

Q&A – doctoral students of the UW Doctoral Schools

Proceedings for the award of a doctoral degree initiated by doctoral students of Doctoral Schools

Where can I find information on the procedure to confer a doctoral degree?

The following regulations apply to doctoral students of doctoral schools:

- [Act of 20 July 2018 – Law on Higher Education and Science \(Journal of Laws of 2022, item 574, as amended\)](#);
- [Resolution No. 157 of the Senate of the University of Warsaw of 29 June 2022 on determining the procedure for the award of a doctoral degree and a habilitated doctor degree at the University of Warsaw \(Monitor UW of 2022, item 159\)](#).

Where can I get help with administrative matters?

The Scientific Councils Office (Biuro Rad Naukowych – BRN) provides administrative support for the procedure for the award of a doctoral degree. We encourage you to contact the coordinator of the relevant Academic Council.

In matters relating to a study programme at Doctoral Schools, please contact the secretariat of the relevant [Doctoral School](#).

What is the schedule to prepare a doctoral dissertation?

The schedule for preparing a doctoral dissertation is specified in the individual research plan for each doctoral student.

How does the procedure for the award of a doctoral degree begin?

To initiate the procedure, an application should be submitted to the Chairperson of the appropriate Academic Council. Please submit your application at the Scientific Councils Office.

The application should be accompanied by:

- 1) doctoral dissertation (submitted in at least one printed copy together with an electronic copy saved in PDF format - on a USB flash drive or by e-mail, after prior agreement with the coordinator of the Council). A doctoral dissertation prepared in Polish is accompanied by an abstract in English, and a doctoral dissertation prepared in a foreign language - abstracts in Polish and in English, saved in separate PDF files;
- 2) a positive opinion of the supervisor or supervisors on the doctoral dissertation in particular on its compliance with the conditions set out in § 5, sections 1-2 of Annex 1 to the aforementioned Resolution);
- 3) a declaration indicating the scientific discipline or area of science in which the candidate is applying for the award of a doctoral degree, or a statement that it is not possible to indicate a single discipline in which a doctoral degree is awarded;
- 4) scientific curriculum vitae, containing information on the most important scientific publications, research projects and internships, in particular those financed from funds granted by the European Research Council, the National Science Centre, the National Center for Research and Development, NAWA, FNP or the minister responsible for higher education and science;

5) a copy of at least one publication:

a scientific article published in a scientific journal or in peer-reviewed materials from an international conference, which in the year of publication of the article in its final form were included on a list drawn up in accordance with the provisions issued pursuant to Art. 267, section 2, point 2 (b) of the Act,

or

a scientific monograph issued by a publishing house which, in the year of publication of the monograph in its final form, was included on a list drawn up in accordance with the provisions issued pursuant to Art. 267, section 2, point 2 (a) of the Act or a chapter in such a monograph;

6) a copy of a certificate or diploma attesting to knowledge of a modern foreign language of at least B2 proficiency level;

7) a copy of the diploma showing that the candidate holds a master's degree, a master's degree in engineering or equivalent, or the diploma referred to in Article 326, section 2, point 2 or Article 327, section 2 of the Act which confers the right to apply for the award of a doctoral degree in the country in the higher education system of which the higher education institution awarding it operates;

8) a certificate from the body in charge of the Doctoral School confirming that the candidate has achieved the learning outcomes for qualifications at level 8 of the PQF ([Polish Qualification Framework](#)).

The Academic Council may determine the templates of the application and the documents listed in points 2 - 4. To find out whether such templates apply, please contact the coordinator of the Council.

What documents are required to attest to knowledge of a modern foreign language?

A certificate or diploma confirming knowledge of a foreign language of at least B2 proficiency level is required (§ 4, section 1, item 2 of Annex 1 to the Resolution). You can obtain a certificate, e.g., by passing an exam at The Centre for Foreign Language Teaching of the University of Warsaw.

The rules for organizing foreign language exams at the University of Warsaw are set out in Resolution No. 156 of the Rector of the University of Warsaw of 22 December 2021 on the rules for organizing foreign language teaching and certification of language proficiency at the University of Warsaw.

For more information on certificates, please refer to the following legal acts:

[Zarządzenie nr 157 Rektora Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego z dnia 13 października 2025 r. w sprawie określenia certyfikatów poświadczających znajomość nowożytnego języka obcego na poziomie biegłości językowej co najmniej B2 w postępowaniu w sprawie nadania stopnia doktora na Uniwersytecie Warszawskim – link do Monitora UW](#)

[Uchwała nr 8 Rady Koordynacyjnej ds. Nauczania Języków Obcych i Certyfikacji Biegłości Językowej z dnia 23 września 2022 r. w sprawie uznawania certyfikatów zewnętrznych instytucji potwierdzających poziom biegłości językowej – link do Dziennika UW](#)

In the absence of a certificate or diploma, the foreign language exam may be conducted by a committee appointed by the Chairman of the scientific council of the discipline.

What happens next with my application?

The application is checked in formal terms - in the event of any deficiencies, you will be asked to supplement them.

Subsequently, the Academic Council, having ascertained that the person submitting the application meets the conditions for awarding a degree, as defined by law, decides to initiate the procedure.

An employee of the Scientific Councils Office enters data regarding the procedure into the USOS system. The candidate then uploads the file with the dissertation to the Archives of Diploma Theses of the University of Warsaw ([Archiwum Prac Dyplomowych – APD](#)).

The supervisor sends the thesis file for examination in the Uniform Anti-Plagiarism System (Jednolity System Antyplagiatowy – JSA). The report from the JSA must be printed, signed by the supervisor (or supervisors), and submitted to the Chairperson of the Council through the Scientific Councils Office.

What are the tasks of the Doctoral Committee?

In most disciplines, the Academic Council appoints a Doctoral Committee, which:

- 1) may propose to the Council candidates for reviewers of the doctoral dissertation;
- 2) adopts a resolution to admit the candidate to the defense of the doctoral dissertation or applies to the Council for a decision refusing to admit the candidate to defence;
- 3) conducts the defence of the doctoral dissertation;
- 4) proposes to the Council to award or refuse to award the degree of doctor;
- 5) may, by resolution, apply to the Scientific Council for the award of a doctoral dissertation.

If the Council does not appoint the Doctoral Committee, the aforementioned activities are carried out by the Council itself.

Is my work publicly available?

Yes. The dissertation is available in the APD. In addition, the University, no later than 30 days before the appointed defense date, provides the full text of the dissertation together with a summary and its reviews in the Public Information Bulletin of the University of Warsaw (BIP UW). In the event that the subject of the doctoral dissertation is confidential, only reviews without confidential content are made available.

What does the doctoral exam look like?

Each Academic Council sets the rules for taking an exam in a specific discipline. The Doctoral Committee, in accordance with the guidelines of the Council, defines and presents to the candidate the number (from one to two), the scope and form of doctoral examinations, as well as the schedule of examinations. You will be notified of the date and place of the exam at least 30 days before the exam.

When issuing a grade for the exam, the Committee applies the following grades: 1) positive with distinction, or 2) positive, or 3) negative.

What does a negative exam grade mean?

If a failing grade was issued for the exam, you can apply to retake the exam. It takes place no sooner than three months after the first exam. You can retake the exam only once. If the re-examination is not passed, the Doctoral Committee applies to the Council to adopt a resolution on the refusal to award the degree.

How many reviewers rate my dissertation?

The Academic Council appoints three reviewers. Reviewers cannot be employees of the University and an academic institution, a PAN institute,, a research institute or an international institute of which the candidate is an employee.

When can I read the content of my work review?

The Chairperson of the Council provides the candidate with reviews of the doctoral dissertation after receiving them from all reviewers.

When does the defence take place?

If at least two reviews of the doctoral dissertation contain positive conclusions and the candidate has obtained a positive grade on the doctoral examination, the Doctoral Committee decides on admission to defence. After the dissertation is approved for defence, it is published in the BIP of the University of Warsaw, together with the reviews. The defense of the doctoral dissertation may not take place within 30 days from the date of publication of the documents. The Chairperson of the Council immediately informs the candidate about the date, time and place of the defence. The announcement of the defence is published on the website of the Scientific Councils Office.

How does the defense work?

The defence of the doctoral dissertation takes place during a meeting of the Doctoral Committee divided into an open and a closed part. The public part is open to all interested persons.

The public part of the meeting of the Doctoral Committee consists of:

- 1) the presentation of the candidate's scientific curriculum vitae by the supervisor;
- 2) the candidate's presentation of the doctoral dissertation;
- 3) the presentation of the review of the doctoral dissertation by the reviewers or, in their absence, by a member of the Doctoral Committee;
- 4) the public discussion on the doctoral dissertation, in which all those present at the meeting may take part;
- 5) the candidate's response to the reviews of the doctoral dissertation and to questions asked during the public discussion on the doctoral dissertation.

After closing the discussion on the doctoral dissertation, the Chairperson of the Doctoral Committee orders the beginning of the closed part of the meeting, in which only members of the Doctoral Committee take part. During the closed part of the meeting, the Doctoral Committee adopts a resolution in a secret ballot on applying to the Academic Council for the award of a doctoral degree, together with its justification. The resolution shall be announced after its adoption to the participants in the public part.

Who awards a doctoral degree?

The bodies authorized to award the degree of doctor are the Academic Councils of Disciplines (or the Academic Council of the Areas of Study).

Meetings of the Academic Councils are usually held once a month, and matters for individual meetings are accepted in advance.

The dates of the meetings can be checked on the BRN website in the Events ([Wydarzenia](#)) tab.