme is carried-out according to letter d),
 - f) date, time and place of the dissertation thesis defence.
- (5) The defence of the dissertation thesis can only take place in the presence of at least two thirds of all members of the exam commission and at least two opponents of the dissertation thesis. If, for serious reasons, one of the three opponents cannot participate in the defence of the dissertation thesis and suggests a passing grade in the assessment, the defence can also take place without his presence. The opinion of the absent opponent will be read at the dissertation thesis defence in full. A maximum of four defences can be held before the same commission in one day.
- (6) The defence of the dissertation thesis is public; in exceptional cases, if its public discussion would endanger a secret protected by a special law or security, the dean of the faculty where the study programme is carried-out can declare it non-public.
- (7) The course of the defence of the dissertation thesis and the announcement of its results are public. If it is necessary to inform the tutor, opponent or exam committee with data, the publication of which is excluded in the dissertation thesis mainly because it is a trade secret of a third party, a classified fact or personal data, the doctoral student may, subject to compliance with the conditions according to special regulations, state this data in a special non-public documentation that is not part of the dissertation thesis, and which is intended exclusively for the tutor, the opponent and the exam commission³⁰
- (8) The defence of the dissertation thesis takes place in the form of a scientific debate between the

²⁸ Art. 7 para 1 letter a) of this Study Order

²⁹ Art. 7 para 1 letter b) of this Study Order

³⁰ section 62a paras 1 and 2 of the Higher Education Act

doctoral student, opponents of the dissertation, members of the exam commission and other participants about the knowledge gained and the contribution of the dissertation thesis. During the defence of the dissertation thesis, the justification and plausibility of its conclusions and proposals, which the dissertation thesis contains, are also examined.

- (9) Procedure for the defence of the dissertation thesis:
 - a) the chairman of the exam commission will provide a brief biography of the doctoral student, announce the topic of the dissertation thesis, essential information from the characteristics of the doctoral student prepared by the tutor and an overview of the doctoral student's scientific works and responses to them,
 - b) the doctoral student will briefly state the essential content of his/her dissertation thesis, its concept, results and contribution,
 - c) opponents of the dissertation thesis will present the essential content of their opinions; for the absent opponent, his/her opinion will be read in full by the chairman of the exam commission or a member of the exam commission authorized by the chairman,
 - d) the doctoral student will take a position on the opinions of the opponents of the dissertation thesis, in particular comment on all suggestions and comments and answer their questions,
 - e) the chairman of the exam commission will inform the participants of the defence with additional initiatives, comments or statements and open a discussion in which all participants of the defence can participate; the discussion verifies the correctness, justification, scientific originality and importance of the knowledge contained in the dissertation thesis,
 - f) during the discussion, the doctoral student will answer all questions and take a position on all suggestions and comments of the participants in the defence of the dissertation thesis.
- (10) The exam commission's decision on the outcome of the dissertation thesis defence will take place at a closed session of the exam commission in the presence of the opponents of the dissertation thesis and the tutor. At a closed session, the progress of the defence and the possibility of using the results of the dissertation thesis in practice will be evaluated. The commission and the opponents will decide in a secret vote whether they propose to award the doctoral student an academic title. The tutor, if he/she is a member of the commission, does not vote.
- (11) Voting according to par. 10 of this article shall be carried out by ballots containing the following data: name and surname of the doctoral student, date and place of the defence and the text "I agree with the awarding of the academic title - I do not agree with the awarding of the academic title". Commission members vote by crossing out the text they disagree with ("cross out inappropriate"). Any other voting method is non-valid.
- (12) The exam commission has a quorum if at least two thirds of all members of the exam commission are present, including the chairman of the exam commission.
- (13) To submit a proposal for the award of an academic title, it is required that at least four members of the commission entitled to vote and one or two opponents so that a majority of the members present vote for the proposal for awarding the academic title.
- (14) The defence of the dissertation thesis is evaluated with a classification grade of pass or fail. The overall result of a properly completed doctoral study is evaluated with a grade of pass.
- (15) Minutes of the defence of the dissertation thesis are drawn up. The minutes are signed by the chairman and members of the exam commission present at the defence of the dissertation thesis.
- (16) If the doctoral student was evaluated by the classification grade for the defence of the dissertation thesis and failed, he/she has the right to one remedial term.
- (17) Failure to pass the evaluation by the classification level at the remedial term for the defence of the dissertation thesis is a reason for the exclusion of the doctoral student from the studies according to section 66 para 1 letter c) of the Higher Education Act.
- (18) The chairman of the commission will announce the result of the vote at its public meeting.
- (19) A doctoral student who, on the basis of the result of the defence of the dissertation thesis or for his/her unjustified non-participation in the defence, has been proposed not to be awarded an

academic degree by the defence commission, may re-apply for permission to undertake the defence in the same study programme at the earliest after one year has passed from the day on which it took place or the defence of his/her dissertation thesis was to take place. The defence of the dissertation thesis can be repeated only once, no later than two years after the end of the standard length of study.

Article 16 **The interruption of doctoral studies**

- (1) The tutor comments on the request to interrupt the doctoral student's studies.
- (2) Interruption of studies for a doctoral student who has applied for a dissertation thesis topic listed by an external educational institution is permitted by the dean after a positive statement from the director (statutory representative) of the external educational institution.³¹
- (3) During the interruption of the doctoral student's studies, the performance of the function of his/her tutor is also interrupted.

Article 17 **Decision on award of academic title**

- (1) Proposal of the dissertation thesis defence commission to award or not award the academic title "doctor" ("philosophiæ doctor" for short "PhD.")³² to the graduate of the doctoral studies, as well as the documentation on the defence and the complete material of the doctoral student, are assessed by the dean of the faculty where the study programme is carried-out.
- (2) If the dean of the faculty where the study programme is carried out finds that the dissertation thesis defence procedure was not followed during the defence, he/she will cancel the commission's proposal to award or not award the academic title "doctor" ("philosophiæ doctor" in short "PhD.") and orders the defence to be repeated.
- (3) If the defence commission has suggested awarding the doctoral student a degree, the dean of the faculty where the study programme is carried-out will forward the materials to the rector with a proposal to award the academic degree to the doctoral student.
- (4) The academic title "doctor" ("philosophiæ doctor" for short "PhD.") is awarded by the university.
- (5) If it is a doctoral study that is carried out in cooperation with an external educational institution, the name of this institution is also indicated in the university diploma.
- (6) The rector shall send the doctoral student a written notice of the awarding or non-awarding of the academic title within 30 days. The notice is delivered to the student by hand.
- (7) The certificate on the award of the academic title "doctor" ("philosophiæ doctor" for short "PhD.") is issued by the university.

Article 18 **Tuition fees and fees related to doctoral studies, non-standard length of study**

- (1) The provisions of the Higher Education Act apply to fees associated with doctoral studies and the issuance of a diploma³³ as well as an internal regulation that determines the amount of tuition fees and fees associated with studying at the SMU in Bratislava for a given academic year and other regulations of the university also. Foreign nationals pay tuition and other fees according to the relevant provisions of the Higher Education Act ³⁴.
- (2) Full-time students of doctoral study programmes pay tuition fees if the standard length of study is

³¹ section 64 para 3 of the Higher Education Act

³² section 54 para 15 of the Higher Education Act

³³ section 92 of the Higher Education Act

³⁴ section 92 para 8 of the Higher Education Act

exceeded and continue to fulfil duties of a full-time doctoral student at the workplace, including teaching activities.

- (3) The above-standard length of study can last a maximum of two academic years in the full-time form of study, three academic years in the external form of study, until August 31 of the relevant academic year.

Article 19

Work conditions of doctoral students, work time, study leave, business trips

- (1) The doctoral student is also obliged to perform other tasks beyond the scope of his/her individual study plan, which are assigned to him/her by the tutor, the head of the training workplace, a senior employee of the faculty, university or external educational institution, resulting from the tasks and mission of the higher education institutions, and in particular tasks related to presentation and promotion of their activities, which in a wider scope enrich the knowledge and skills of the doctoral student acquired during the doctoral studies.
- (2) The presence of a doctoral student in the full-time form of doctoral studies at the workplace is recorded at the training workplace where the doctoral student is enrolled. A doctoral student in full-time study with the tutor's approval is entitled to a total of 40 days off³⁵ for the preparation and execution of all state exams or dissertation exams mainly during the winter and main holidays, determined by the schedule of the academic year. The doctoral student has the right to be at the workplace even during the holidays to fully fulfil the approved individual study and scientific plan. A doctoral student has the right to a ten-day leave of absence to prepare and defend his/her dissertation³⁶ after the prior approval of the tutor.
- (3) A doctoral student can be seconded on a business trip as part of solving a specific project, in which the doctoral student is also a co-investigator. The doctoral student is entitled to claim travel reimbursements in accordance with Act No. 283/2002 Coll. on travel reimbursements as amended.
- (4) A full-time doctoral student must complete occupational health and safety (OSH) training. The training is provided by the university in cooperation with the department/unit of doctoral studies at the faculties. A record will be made of the completed training, which will be entered into the doctoral student's personal file.

Article 20

Using of information-communication technologies

- (1) SMU is authorized to make audio or audio-visual recordings of educational activities to the extent necessary for scientific and study purposes. SMU can also carry out public transmission of educational activities, in particular public transmission of a lecture or the public part of a state exam/dissertation exam.³⁷
- (2) The public part of the state exam/dissertation exam is considered public even if SMU ensures their public live broadcast. The public part of the dissertation defence is considered public even if the university ensures its public audio-visual live broadcast.³⁸

Article 21

Transitional and final provisions

- (1) This Study Order for doctoral studies at the SMU was approved by the Academic Senate of the SMU on June 26, 2023.
- (2) The provisions of the SMU Study Order apply mutatis mutandis (accordingly) to relationships not regulated by this Study Order.

³⁵ section 140 para 3 letter d) of the Labour code

³⁶ section 140 para 3 letter e) of the Labour code

³⁷ section 108 para 8 of the Higher Education Act

³⁸ section 108 para 9 of the Higher Education Act

- (3) The rights and obligations of doctoral students who were admitted to study before the entry into force of this Study Order are governed by this Study Order only from the date of its entry into force.
- (4) Faculties are obliged to harmonize their internal regulations on the organization of doctoral studies with this Study Order with effect from September 1.
- (5) This internal regulation enters into force on the day of its registration at the Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic³⁹ and is in force since September 1, 2023.
- (6) This internal regulation is archived in printed form at the rectorate of the SMU in Bratislava and published in electronic form on the public part of the SMU's website www.eszu.sk.

In Bratislava, on June 16, 2023

.....
prof. MUDr. Ivan Rybár, PhD.
Chairman of the
Academic Senate of the
Slovak Medical University in Bratislava

.....
Dr. h. c. prof. MUDr. Peter Šimko, CSc.
Rector of the
Slovak Medical University in Bratislava

³⁹ section 45 para 4 letter a) of the Higher Education Act