

**KLAIPĖDA UNIVERSITY  
REGULATION FOR THE DOCTORAL DEGREE IN  
ECOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE**

**I. GENERAL PROVISIONS**

1. The Regulation for the Doctoral Degree at Klaipėda University (hereinafter – the Regulation) has been prepared in accordance with the Provisions for the Scientific Doctoral Degree, approved by the Order No. V-739 of the Minister of Science and Education of the Republic of Lithuania on 18 May 2020 (Amendment of the Order on 23 December 2022. No V-2003), and the Statute of Klaipėda University. This Regulation establishes the procedure of the doctoral studies, preparation of the dissertation, defence and the award of the doctoral degree at Klaipėda University (hereinafter - the University).

2. The purpose of scientific doctoral studies is to train scientists, who are able to conduct independent scientific research, experimental development works, and solve scientific issues. Scientific doctoral studies must ensure the person, who has completed the programme and was awarded with the degree, a sufficient competence in the following: latest knowledge in research work, scientific areas and their interaction; special skills and methods for solving problems in scientific research and other areas, as well as developing one's knowledge and professional practice; the ability to work independently and use the scientific and professional knowledge for developing new processes and using them in further studies or other activities.

3. This regulation establishes the procedure of the admission to doctoral studies, advising doctoral students, creating and approval of the plan for the doctoral dissertation, the assessment of the knowledge, abilities and skills of the doctoral student, the implementation of the scientific research of the doctoral student, preparation of the dissertation, examination, defence and issue of the diploma of the doctoral degree, certification of the doctoral student and postponement of the deadlines, examination of an application to defend a doctoral dissertation, submitted by an external student, examination of appeals and complaints, funding of the doctoral studies and document keeping, approval and implementation of the resolutions, issued by the committee of the doctoral studies, also the functions and procedures of advisors of the doctoral students and persons, divisions and special structures, participating in the process of the doctoral studies.

4. The list of the members of the doctoral committee in Ecology and Environmental Science (hereinafter – the Committee) is publicly available on the website of the institution. The Committee must consist of at least 9 high-level scientists (running their office on the basis of a tender and working at the institution to the extent, which is equivalent to at least half of full-time working hours for the last three years). At least half of the members of the Committee and its chairman must comply with the requirements, applicable to a chief researcher, while the rest of the Committee members must comply with the requirements, applicable to a senior researcher, as established in the applicable Description of the Minimum Qualification Requirements for Scientific Researchers at State Science and Education Institutions, approved by the Research Council of Lithuania. A researcher cannot belong to more than two Committees. At least two thirds of the persons that belong to the doctoral Committee must work in the field of Ecology and Environmental Sciences. The chairman of the Committee is elected by secret voting at a Committee meeting for a period of 5 years and can run this office not longer than two consecutive terms. The Institution shall review and update the composition of the Doctoral Committee at least every 5 years, in accordance with the Doctoral Quality Assurance Procedures approved by the Committee. The composition of the Committee and changes in the regulation must be coordinated with the Research Council of Lithuania.

5. A degree of a doctor in science is awarded to a person, who has successfully completed full time (length – up to 4 years) or continuous (length – up to 6 years) doctoral studies and

defended a doctoral dissertation, or to a person, who has defended a doctoral dissertation as an external student.

6. A doctoral student is a student and researcher of the third cycle (postgraduate) studies.

7. A joint doctoral programme may be carried out in several scientific fields in which the institution has obtained doctoral rights. Joint doctorates may involve interdisciplinary research and the preparation of doctoral theses at the intersection of several scientific fields. Publications produced by a doctoral candidate during the organisation of a doctoral research fellowship shall be subject to the requirements of the doctoral regulations of the doctoral fellowship in the field of research, which sets higher requirements for the publication of the doctoral candidate's research results.

## **II. ORGANISING DOCTORAL STUDIES**

7. The doctoral studies at the university are controlled by the Rector.

8. The process of the doctoral studies is organised by the Office of Science and Innovations – a division of Klaipėda University administration (hereinafter – the Office of Science), subject to the Vice-rector for Research and Innovation – in accordance with the Law on Science and Research of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania, provisions for scientific doctoral studies, the Statute of Klaipėda University and the Regulation herein.

9. Scientific doctoral committee is a group of high-level scientists, coordinating the process of scientific doctoral studies. The activities of the committee is based on the principles of collegial discussion, impartiality, transparency, tolerance, legality, also personal responsibility of the members of the committee for their activity. Its major functions are as follows;

9.1. To establish the conditions and procedure of the tender for the admissions to the doctoral studies;

9.2. To implement the selection/tender for the dissertation topics and advisors of the doctoral students;

9.3. To implement admissions to the doctoral studies;

9.4. To approve the study programme of the scientific doctoral studies;

9.5. To discuss and submit candidates for doctoral students' scientific advisors and consultants for approval, to approve the distribution of doctoral students to various scientific departments and discuss applications regarding their change; to act as an intermediary in appointing consultants, discuss applications regarding the change of the scientific advisor or consultant;

9.6. To approve the individual study plans and scientific research plans, examination plans and examination commissions for the students, admitted to doctoral studies;

9.7. To provide conclusions regarding the announcement of the doctoral studies, scientific research and its results, the plans of the preparation of the scientific doctoral dissertation and their implementation, the postponement of the terms of the doctoral dissertation plan;

9.8. To discuss the dissertation submitted and to make decision regarding its submission for public defence;

9.9. To submit the list of the doctoral dissertation Defence Board for the approval of the Rector;

9.10. To ensure the quality of the dissertations to be defended.

10. The scientific advisor of a doctoral student (hereinafter – the Advisor) is an active scientist, conducting scientific research in the field of the doctoral studies and complies with at least the minimum requirements, applicable to the position of a senior scientific researcher. One advisor can work with no more than 5 doctoral students at once:

10.1. Compiling an individual plan for doctoral studies and scientific research with the doctoral student and submitting it for the approval of the Committee;

10.2. Providing the doctoral student with scientific and methodological assistance;

10.3. Assisting the doctoral student in solving organisational issues regarding the studies and dissertation preparation;

10.4. Coordinating applications of the doctoral students for part time study abroad programmes at foreign universities, scientific centres, seminars, conferences, internships, academic leave, etc.;

10.5. Taking responsibility for the preparation of a quality doctoral dissertation together with the doctoral student;

10.6. Submitting suggestions to the Committee regarding the appointment of a scientific consultant for the doctoral student;

10.7. For each certification of the doctoral student, submitting an opinion on the results of the doctoral students' studies and scientific research, expediency to continue the doctoral studies, completeness of the doctoral dissertation, etc.

11. A doctoral student's advisor may suggest the Committee of the doctoral studies to appoint a consultant for the doctoral student. In cases, when the doctoral student's advisor is from a foreign institution, the consultant of the doctoral student is recommended to be from a Lithuanian institution. The consultant must comply with at least the minimum requirements, applicable to the position of a senior scientific researcher. A consultant of a doctoral student:

11.1. Consults the doctoral student in a certain field (branch) of scientific research;

11.2. Organises scientific research or experiments at other divisions of the university or other Lithuanian or foreign universities and (or) scientific research institutes.

12. The doctoral studies are curated by a division, which has a sufficient research infrastructure and scientific potential to ensure a high quality of the doctoral studies of the doctoral student. This division:

12.1. Coordinates the doctoral student's scientific research plan together with the Committee and creates conditions for its successful implementation;

12.2. Organises presentations of the doctoral student's dissertation/seminars at the division and monitors the course of the study process, offering recommendations for the doctoral student's certification;

12.3. Encourages the mobility of the doctoral student and assists in developing their research skills, offering methodological assistance and, if possible, including into project and scientific communication activities;

12.4. Helps the doctoral student to obtain pedagogical experience and seek for a scientific career;

12.5. Can initiate extraordinary certification of the doctoral student and explains the reasons in the statement for the Committee.

13. Doctoral students must be provided with conditions to use the scientific research equipment in laboratories and other divisions of the university in accordance with the procedure, established in the division. Doctoral students can conduct their scientific research at foreign scientific and research institutions as well.

14. Doctoral students can be employed at the university's divisions full time or part time, enabling them to take part at the process of scientific research and studies.

15. The quality of the process of the doctoral studies is ensured in accordance with the Procedure of Ensuring Quality of the Doctoral Studies as approved by the Committee. The Committee conducts an assessment of the level of the topics of the scientific dissertations, efficiency and the condition of the doctoral studies, according to indicator list, analysis of the

experience of the doctoral studies, the quality of the dissertations defended and submits generalised conclusions and recommendations on ways to improve the quality of the doctoral studies to the MRI Council every 3 years. The Council shall review and renew the composition of the Committee at least every 5 years and/or assess the adequacy of the renewal during the evaluation period.

16. Members of doctoral committees, supervisors of doctoral students, members of the defence council and advisors must be of good repute as defined in the Law on Higher Education and Research.

### **III. ADMISSIONS TO THE DOCTORAL STUDIES**

17. Admissions to the doctoral studies take place as an open tender. The tender is announced by the Rector by the suggestion of the Committee.

18. The Committee approves the list of dissertation topics and admission rules before the announcement of the tender. The list of the dissertation topics is compiled from topics, suggested by advisors of the potential doctoral students, that comply with the criteria of high scientific level and international relevance, when the research infrastructure and the competence of the doctoral student's advisor are sufficient.

19. The dissertation topics and advisors of the doctoral students are selected on a basis of a tender. The tender is public. The potential dissertation advisor, compliant to the requirements, listed in clause 10, must submit a standard form dissertation topic description in English and Lithuanian languages. The form must contain a dissertation topic title, a short introduction of the topic, the progress already made and the necessary infrastructure and requirements for the future doctoral student, and the potential dissertation advisor (consultants). The assessment if the topics submitted are clear and comply with the doctoral study programme and the topics of the research, conducted at the division, relevance to stakeholders is done by the Committee. Each member of the Committee submits their assessment and comments. The adjusted dissertation topics, submitted for the second stage of the tender are discussed at a Committee meeting and approved by the majority of the votes.

20. The conditions and procedure of admissions for doctoral studies are approved by the order of the Rector, which, together with the list of the dissertation topics, approved by the Committee, is published on the website of the University at least 2 months before the date of the admissions for the doctoral studies tender.

21. The tender for the admissions to the Doctoral studies is open for persons with a qualifying master's degree or an equivalent university education. Applicants must submit the following documents:

- 21.1. An application for the Rector (indicating the form and funding of the studies);
- 21.2. A copy of the qualifying master's degree or an equivalent university education diploma;
- 21.3. Curriculum vitae;
- 21.4. Recommendations from two researchers;
- 21.5. The list of one's scientific works and publications, conference presentations, works, awarded at scientific competitions;
- 21.6. A scientific project for the doctoral studies on the topic chosen;
- 21.7. A copy of a passport or an identity card;
- 21.8. Persons, who have obtained a qualifying master's degree or an equivalent university education diploma abroad must also submit a letter from the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education, Klaipėda University or other Lithuanian institutions of higher education on the acknowledgement of the qualification of the university education, acquired abroad.

21.9. Other documents, indicated in the announcement of admissions for doctoral studies.

22. All dates, related to admissions for doctoral studies, are indicated in the description of the admission conditions and procedure.

23. The tender of the admissions for doctoral studies takes place in September-October. The admissions tender is organised by the Office of Science and implemented by the Committee.

24. The student selection criteria (scientific project, interview, etc. indicated in the admissions rules) are evaluated in points. The interview must be attended by all applicants. Applicants, located abroad, may participate at the interview remotely. Following the admissions criteria, listed in the description of the admissions conditions and procedure, the Committee must make a list of the candidates, which is documented and submitted to the Office of Science.

25. A candidate, who has submitted an application to participate at the admissions tender for the doctoral studies and has not been accepted, can submit a motivated appeal to the Committee in three days since the publication of the protocol of the Committee. Should the Committee decide not to satisfy the appeal, the candidate may submit an appeal to the Rector in three days.

26. Should there be any vacancies after the initial admissions tender, the Committee may adopt a decision regarding the expediency of a second admissions tender. The second admissions tender takes place in accordance with the same procedure.

27. Candidates, whose studies are not funded by the state, may choose paid doctoral studies for a fee, established by the University.

28. Candidates for doctoral studies are admitted by the order of the Rector, issued on the basis of the Committee meeting protocol.

29. Admitted doctoral students sign study agreements. The length of full-time doctoral studies is up to 4 years, continuous studies – up to 6 years.

30. Foreigners, admitted for doctoral studies, must obtain a Lithuanian residence permit in accordance with the procedure, established by the law.

#### **IV. THE COURSE OF DOCTORAL STUDIES**

31. In 15 days since the day of admissions for the doctoral studies, the Committee must submit the list of the doctoral students' scientific advisors and the division, curating the doctoral studies. The Committee transfers the written agreements of the Advisor, lists of their major scientific publications and other scientific activity, and agreements of the divisions to accept a doctoral student to the Office of Science together with the suggested Advisors and divisions. In case of a need, by the suggestion of the Advisor, the Committee may appoint a consultant for the doctoral student. Such an appointment is approved by the order of the Rector. Should it become necessary to change the Advisor or consultant, this change must be conducted and established in the same procedure as the appointment of the Advisor or consultant.

32. A doctoral student has a right to submit a motivated request to the Committee, asking to change the Advisor and/or consultant. The change of the Advisor is possible only for an important reason. The request may be submitted in at least one year until the completion of the doctoral studies. The request of the doctoral student must be discussed and the decision must be made in two months.

33. Should the doctoral students' request regarding the change of the Advisor be satisfied, the Committee, considering the topic of the doctoral student's dissertation, suggests potential candidates that comply with the qualification and competence requirements, applicable to an advisor, to become the advisor of the doctoral student. Should the Committee refuse to satisfy the doctoral student's request, the position remains with the same Advisor.

34. The doctoral student together with their Advisor must prepare the individual research plan for the next four years in one month since the beginning of the doctoral studies. The plan must be coordinated at the division, curating the doctoral studies and approved at the Committee meeting.

35. The doctoral research plan consists of the following: research goal and tasks, scientific literature analysis, scientific research methods, analysis of the data obtained, their introduction at scientific conferences, stages and terms of scientific publications and the dissertation. It is recommended to include a 3-month traineeship at another institution in the PhD plan.

36. The doctoral student's research plan indicates the subjects studied and their volume in credits. The total volume of the doctoral studies must be at least 30 credits. Credits are obtained by taking at least 3 study subjects (modules). Examinations must be passed during the first year of the doctoral studies.

37. The doctoral study programme consists of study modules, approved by the Committee. The module of the Scientific Research Methodology is mandatory to all doctoral students of that scientific field and includes not only the doctoral dissertation topic, but also the development of general skills (i.e. preparation of project applications, issues of ethics, procedures, copyrights, etc., that are equivalent to at least 5 credits). The doctoral student must also attend at least one module on data mathematical/statistical analysis. Other subjects must be selected upon coordinating with the advisor. The doctoral student must pass the selected courses on accordance with the procedure, established in the modules or study the independently, consulted by consultants of the said subject. Each course is completed by passing an examination.

38. The doctoral student must take the examinations, established in the plan, with the participation of the commission, appointed by the Committee. The commission must contain a chairman and two members. All three members must have scientific degrees. A Commission may include lecturers, consulting on the chosen subject, members of the Committee, also other scientists – active experts in the said field of subject (also from other scientific and academic institutions), also the Advisor and the Consulting. If the examination is failed, the doctoral student may retake it one more time, but not earlier than after two months. Upon failing the examination for the second time, the doctoral student is subject to an extraordinary certification.

39. The examinations passed are recorded in an examination protocol, signed by all examiners. The examination protocols are submitted to the Office of Science.

40. By the request of the doctoral student, the examinations, passed on subjects, previously studied during doctoral programmes, also for subjects, studied during specialised international and national courses for doctoral students may be credited as well. They are credited by the decision of the Committee, when the doctoral student submits protocols or other documents to prove that the examination has been passed. All of these documents must be submitted to the Office of Science.

41. If the doctoral student agrees, they may take part at pedagogical practice. The pedagogical practice must be implemented in accordance with the procedure, established at the institution upon coordinating the length and type of this practice with the advisor of the doctoral student and the committee of the doctoral studies.

42. The doctoral student is encouraged to conduct scientific research at other institutions in Lithuania or abroad. The recommended length of the internship is three months. This period is included into the total length of the doctoral studies and the student receives full scholarship. These trips take place by the order of the Rector upon submitting an application, coordinated with the advisor of the doctoral student and the chairman of the Committee. The costs of the trip may be funded by projects or programmes, administered by the Research Council of Lithuania, also funds, allocated for doctoral studies, inviting institutions or other sources.

43. Upon signing an additional agreement, persons, studying at foreign scientific institutions, conducting doctoral studies in the same or similar scientific field, may defend their dissertation and acquire a double scientific doctoral degree

44. The Committee implements doctoral student certification in October-November every year. Doctoral students report on the progress of their studies and the implementation of their scientific research plan. By the request of the Committee, the Advisor of the doctoral student must submit the assessment of the student's activity in writing. Certification documents must be submitted to the Office of Science. The Committee may suggest postponing the certification for a period that is not longer than 3 months until the shortcomings of the implementation of the plan are eliminated. In these cases, the Committee may make a decision and provide the Rector with a suggestion to suspend the payment of the scholarship for a period of 3 months.

45. The Committee must conduct an interim assessment of the student's knowledge, abilities and skills, as well as the implementation of the research plan, every year in May. This assessment includes providing the student with recommendations, problem-solving and, in case it is necessary, making changes in the research plan. If the doctoral student is evidently failing to implement the requirements of the study or scientific research plan, the student may be subject to an extraordinary certification by the suggestion of the advisor of the doctoral student, or the Committee. An uncertified doctoral student is dismissed from the doctoral studies by the order of the Rector.

46. The examination or other terms, indicated in the individual programme of the doctoral student may be postponed due to important reasons (illness, scientific internship abroad, etc.). These issues are to be settled at a Committee meeting. The meeting protocol is submitted to the Office of Science.

47. A doctoral student may go on an academic leave due to important reasons (childbirth, child care leave, illness, etc.) upon providing the Office of Science with relevant documents. Based on these documents, by the order of the Rector, the doctoral student may go on an academic leave. The scholarship is not paid during the academic leave.

48. Failure to commence the studies without a reasonable explanation, or failure to submit the study or scientific research plan in accordance with the established procedure or after the academic leave, scientific internship, illness, etc. in 15 calendar days without a reasonable explanation, results in the doctoral student being dismissed from the doctoral studies.

49. All persons, participating in the process of the doctoral studies, follow the standards of academic ethics and procedures, established in the code of academic ethics of Klaipėda University. For preventive purposes, a newly-admitted doctoral student must be introduced to the issues of the principles of academic fairness, ethics, procedures and copyrights during the studies of the mandatory module of Scientific Research Methodology. The consulting of the doctoral student on the issues of academic ethics is conducted by an appointed member of the Committee of Academic Ethics.

50. A reasonable suggestion of the doctoral student, their advisor, head of the division, also the Committee regarding a violation of academic ethics is examined by the Committee of Academic Ethics in accordance with the established procedure. The Committee of Ethics submits its conclusions and recommendations regarding sanctions to the Rector.

51. A doctoral student may be dismissed from the doctoral studies on the grounds of behaviour that does not comply with the ethical standards of the academic community by the order of the Rector.

## **V. DEFENCE OF THE DOCTORAL DISSERTATION**

52. Doctoral dissertation must be defended during the period allocated for the doctoral studies. Should the doctoral student submit his dissertation before the end of the doctoral studies, but be unable to defend it on time, the doctoral dissertation may be defended in a standard procedure 12 months after the end of the doctoral studies. In other case, the dissertation is to be defended as an external student in accordance with the requirements of the section VI of this Regulation. A dissertation, defended on time, is a dissertation, defended no later than in one year since the end of the doctoral studies.

53. A doctoral student may submit their dissertation for defence upon:

53.1. Passing all examinations, established in the doctoral research plan;

53.2. Publish the main results of his/her research in at least two published (or accepted for publication) articles (of which he/she is the sole author or main co-author), published, or with a DOI or other justification for acceptance, in peer-reviewed scientific journals with a citation index in the Clarivate Analytics Web of Science (CA WoS), or in a scholarly monograph;

53.3. Introducing research results at at least two international scientific events;

53.4. Having completed an at least three-month internship at foreign scientific and academic institutions (Recommended total duration of internships 3 months);

53.5 Complying with other requirements, established in the Regulation herein.

54. A scientific doctoral dissertation consists of the text, summary (0.5-1 quire) and the list of scientific publications on the dissertation topic, published by the person, submitting the dissertation for defence. The dissertation is written in English language, or, upon the approval of the Committee, in another language and feature no grammar, vocabulary or style mistakes.

55. A dissertation, based on a collection of scientific articles may be submitted to be defended as a doctoral dissertation as well. In this case, the dissertation must consist of at least 1 quire overview in English language, a summary in Lithuanian language (up to 20 thousand characters) and copies of the scientific publications on the topic of the dissertation of the person, submitting the dissertation for defence. The major research results must be included in at least four articles (two of which must feature the person, submitting the dissertation for defence, as the first author or main co-author), published or accepted for publishing (with a digital object identifier (DOI) or other justification for acceptance for publication) at international scientific publications with Clarivate Analytics Web of Science (CA WoS) citation index. Manuscripts of high quality to be published may be included in the collection of articles, indicating the date of submission to the journal. This type of additional manuscripts can only be included when the collection contains 4 printed/accepted articles. The dissertation introduction identifies the author's contribution according to the following criteria: a) research idea or design; b) data collection and processing; c) data analysis and interpretation; d) writing of individual parts/chapters of the dissertation, or critical rewriting/improvement of individual parts/chapters of the dissertation (syntheses of the literature review, or part of the results). The manuscript of the dissertation must also include written permissions of the co-authors and publishers of the articles, whom the material copyrights of the articles have been transferred to, to include copies of the articles into the dissertation, as confirmed in the Co-authorship Declaration.

56. The dissertation must have a defined purpose, formulated tasks, the scientific novelty of the work, an overview of the research done on the topic of the dissertation abroad, an introduction of the dissertation methods, a discussion of the research results, proof of their reliability and relation with the data, obtained by other researchers, conclusions and other aspects that the doctoral student deems to be important. Together with the doctoral dissertation, the student must also submit a list of scientific conferences, where the research results were introduced, a dissertant's CV and description of scientific activities.

57. A scientific monograph, written by the doctoral student without co-authors, may be submitted for defence as a doctoral dissertation as well. The monograph must be written in English language, or, upon the approval of the Committee, in another language. The monograph must include a summary (0.5-1 quire) in Lithuanian language. In this case, other scientific publications should be submitted only if they are required to reveal the dissertation topic.

58. Upon submitting the dissertation for examination, the doctoral student must sign a standard Declaration of Academic Integrity to confirm the authenticity of their work and the Declaration of Co-authorship to confirm their own and their co-authors' contribution in preparing the publications. The content of the dissertation can be checked with a text-similarity tool.



59. Upon submitting the dissertation, the Committee appoints two reviewers (one external reviewer recommended), who get thoroughly acquainted with the research and submit their evaluations to the Committee no later than in one month. The doctoral student presents the dissertation at a joint meeting of the Committee and the division, curating the doctoral studies, attended by the Advisor and consultants. Following the reviewer evaluations and discussions, the meeting evaluates the dissertation, scientific articles, examinations passed and participation at scientific conferences, and decides if the dissertation complies with applicable requirements and can be defended publicly.

60. If the dissertation complies with all requirements, the Committee:

60.1. establishes a Defence Board, consisting of five scientists, appointing one of them as the chairman. Defence Board – a group of scientists, which, upon examining the dissertation, submitted for defence, and evaluating its quality, compliance with dissertation requirements and scientific competence of the doctoral student, decides if the doctoral student is to be awarded with the degree of a doctor in science. There cannot be any conflicts of interest between the members of the Defence Board, the doctoral student or their Advisor and Consultant (if the dissertation is defended by an external student – the consultant). The members of the Defence Board cannot have any joint publications with the doctoral student. More than half of the Defence Board members cannot have any joint publications with the Advisor of the doctoral student (if the dissertation is defended by an external student – the consultant) in the recent five years. At least one of the member of the Defence Board should be from a foreign institution of science and education;

60.2. Establishes the date and time for the dissertation defence;

61. Office of Science:

61.1. Organises the publication of the dissertation and its summary;

61.2. Prepares the order of the Rector to approve the Defence Board, and the date and place of the dissertation defence.

61.3. At least one month before the dissertation defence, submits the dissertation to the Defence Board members and publishes information about the defence on the website of the University;

61.4. No later than one month before the defence of the dissertation, submit the data to the dissertation database administered by the Research Council of Lithuania in accordance with the procedure laid down by the Council, publish a link to the website on which the dissertation is published (except for dissertations to be defended in a closed session), and submit the dissertation to the members of the Defence Board and the libraries of the institutions that are entitled to hold the doctoral degree).

62. Members of the Defence Board must submit their opinions on the dissertation in writing to the Office of Science at least 5 business days until the dissertation defence. The person, defending their dissertation, has a right to get acquainted with the opinions submitted.

63. The dissertation is defended in a public meeting of the Defence Board. The defence of the dissertation may take place both in Lithuanian and other languages. In cases, when the meeting uses a language other than Lithuanian, the need for a translation into Lithuanian language is established by the Committee. The meeting is led by the chairman of the Defence Board. The meeting is deemed to be valid if it is attended by more than a half of the Defence Board members, including teleconference participants. The chairman of the Defence Board cannot take part as a teleconference participant. The meeting reads the opinions on the dissertation, submitted by Defence Board members, who could not take part at the meeting. The meeting is based on the principles of impartiality, transparency, tolerance, correctness and legality, also personal responsibility of the Board members for their actions and decisions.

64. If the dissertation contains information, regarded a commercial secret, the Committee decides who, besides the dissertation defendant, their scientific advisor, consultant, chairman of

the Defence Board and members can participate at the defence, also establishes the term for the postponement of the publication of the dissertation.

65. The dissertation defendant introduces the major results and conclusions of their research, indicating their contribution to the publications, provided in the dissertation. Members of the Defence Board provide a reasonable assessment of the scientific level of the dissertation, the novelty and relevance of the results, reliability and validity of the conclusions, indicating shortcomings and inaccuracies of the research, and, during the defence, the scientific competence of the student defending the dissertation. The student defending the dissertation answers all questions and reflects on the comments made.

66. After the discussions with the student, members of the Defence Board vote to decide if the dissertation student should be granted the degree of a doctor in science. Defence Board members, taking part as teleconference participants also vote, communicating their decision using electronic means of communication to the chairman of the Defence Board. A decision is made upon receiving more than half votes from all of the Defence Board members. Should a decision be made not to award the scientific degree, the voting protocol must contain explanations for such a decision. The voting protocol must be signed by all members of the Defence Board, who have directly participated at the meeting. The procedure of the Defence Board is provided in Appendix No. 1.

67. The documents of the Defence Board are processed by the Office of Science. Following the dissertation defence, all defence documents (protocol and decision of the meeting, sound record of the meeting, etc.) are transferred to the Office of Science as well. They are the basis for the Office of Science to issue a doctoral diploma.

68. In 2 weeks, in accordance with the procedure, established in the regulation of the doctoral studies, one copy of the defended dissertation (except for dissertations, defended in closed meetings) must be submitted to Martynas Mažvydas National Library of Lithuania and the dissertation must be published on the Lithuanian Academic Electronic Library (eLABa).

69. No later than in 20 business days following the dissertation defence meeting, the Office of Science must report the results to the Research Council of Lithuania.

70. Should the Defence Board decide that the scientific degree should not be awarded, the amended and (or) supplemented dissertation may be submitted for defence not earlier than in one year. In this case the doctoral degree would be acquired in accordance with the procedure, applicable to external students. The dissertation cannot be defended in case of establishing the fact of scientific dishonesty (plagiarism, etc.).

71. Should, at the end of the doctoral studies, the dissertation substantially lack compliance with the requirements, or if the doctoral student has failed to complete the requirements, listed in the clause 53, and cannot submit and defend their dissertation in 12 months, the doctoral student will be dismissed from the doctoral studies.

## **VI. ACQUISITION OF THE DOCTORAL DEGREE FOR EXTERNAL STUDENTS**

72. A person, who has a qualifying master's degree or equivalent higher education can seek to acquire a scientific doctorate as an external student (hereinafter – external student). An external student must have published a scientific monograph or published the major results of the dissertation in at least two articles (and is the sole author or main co-author of at least one of them), printed in reviewed scientific publications with Clarivate Analytics Web of Science (CA WoS) citation index, and written a dissertation. A dissertation, based on a collection of scientific articles may be submitted to be defended as a doctoral dissertation as well (see clause 55).

73. An external student must submit an application for a doctoral dissertation defence to the Rector and provide the Office of Science with the following documents:

73.1. A manuscript of the dissertation or a published monograph and their electronic copies;

73.2. A list of scientific publications and their electronic copies;

73.3. A copy of the qualifying master's degree (or an equivalent university education diploma) and their supplements;

73.4. Copies of the protocols of the approved doctoral examinations (if any) or their transcripts; 73.5. Curriculum vitae, featuring life, scientific and creative work details.

73.6. Citizens, who have acquired a qualifying master's degree or an equivalent higher education diploma abroad, must also submit a letter on the acknowledgement of higher education qualification, acquired abroad, as established in clause 21.8.

74. The Office of Science registers the application of the external student and transfers it to the Committee, which must examine the material submitted and decide, if the dissertation manuscript or published scientific monograph complies with the requirements for a doctoral dissertation, in not more than 3 months since the application was received.

75. In case of a positive decision, the Committee:

75.1. Appoints a scientific consultant and a curating division;

75.2. Determines doctoral subjects to be studied and their examination terms;

75.3. If the examination has already been passed, makes the decision regarding their crediting; 75.4. Establishes the final term for dissertation defence and preparation of the summary, which cannot take longer than one year since the day of adopting the decision.

76. The external student takes examination in accordance with the procedure, established in clauses 38, 39, 40 of this regulation.

77. The final discussion of the dissertation, summary and publications, as well as the defence of the dissertation, take place in accordance with the procedure, established in clauses 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66 of this regulation.

78. Upon the Committee's permission to defend the dissertation, the external student defends the dissertation in accordance with the requirements, established in the section V of the regulations herein no later than in one year since the day of adopting the decision, indicated in this clause. Should the Committee decide to reject the application for dissertation defence of the external student, the external student may re-apply for dissertation defence not earlier than in one year since the day the Committee adopted the decision.

79. The external student must cover only the costs, incurred by Klaipėda University, directly related with the acquisition of the doctoral degree.

## **VII. AWARD AND REVOCATION OF THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR IN SCIENCE**

80. A person, who has defended their dissertation, is awarded with the doctoral degree and issued a diploma by Klaipėda University.

81. The Rector signs the diploma upon receiving the decision of the Defence Board to award the doctoral degree.

82. A registered diploma of a scientific doctoral degree is awarded to the scientist after the dissertation is published on the Lithuanian Academic Electronic Library (eLABa).

83. A motivated appeal or complaint regarding a rejected application for dissertation defence or other issues, related to the implementation of the doctoral studies, must be addressed to the Rector and submitted to the University Administration. The Rector transfers the appeal or complaint to be examined by the Committee. The appeal or complaint must be examined and the decision must be made in two months since the day of receipt. The Office of Science issues an answer regarding the decision made in the name of the Rector and sends it to the applicant in ten business days since the adoption of the decision.

84. The Senate can revoke the decision regarding the award of the scientific degree in the following cases:

84.1. Establishment of the fact of a violation of academic integrity;

84.2. The degree of a doctor in science was awarded in violation of the Regulation or other legislation, applicable to the awarding of the degree;

84.3. The Ombudsperson for Academic Ethics and Procedures issues a binding decision upon making an assessment of the facts presented. The Ombudsperson for Academic Ethics and Procedures can order the university to revoke a decision to award a scientific degree that was previously adopted as well.

85. The form of the scientific doctoral diploma and the procedure of its production, accounting and registration, are determined by the Government of the Republic of Lithuania.

86. Should a doctoral diploma be lost, Klaipėda University will issue a duplicate of the doctoral diploma in accordance with the established procedure.

### **VIII. FUNDING OF DOCTORAL STUDIES**

87. Doctoral studies are funded from the subsidies, allocated from the state budget, state investment programs and funds obtained from state investment projects as payment for the studies, also revenue from economic, scientific activity and services, grants for scientific research project competitions, funds, allocated from state, international and foreign funds and organisations, and other legal funds.

88. Funds for the scholarships of doctoral students (except for external students), Board members, advisors and consultants of doctoral students, social insurance, scientific research, conducted by doctoral students, publishing, also other costs, related to the award of the doctoral degree, are planned in the estimates of the University budget programs.

89. The individual costs estimate of the doctoral student and its changes must be coordinated with the Advisor and the Committee.

90. The use of the funds, allocated to doctoral students, is administered by the Office of Science in accordance with the procedure of the use of Klaipėda University funds, allocated to doctoral research.

91. Doctorate students from other institutions of science and education, intending to take doctoral examinations at Klaipėda University or defend their doctoral dissertations, must pay an established fee.

92. The payment, social insurance and other costs, incurred by Consultants, chairmen and members of examination commissions of the external students in relation with the acquisition of a doctoral degree, are covered in accordance with the procedure, established at the University.

### **IX. PROCEDURE OF THE DOCTORAL COMMITTEE**

93. The meetings of the Committee will be regarded as valid, if attended by 3/5 of the Committee members, including the chairman and those, who take part as teleconference participants. The chairman of the Committee may initiate voting on individual issues by e-mail, unless objected by at least one member of the committee.

94. Decisions, adopted by the Committee are deemed legal, if the meetings were attended by 3/5 of its members, including the chairman. A decision of the doctoral Committee is deemed as adopted, if it receives at least 2/3 of the doctoral Committee member attending the meeting votes. Committee members that are unable to take part at the meeting, may express their will on the issues discussed by submitting their opinion in writing or e-mail in advance, but can not vote. These letters are read during the meeting. Committee meeting protocols are to be stored at the university's Office of Science for 6 years.

95. Chairman and secretary of the Committee administer the documents of the meeting and sign meeting protocols.

96. Committee meetings and their work are organised by the chairman of the Committee and, in their absence, a Committee member, appointed as acting chairman of the Committee. The Chairman:

96.1. Examines documents received in advance;

96.2. Examines recommendations, which must be submitted during the Committee meeting or appoints a Committee member to do that;

96.3. Chairs the Committee meeting;

96.4. Signs the Committee documents.

97. Committee member:

97.1. Becomes acquainted with the documents received in advance;

97.2. Expresses their personal opinion on issues discussed during the meeting;

97.3. Implements other tasks, appointed by the chairman of the Committee.

## **X. THE PROCEDURE OF STORING DOCUMENTS OF THE DOCTORAL STUDIES**

98. The University stores files on the doctoral students and dissertation defence. They contain the following:

98.1. Admissions documents;

98.2. Documents regarding the appointment of the Advisor and consultants;

98.3. Study and research plan of the doctoral student, the plan for the publishing of their results and writing of the doctoral dissertation;

98.4. Certification documents;

98.5. Documents on the postponement of the program terms for the doctoral student;

98.6. Protocols of the examination of the doctoral studies;

98.7. Application for a permission to defend the dissertation and related documents (dissertation discussion protocols, other documents of the Committee);

98.8. Rector's order regarding the approval of the Defence Board and the appointment of the defence date;

98.9. Document to confirm that the dissertation was transferred to Klaipėda University library if the dissertation does not contain a commercial secret;

98.10. A copy of the announcement of the public dissertation defence;

98.11. The audio record of the Board meeting, where the dissertation was defended, also copies of all documents, related to the examination of the dissertation at the said Board;

98.12. A copy of the dissertation;

98.13. A resolution of the Board, where the doctoral dissertation was defended, regarding the award of the degree of a doctor of science;

98.14. A copy of the doctoral diploma;

98.15. Copies and list of scientific articles by the doctoral student published or accepted for publishing;

98.16. Other documents, related to the studies, scientific research and dissertation defence of the doctoral student.

## **Appendix 1 Procedure of the Defence Board.**

1. The dissertation is defended in a public meeting of the Defence Board. The defence of the dissertation may take place both in Lithuanian and other languages. In cases, when the meeting uses a language other than Lithuanian, the need for a translation into Lithuanian language is established by the Defence Board.
2. The meeting is led by the chairman of the Defence Board. The meeting is deemed to be legitimate if attended by more than half of the members of the Defence Board (including those participating by teleconference). The meeting reads the opinions on the dissertation, submitted by Defence Board members, who could not take part at the meeting.
3. The meeting is based on the principles of impartiality, transparency, tolerance, correctness and legality, also personal responsibility of the board members for their actions and decisions.
4. Beginning of the Board meeting. Upon establishing that the meeting is attended by more than half of the members of the Defence Board (including those participating by teleconference), all opinions on the dissertation of the Board members were submitted in writing (also including those of the participants that are not attending the meeting), the Board chairman introduces the participants of the meeting and informs of the presence of the quorum.
5. Board chairman introduces the file of the doctoral student, indicating the following: the year of admissions, examinations passed, participation at scientific projects and conferences in Lithuania and abroad, scientific publications and other important information.
6. Introduction of the dissertation. The doctoral student introduces the thesis, goals and tasks of the dissertation, research data obtained, one's contribution to the publications, provided in the dissertation, and conclusions (length of the presentation – approximately 20 min.). The doctoral student answers the questions of the participants of the meeting.
7. The Board chairman announces the beginning of the scientific discussion. The discussion begins with the Defence Board members. They must provide a reasoned assessment of the scientific level of the dissertation and the validity of the conclusions, compliance of the dissertation, its summary and the publications of the student to the requirements, applicable to the Doctoral studies. Board members can ask the doctoral student questions. The doctoral student answers the comments and questions.
8. The podium is given to the doctoral student's academic Advisor and consultants.
9. The podium is given to attending guests.
10. The doctoral student can ask to make a comment after each of the speakers.
11. The Chairman reads the comments on the dissertation or, upon the Board members' approval, provides a general summary of the comments and conclusions, while the dissertation defendant can reflect on the comments made.
12. The scientific discussion is concluded by the dissertation defendant.
13. The Board votes on the awarding of the doctoral degree to the dissertation defendant.
14. The voting is secret and takes place in a separate room. The Board chairman hands out the ballot papers to the members directly participating at the meeting. After the voting of the members, directly participating at the meeting, the teleconference participants inform the Board chairman of their decision using electronic means of communication.
15. A decision shall be adopted if more than half of the members of the Defence Board vote in favour. Unless 3 members are present. In the latter case, the decision shall be adopted if all three members vote in favour. In the case of a decision not to award a doctorate, the reasons for the decision shall be stated in the minutes of the voting protocol. The voting record shall be signed by all members of the defence council who were present at the meeting.
15. The Board chairman reads the decision of the Board to the participants of the meeting and announces the end of the meeting.

KLAIPĒDA UNIVERSITY

Name SURNAME

**DISSERTATION TITLE DISSERTATION TITLE  
DISSERTATION TITLE**

DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

NATURAL SCIENCES,  
ECOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES (N 012)

Klaipėda, 20XX



Doctoral dissertation was prepared in the period 20XX–20XX at Klaipėda University, based on the conferment a doctorate right which was granted for Klaipėda University by the order of the Minister of Education and Science (Republic of Lithuania) No. X-XXX, signed on d. m., 20XX.

**Academic advisor**

prof. dr. Xxxxx XXXXXX (Klaipėda University, Natural Sciences, Ecology and Environmental – N 012)

The doctoral dissertation is defended at the Board of Klaipėda University in Ecology and Environmental Sciences:

**Chairman**

prof. dr. Yyyy YYYYYYY (Klaipėda University, Natural Sciences, Ecology and Environmental Sciences – N 012)

**Members:**

dr. Aaaaa AAAAAA (University of ZZZ, Country, Natural Sciences, Ecology and Environmental Sciences – N 012),

prof. dr. Bbbbb BBBBB (XXX University, Country, Natural Sciences, Ecology and Environmental Sciences – N 012),

dr. Ccccc CCCCC (XXX Research Centre, Natural Sciences, Ecology and Environmental Sciences – N 012),

dr. Ddddd DDDDDD (XXX University, Natural Sciences, Ecology and Environmental Sciences – N 012).

The dissertation will be defended in a public meeting of the Board in Ecology and Environmental Sciences, Klaipėda University, Marine Research Institute Conference hall at xx p.m. dd month, 20XX.

Address: Universiteto av. 17, LT-92294, Klaipėda, Lithuania.

The doctoral dissertation was sent out on dd month, 20ZZ.

The doctoral dissertation is available for review at the Library of the Klaipėda University.

KLAIPĖDOS UNIVERSITETAS

Vardas PAVARDĖ

**DISERTACIJOS PAVADINIMAS DISERTACIJOS  
PAVADINIMAS DISERTACIJOS PAVADINIMAS**

DAKTARO DISERTACIJA

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EKOLOGIJA IR APLINKOTYRA (N 012)

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Daktaro disertacija ginama Klaipėdos universiteto Ekologijos ir aplinkotyros mokslo krypties taryboje:

**Pirmininkas**

prof. dr. Yyyy YYYYYYY (Klaipėdos universitetas, gamtos mokslai, ekologija ir aplinkotyra – N 012)

**Nariai:**

dr. Aaaaa AAAAAA (XXX, Šalis, gamtos mokslai, ekologija ir aplinkotyra – N 012),

prof. dr. Bbbbb BBBBB (XXX, Šalis, gamtos mokslai, ekologija ir aplinkotyra – 03B Sciences – N 012),

dr. Ccccc CCCCC (XXX tyrimų centras, Šalis, gamtos mokslai, ekologija ir aplinkotyra – N 012),

dr. Ddddd DDDDDD (XXX universitetas, gamtos mokslai, ekologija ir aplinkotyra – N 012).

Daktaro disertacija bus ginama viešame Ekologijos ir aplinkotyros mokslo krypties tarybos posėdyje 20XX m. mėn. x d. XX val. Klaipėdos universiteto Aula Magna konferencijų salėje.

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