

Guide for doctoral students at the University of Bucharest:

from admission to obtaining the title of Doctor



UNIVERSITY OF
BUCHAREST

VIRTUTE ET SAPIENTIA

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- The present volume is intended to serve as a substantial resource for doctoral students at the University of Bucharest, offering comprehensive guidance on the entire spectrum of academic life, from admission to the attainment of the title of „Doctor”. -

Within the University of Bucharest (UB), doctoral studies (<https://doctorat.unibuc.ro/>) are governed by *Law No. 199/2023 on Higher Education, with subsequent amendments and additions*¹, *the Framework Regulation on doctoral studies* approved by Order of the Minister of Education No. 3020/2024, *with subsequent amendments and additions*² and *the Regulation on the organisation and conduct of doctoral study programmes at the University of Bucharest*³, approved in the meeting of the U.B. Senate on 19 March 2025. Within the Institution Organising Doctoral Studies – University of Bucharest (I.O.D.S.-U.B.), 22 fields of doctoral studies are accredited, within the 25 doctoral schools. In the previous year, there was a significant increase in the number of candidates applying for the 340 positions funded from the state budget, with more than 400 individuals seeking these positions. Annually, over 25 doctoral students are enrolled in fee-paying positions.

The doctoral studies programme consists of the following three essential stages:

- I. The admission and the enrolment in the doctoral studies programme**
- II. The period which encompasses the undertaking of doctoral studies and the elaboration of the doctoral thesis, which includes the programme for advanced university training and the scientific research activity.**
- III. The successful completion of doctoral studies, which is contingent upon the submission of the doctoral thesis and its subsequent public defence.**

The following section provides a comprehensive overview of each stage of the process.

I. Admission and enrolment in the doctoral studies programme

Admission

Admission to doctoral studies at IODS-UB is usually held in the July session, with the possibility of an additional session in September, if not all allocated positions have been filled, or in the event of additional positions having been made available through reallocation after the initial session. The number of positions funded from the state budget, full-time (IF) and part-time *low-frequency (IFR) positions, as well as fee-paying positions, is allocated to each doctoral school by the CSUD, with the approval of the Senate, and is published on their website.

¹ <https://www.aracis.ro/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/legea-invatamanantului-superior-nr-199-2023.pdf>

² https://www.edu.ro/sites/default/files/fisiere%20articole/OM_3020-2024.pdf

³ https://doctorat.unibuc.ro/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/1-Regulamentul-de-organizare-si-desfasurare-a-programelor-de-studii-univ-de-doctorat_Senat-2025-03-19_F-1.pdf

For general information on the admission procedure, candidates must consult the official website: <https://doctorat.unibuc.ro/admitere/>, as well as *the Regulation on the organisation and conduct of the admission contest for doctoral studies*, which is updated and approved annually by the Senate of the University of Bucharest. To acquire further information regarding the admission to a particular field, it is also advisable that the candidates refer to the website of the doctoral school in which they intend to enrol. The list of the doctoral schools within each faculty is accessible via the following link: <https://doctorat.unibuc.ro/scoli-doctorale/>.

The admission of Romanian candidates from all over the world (“Romanians Abroad”), as well as foreign citizens from European Union third countries is contingent upon methodologies specially elaborated by the Ministry of Education and Research, and they will address the International Relations Department / External Relations Service in order to register for the admission contest for doctoral studies:

[\(https://unibuc.ro/international/studenti-internationali/admitere-doctorat/](https://unibuc.ro/international/studenti-internationali/admitere-doctorat/)

and

[https://sites.google.com/externe.unibuc.ro/international-unibuc-ro-en/admission\).](https://sites.google.com/externe.unibuc.ro/international-unibuc-ro-en/admission)

The admission procedure is comprised of two stages: registration, on the basis of a complete file, and the admission competition. Each doctoral school posts its admission calendar and its own Admission Regulation on their website, which describe in detail the steps of the entire process and specify the documents that need to be uploaded/submitted. Should further information or inquiries arise, candidates are advised to direct them to the secretariat of the doctoral school (including by email).

The contest may consist of one or two exams, depending on the decision taken at the level of each doctoral school, the purpose of which is to evaluate candidates as objectively as possible. Candidates are ranked according to their results. The doctoral grants related to the doctoral topic announced and opened to competition at doctoral school level are distributed in the order of the ranking of the eligible candidates based on the results of the admission competition. In the event of equal averages, each doctoral school is required to have at least three tie-breaking criteria. After the results are posted, candidates are required to officially confirm their filling of their position within the deadline specified by the secretariat of the doctoral school.

The Enrolment

The enrolment in doctoral studies takes place at the beginning of each academic year, in accordance to the legislative and institutional provisions, the information on this process being provided in a timely manner by the secretariat of the doctoral school. The enrolment shall be done in person or, in exceptional circumstances, with the approval of the management of the doctoral school, via electronic means/online.

The Contract for Doctoral Studies is required to be signed in the first year of the doctoral studies, and it necessitates scrutiny in order to ensure the full comprehension of its terms, rules and regulations! The argument that one is unaware of its provisions does not constitute a valid defense in the event of infringement / noncompliance, nor does it exculpate one from its consequences. During the course of the doctoral studies, the study contract may be supplemented with additional documents.

II. The duration of doctoral studies

The duration of doctoral studies is typically four years. In exceptional cases and for well-founded reasons, the doctoral student may request periods of interruption, extension or reduction of the duration of doctoral studies. The doctoral student is guided in his/her academic activity by their doctoral supervisor, with whom the student is required to maintain continuous communication. The doctoral supervisor is supported in their activity of supervising the doctoral student by an academic guidance and integrity committee, which is established in alignment with the research topic/theme. The composition of this committee typically includes three members, at least one of whom is not affiliated with I.O.D.S.-U.B.

During the period of doctoral studies, it is essential that students give careful consideration to the following aspects:

- a) Each year, training and research activities are planned in accordance with the schedule established together with the doctoral supervisor and with the curriculum. The training programme based on advanced courses is typically undertaken during the first year of study and is allocated a certain number of transferable study credits (ETCS). In exceptional cases, with the approval of the doctoral school management, it can also be completed within the four years of the doctoral programme.
- b) Each year, doctoral students must carry out a series of activities, which are specified in the curriculum with a certain number of credits that is specified by the doctoral school. Each year of the programme is equivalent to 60 transferable study credits. By the end of the four years of study, doctoral students must have accumulated all 240 transferable study credits. The activities for which doctoral students obtain credits (papers, scientific reports, progress reports, etc.) are approved by the doctoral supervisor and the members of the academic guidance and integrity committee. If these activities have not been completed or have not been assessed as satisfactory, the doctoral student will have the opportunity to request that they be redone, or they will be expelled.
- c) In the event that, at the end of the fourth year, the doctoral student has fulfilled the obligations under points (a) and (b), but has not completed their thesis yet, they may submit a request for an extension period of up to two years, under the conditions established by IODS-UB.
- d) During the course of doctoral studies, for valid reasons and under the conditions of the law, periods of interruption may be requested, of which cumulative duration cannot exceed three years.
- e) At the end of the periods of extension(s) and/or interruption(s) at the latest, the doctoral student must submit the doctoral thesis, following its preliminary defence before the academic guidance and integrity committee. At this point, the doctoral student attains the quality of: graduate.

- f) In addition to the activities mentioned in points a) and b), the doctoral student has a number of other obligations, as stipulated in the *Regulation for the organisation and conduct of doctoral programmes at the University of Bucharest*, which can be consulted on the Doctorat UB (UB Doctoral Studies) / C.S.U.D. website at: <https://doctorat.unibuc.ro/legislatie/> – section DOCTORAL STUDIES. Among these, we highlight the compulsory activities carried out during the four years that lead to the acquisition of professional and transversal skills⁴, as stipulated in Ministerial Order no. 3020/2024, *the Framework Regulation on doctoral studies*. The approval of the doctoral thesis submission file for its public defence is conditional upon the completion of the ten compulsory activities recommended by the doctoral supervisor.
- g) During their doctoral studies, on the basis of *the Methodology for encouraging performance in the research activity of doctoral students* approved by the Senate of the University of Bucharest⁵, doctoral students can access funding for the purpose of participating to national and international scientific events, for carrying out research/documentation/doctoral trainings, for theses under international co-supervision, for internships/ scholarships abroad (in the case of doctoral students enrolled in the European Doctorate Route – *Doctor Europaeus/Europaea*), for organising the conferences of their doctoral schools and editing the resulting publications / journals / their proceedings, for acquiring the materials and equipment necessary for the research activities (through purchase or rental, within the limits of the allocated funds) and for publishing scientific articles. Doctoral students can also be the beneficiaries of information, guidance, counselling and continuous professional training services in their research career offered by the Regional Centre for Guidance and Counselling in The Research Career – Bucharest-Ilfov, **SciResCareer** (<https://scirescareer.unibuc.ro/>). **SciResCareer** regularly organises training sessions for project writing, sessions providing support for preparing the application for national and international grant competitions, events for presenting employment opportunities within the scientific research and innovation network.
- h) Doctoral studies can also be carried out under joint supervision /co-direction. In this case, the doctoral student works under the simultaneous guidance of a doctoral supervisor from IODS-U.B. and a doctoral supervisor from another country or another IODS in Romania, based on a written agreement between the organising institutions involved. A doctoral programme under joint supervision/co-direction may also be organised if the doctoral supervisors are both from IODS-U.B.

⁴ https://doctorat.unibuc.ro/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/2-Anexa-Reg_SUD_UB_Senat-2025-03-19-Activitati-obligatorii-DRD.pdf

⁵ (<https://doctorat.unibuc.ro/studii-universitare-de-doctorat/> and <https://doctorat.unibuc.ro/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Metodologia-privind-incurajarea-performantei-in-cercetare-DRD-Aprobare-SENAT-2022-.pdf>)

III. Submission and public defence of the doctoral thesis

The completion of doctoral studies is achieved by publicly defending the doctoral thesis before the doctoral thesis public defence committee, which has the status of a final examination. The steps to be taken from the official submission of the thesis to the public defence are detailed in [*the Procedure for the completion of doctoral studies at the University of Bucharest*](#)⁶, a document approved by the Council for Doctoral Studies (CSUD) of the University of Bucharest, as summarised below:

- a) Once the thesis has been approved by the doctoral supervisor (who will also consult the members of the academic guidance and integrity committee in this regard), it can be submitted in electronic (digital) format to the secretariat of the doctoral school, together with the abstract of the thesis, the statement of one's own responsibility regarding the originality of the thesis signed by the doctoral student and approved by the doctoral supervisor(s), as well as an appendix detailing the fulfilment of the other scientific obligations set out in the study contract and the fulfilment of the minimum standards. The secretariat of the doctoral school sends the thesis to the Doctorate, Habilitation and Integrity Service (SDAI) of the University of Bucharest, for the issuance of the similarities report, which is generated using a special analysis software (TURNITIN or equivalent) recognised by the National Commission for the Accreditation of University Titles, Diplomas and Certificates (CNATDCU). The results of the similarities report will be analysed by the doctoral supervisor and the members of the academic guidance and integrity committee, as well as by the director of the doctoral school or a person/persons designated by the doctoral school, especially if the director of the doctoral school is the doctoral supervisor of the thesis in question.
- b) In the event that the verification procedure reveals that the doctoral student has engaged in the unethical practice of misappropriating the scientific contributions of other individuals or specialists, presenting these contributions as their own in the thesis (indicating plagiarism), either in bad faith or due to a lack of understanding of the citation rules in force, the thesis will be returned to the doctoral student for revision, by appropriately citing the sources or by removing the non-compliant parts. In such cases, the entire submission procedure is reinitiated, commencing with an updated opinion from the doctoral supervisor and subsequently a new submission of the thesis to the secretariat of the doctoral school.
- c) If the opinion received for the doctoral thesis is favourable, the date of the preliminary defence of the thesis before the academic guidance and integrity committee shall be set. Like the public defence, the preliminary defence is also a public event and shall be announced on the doctoral school's website.
- d) If, following the preliminary defence, the academic guidance and integrity committee records a favourable evaluation of the thesis through an official

⁶ <https://doctorat.unibuc.ro/studii-universitare-de-doctorat/>

document, the official submission of the thesis and the organisation of the public defence are appointed. The doctoral student may proceed, with the support of the secretariat, to complete the thesis defence file. In order to be uploaded to the national platform, the doctoral thesis, its annexes and the doctoral student's statement that they are aware that the doctoral thesis will be published for preview on the national public consultation platform for 90 days prior to the public defence, are required to be sent to the SDAI. The doctoral thesis will be available for public consultation for 90 calendar days on the national platform managed by the Executive Unit for Financing Higher Education, Research, Development and Innovation (UEFISCDI), in accordance with the legal provisions in force in the field of copyright. Potential complaints will be analysed at the level of the CSUD and the doctoral school. At the end of the 90 days, after the UEFISCDI platform notifies UB of the expiry of the public consultation period, the doctoral school will draw up a report (that will be included in the doctoral file) to be submitted to the CSUD, for the purpose of analysis and decision-making regarding the validation of the initiation of the public defence procedure.

- e) After the CSUD's decision to validate the procedure, the public defence committee, also referred to as *the doctoral committee*, is appointed, as proposed by the doctoral supervisor, approved by the doctoral school council and endorsed by the CSUD. After obtaining all the reports of the committee members, if they are favourable, the request to set the date of the public defence can be submitted at least 25 calendar days before the proposed date.
- f) If the doctoral committee's proposal is to award the doctoral degree diploma and the title of “Doctor”, it shall be forwarded, together with the doctoral file, to the CNATDCU for the issuance of a favourable opinion (an assent) regarding the compliance with the administrative procedure carried out at the IOSUD-UB level and compliance with the minimum criteria for awarding the doctoral degree and title of “Doctor”. Within 30 calendar days from the receiving the assent of CNATCU, issues the Decision to award the Doctoral Degree, subsequently drafting and issuing the Doctoral Diploma, which is signed by the Rector.

Throughout the doctoral studies (including periods of interruption and/or extension) for all administrative activities, the doctoral student is highly advised to maintain constant contact with the doctoral school secretariat, and in special/specific situations, they shall contact the Doctorate, Habilitation and Integrity Service at birou@doctorat.unibuc.ro and/or the Director of CSUD at director@csud.unibuc.ro.