

## **Good Practice Guide for the Direction and Supervision of Doctoral Theses**

This document has been drawn up with the aim of briefly compiling some recommendations, key aspects, rights and duties to be taken into account during the process of supervising and supervising doctoral theses. In this sense, it is hoped that it will be a useful document for researchers and researchers in training and also for all those research staff who carry out supervisory tasks within the framework of the Research Institute (contracted by the FSJD or assigned). Always taking into account the principles of the European Charter for Researchers, its Code of Conduct, the regulations of the universities where doctoral studies are carried out and current legislation (Royal Decree 99/2011 of 28 January, which regulates official doctoral studies), as well as the IRSJD's Code of Good Scientific Practice.

The general principles governing this guide are as follows:

- The doctoral thesis is the final result of rigorous original research work in a specific area of knowledge.
- This research work must be carried out in a framework of freedom, confidence and intellectual respect.
- Those responsible for supervising doctoral theses and those supervised must be provided with a motivating and facilitating intellectual environment.
- The structure and format of the final thesis must conform to the academic criteria that apply to it and to the regulations and legislation in force in our country.

In order to achieve good results during the process of supervising and directing a doctoral thesis, the following recommendations should be borne in mind:

1. From the first moment, it is important to set down in writing expectations, objectives and goals to be achieved, so that a correct planning of all the work to be carried out can also be made, defining deadlines and the schedule of follow-up meetings to be held.
2. The person who directs the project must advise on the choice of the chosen topic, in terms of relevance and originality; provide support in the preparation of the research plan; provide recommendations on the existing literature and support in the most appropriate conceptual and methodological orientation.
3. In addition to the periodic meetings that must be held to monitor and control the work efficiently, a permanent channel of communication must be established, so that the supervisor can respond quickly to the doctoral student's questions.
4. Build an atmosphere of trust and collaboration, in which the student finds support and support when facing difficulties or conflicts caused by the research itself or by other situations, including personal ones.

5. Provide the necessary and sufficient support to the PhD student to encourage and promote their autonomy and ability to make decisions in the research process.
6. Review, comment on and evaluate the work being carried out by the student, so that a constructive dialogue is always maintained with the aim of improving their work.
7. The person responsible for supervision must have solid academic training and be up to date in the specific area of research in which he/she will provide support. In this sense, the supervisor must be familiar with the latest work, publications and research on the specific subject of the thesis.
8. The supervisor of the doctoral thesis will ensure the integrity of the research and compliance with ethical principles, training and educating the student in those principles and in those rules and regulations that are of basic application in the world of research. As well as in the contribution and intellectual property of each actor participating in the research.
9. In addition to academic and research training, students will need to carry out other types of activity to develop transversal skills that will improve their professional competences. Thus, from their institutions and guided by their supervisors, trainee researchers should participate in courses, workshops and seminars on the development of research projects, writing and academic presentations, resource management, time management, among others.
10. Thesis direction or supervision should also encourage the mobility of researchers and trainee researchers so that they can acquire new knowledge, techniques and practices in collaboration with other institutions in their environment or abroad.
11. Supervisors can promote activities that train students in intellectual study and discussion, creating discussion groups to deepen certain aspects of the subject under study, or even discussion groups with other researchers.

The rights and duties of the directors and supervisors of doctoral theses, as well as the rights and duties of students, must necessarily be considered by the universities and doctoral schools where the researchers and pre-doctoral researchers will carry out their doctoral thesis and where they will be enrolled. Our Institution welcomes pre-doctoral researchers who are supervised, in the majority of cases, by academic staff from the University of Barcelona, although they often also have the co-direction of a supervisor with a clinical profile, in order to promote the multidisciplinary and translational research profile, which is the main mission of our institution.

In any case, there are some duties and rights that doctoral candidates must be aware of and comply with, such as, for example:

- Be aware of the structure and objectives of the Doctoral Programme.
- Have the requirements for access and admission to the programme and correctly complete the enrolment process.
- Be informed about possible grants and financial aid to which they may apply.

- Be familiar with and comply with the regulations of the doctoral programme.
- Respect the functions and competences of the people who have been assigned as tutor or who have accepted to be the supervisor of their thesis.
- Be familiar with the administrative stages that must be followed for the submission and reading of the doctoral thesis.
- Maintain the agreements and commitments acquired during the process to achieve the completion of the thesis within the agreed timeframe (full or part-time doctoral degree).
- To have all the rights recognised by current legislation, the University where you have enrolled and our Institution.

The directors and supervisors must also take into account the conditions and the rights and duties established for each Doctoral Programme and in accordance with the University to which they are linked, but some elements will be transversal to any Institution, such as:

- Be an accredited doctor with research experience (recognised research work, being a researcher on a funded project, having directed or co-directed other theses, etc.).
- Be the person responsible for the scientific supervision of the doctoral thesis; as such, they must sign the document of commitment that establishes the doctoral candidate's supervisory duties.
- Be the person responsible for the coherence and suitability of the training activities, for the impact and novelty in the field of the subject of the doctoral thesis and for the guidance in the planning of the work.
- Have the right to receive academic and institutional recognition for their thesis direction or co-direction activities, and the right to access to the facilities and materials necessary to carry out their work.
- To ensure that research results are disseminated appropriately in due time and form, through the usual channels.
- Ensure that pre-doctoral researchers follow safe working practices and adopt the necessary measures to comply with regulations on data protection and confidentiality.

This is the set of key elements that must govern the process of preparing a doctoral thesis, its supervision and the list of basic rights and duties that both parties involved are committed to following.