

Chapter 10. Dissertation defence procedure

Section 1. Dissertation defence procedure at the University of Luxembourg

Article IV.10.101. Before the defence.

- The dissertation shall be written in one of the following languages: French, German or English, with a mandatory abstract in English. If justified by the topic, the dissertation may be written in Luxembourgish or, with the authorisation of the rector, in another language.
- The candidate shall submit his manuscript to the Dissertation Defence Committee.

This committee shall send its opinion within 6 weeks with the approval of the dean of the faculty, along with an electronic version of the dissertation to the Office of Doctoral Studies (BED) in the Student Department (SEVE).

- If the opinion is negative, the candidate will be asked to rework the dissertation and the PhD supervisor of the University of Luxembourg shall inform the Office of Doctoral Studies of the additional period granted, whereby said additional time may not exceed the maximum time limit allotted for the completion of the dissertation.
- In the event of co-supervision without a Dissertation Defence Committee, the candidate shall submit his manuscript to the two PhD supervisors. The PhD supervisor of the University of Luxembourg shall send the joint opinion of the two PhD supervisors within 6 weeks with the approval of the dean of the faculty, along with an electronic version of the dissertation, to the Office of Doctoral Studies.
- The Office of Doctoral Studies shall verify that the student's file is in order in administrative terms. If such is the case, it will send the Dissertation Defence Committee's opinion to the rector.
- Upon receiving this opinion, if the rector decides to authorise the defence, he shall inform accordingly the members of the Dissertation Defence Committee appointed in accordance with the provisions of the Grand-Ducal Regulation of 22 May 2006, the dean, the PhD student, and the Office of Doctoral Studies. He shall also appoint, from the ranks of the Dissertation Defence Committee, a chairman who must be a member of the University of Luxembourg.

The rector shall then send out invitations to attend the defence specifying, where applicable, whether the dissertation is covered by a confidentiality agreement and whether the defence will be held behind closed doors.

- The two preceding steps (verification by the Office of Doctoral Studies and notification by the rector) shall be taken within 4 weeks.
- The Office of Doctoral Studies shall attribute a dissertation number to the PhD student and the cover page of the University of Luxembourg.
- The PhD student shall, with the help of the secretariat of his research unit, send 1 copy of his manuscript bearing said number to the members of the Dissertation Defence Committee.

- The members of the Dissertation Defence Committee shall apprise their chairman of their consent to hold the defence within 4 weeks at most.
- The defence shall be held at the latest 10 weeks after the Dissertation Defence Committee has been appointed by the rector.
- The defence shall be announced to the public through the usual means.
- The designated representative of the Office of Doctoral Studies shall provide the Chairman of the Dissertation Defence Committee with the administrative documents required for the dissertation defence.

Article IV.10.102. Defence

- The Dissertation Defence Committee may deliberate only if at least 4 of its members are present.
- If strictly fewer than 4 members of the Dissertation Defence Committee are present 60 minutes after the scheduled time for defence, the defence shall be adjourned to another date, and such adjournment shall be entered in the minutes of the defence by the Chairman of the Dissertation Defence Committee, his alternate, or in the absence thereof, any member of the Dissertation Defence Committee present.
- Otherwise, the Chairman of the Dissertation Defence Committee shall declare the dissertation defence open. This defence shall be conducted in two steps: A presentation by the candidate, followed by a session of observations and questions by the Dissertation Defence Committee. If a dissertation is covered by a confidentiality agreement, the defence may be held behind closed doors.

When the candidate has completed his presentation, the Chairman of the Dissertation Defence Committee shall ask the members to make observations and ask the candidate such questions as they shall deem useful.

Article IV.10.103. Deliberation of the Dissertation Defence Committee, drawing up the minutes of the defence and preparation of the summary dissertation report

- After the defence, the Chairman of the Dissertation Defence Committee shall ask the members to retire behind closed doors to deliberate and to draw up the minutes of the defence as well as the summary dissertation report, and to assess the dissertation and the defence overall. The Chairman of the Dissertation Defence Committee shall moderate the discussions of the committee to reach a consensual conclusion. Said conclusion must pertain both to the manuscript produced by the candidate and to his performance during the defence. It must justify the decision taken by the Dissertation Defence Committee to confer or not to confer the degree of “Docteur de l’Université de Luxembourg” [doctor of the University of Luxembourg] on the candidate as well as the mention, and the conditions for the reproduction of the dissertation.
- For the final assessment of the dissertation and its defence, the Dissertation Defence Committee may resort to the procedure described in the annex.

- The Chairman of the Dissertation Defence Committee shall draw up the minutes of the dissertation defence in accordance with the decision of the committee, and have it signed by the members of the committee immediately.
- The summary dissertation report shall contain the conclusion of the committee's discussions. It shall be drawn up by the Chairman of the Dissertation Defence Committee and co-signed by all the members of the committee present at the defence, then submitted within 30 days after the date of the defence.
- The Chairman of the Dissertation Defence Committee shall ask the members to join the candidate for the announcement of the result.

Article IV.10.104. Announcement of the result to the candidate and to the Office of the Doctoral Studies, dissemination of the dissertation, conferral of the PhD degree

- The Chairman of the Dissertation Defence Committee shall inform the candidate of the committee's decision.
- The Chairman of the Dissertation Defence Committee shall send to the representative of the Office of Doctoral Studies in charge of dissertations the original minutes of the dissertation defence and, within 30 days of the date of the defence, the original summary dissertation report, co-signed by all the members of the Dissertation Defence Committee present at the defence.
- The candidate, the PhD supervisor, the dean of the faculty concerned or any member of the rectorate may obtain a copy of these documents from the Office of Doctoral Studies.
- The Office of Doctoral Studies shall proceed to announce the result through the usual means and to take the necessary administrative steps.
- Where necessary, the candidate shall proceed to make such corrections to the manuscript as requested by the Dissertation Defence Committee and shall send the manuscript thus corrected to the chairman of said committee.
- The Chairman of the Dissertation Defence Committee shall make sure that the changes made correspond to those requested by the Dissertation Defence Committee and shall issue the authorisation for the dissertation to be reproduced.

Once such authorisation has been obtained, the PhD student shall, within three months of the defence, submit to the Office of Doctoral Studies three paper copies of his definitive manuscript, an electronic version in pdf on CD or DVD, and documents concerning the dissemination of the dissertation.

- Upon receipt of these documents, the Office of Doctoral Studies shall issue the PhD degree and proceed to have the dissertation legally copyrighted.
- The area of specialisation or discipline mentioned on the degree shall be one of the following: biology, chemistry, law, management, history, information technology, language and literature, mathematics, geography, philosophy, physics, psychology, engineering, economics, education, finance, linguistics, political science, sociology.

Section 2. Procedure for the defence of jointly sponsored dissertations at the partner university

Article IV.10.201.

- The duration of the doctoral programme shall be fixed in the joint sponsorship agreement, but shall not be less than the minimum of the admissible durations of the contracting universities.
- Pursuant to Article 11 of the Grand-Ducal Regulation of 22 May 2006 on earning a PhD degree at the University of Luxembourg, “the principles governing the establishment of the Dissertation Defence Committee and the designation of its chairman shall be specified in the agreement. (...) The number of members of the Dissertation Defence Committee may not exceed six.”
- If the joint sponsorship agreement should not specify all or part of the procedure to be followed, the corresponding procedure of the university where the defence is to be held shall apply. If the dissertation defence is held at the partner university, an official application for authorisation of defence through the report of the two PhD supervisors shall be confirmed by the rector of the University of Luxembourg. In such a case, the president shall inform only the two PhD supervisors of his decision.
- The Chairman of the Dissertation Defence Committee shall make sure that the minutes of the dissertation defence shall, in compliance with the decision of the committee and duly signed by its members, be sent to the Office of Doctoral Studies of the University of Luxembourg within 30 days as of the date of the defence.

Annex 5 Procedure and documents for dissertation defence and dissemination

The Chairman distributes an anonymous ballot to the members of the committee based on this model:

passable ausreichend sufficient	assez bien befriedigend fair	bien gut good	très bien sehr gut very good	excellent ausgezeichnet outstanding
1p.	2p.	3p.	4p.	5p.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Work ranked on the top 20 percentile compared with the committee member's recent experience is considered to be excellent.

Work ranked in the 2nd 20 percentile compared with the committee member's recent experience is considered to be very good.

Etc.

The Chairman opens the ballots and notes the final assessment according to the table below.

Final assessment:

Total number of points	Point average	
5 to 9	1 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	passable, ausreichend, sufficient
10 to 13	1.8 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	assez bien, befriedigend, fair
14 to 17	2.6 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	bien, gut, good
18 to 21	3.4 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	très bien, sehr gut, very good
22 to 25	4.2 <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	excellent, ausgezeichnet, outstanding

The dissertation report concludes with:

Appréciation finale de la thèse et de sa soutenance
Final grading of the dissertation and its defence
Abschließende Bewertung der Doktorarbeit und ihrer Verteidigung

passable ausreichend sufficient	assez bien befriedigend fair	bien gut good	très bien sehr gut very good	excellent ausgezeichnet outstanding
<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>