

REGULATIONS OF DOCTORAL STUDIES IN THE SCIENCE FIELD OF EDUCATION AT VYTAUTAS MAGNUS UNIVERSITY

I. General part

1. Regulations of Doctoral Studies in the Science Field of Education at Vytautas Magnus University (hereinafter referred to as the **Regulations**) have been prepared in accordance with the Regulation of Doctoral Studies approved by Order No. V-739 of the Minister of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania of 18 May 2020.

2. These Regulations define the procedure of doctoral studies, scientific research and dissertation preparation and defence by doctoral students as well as procedure for granting a degree of the Doctor of Science at Vytautas Magnus University in the science field of education, in which Vytautas Magnus University has been granted the right to conduct doctoral studies by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania.

3. The purpose of doctoral studies is to prepare scientists who are able to independently carry out research and experimental (social, cultural) development work and solve scientific problems. Doctoral studies shall ensure the following sufficient competences for a person who has completed these studies and has been awarded a degree of the Doctor of Science: most advanced knowledge of research, areas of science and their interaction; special skills and methods to solve problems of research and other areas, expand the existing knowledge or professional practice; ability to work independently, knowledge and know-how of science and profession required for the development of new ideas and processes and ability to use them in studies and other activities.

4. A degree of the Doctor of Science may be awarded to a person who has successfully completed full-time (up to 4 years) or part-time (up to 6 years) doctoral studies, prepared a dissertation and successfully defended it, or to a person who has successfully defended a dissertation prepared externally.

5. The following concepts are used in these Regulations:

Formal scientific consultant is a scientist in the field of social sciences, in the science field of education or other science field and/or branch, who provides additional long-term consultations for the doctoral student in a field/branch of science other than the research carried out by his/her supervisor and is appointed no earlier than in the second year of studies and no later than in the third year of studies.

Researcher carrying out high-level scientific research is a researcher who meets the requirements no lower than those of a chief research worker¹ and participates in the process of doctoral studies, international projects, research exchange programmes and other international scientific and expert activities.

Doctoral Student Institution is an institution which has been granted the right to carry out doctoral studies in which a doctoral student is pursuing doctoral studies and scientific research and is preparing a dissertation.

¹ The requirements of clause 5.2 of the Description of Minimum Qualification Requirements for the Positions of Researchers at State Research and Study Institutions, approved by Resolution No. V-340 of the Research Council of Lithuania of 28 June 2018.

Doctoral School is a unit of the Doctoral Institution which administers and participates in the organisation of doctoral studies.

Finance Department is a unit of the Doctoral Institution which manages the accounting necessary for economic decision-making, financial and tax reporting.

Defence Council (hereinafter referred to as the Council) is a group of researchers composed by the Committee of Doctoral Studies which, after examining the dissertation presented for defence and evaluating its quality and compliance with the requirements for the dissertation, decides whether a dissertation candidate is to be granted a degree of the Doctor of Science.

Doctoral student (hereinafter referred to as a doctoral student) is a student and a researcher of third-cycle studies.

Scientific supervisor of the doctoral student (hereinafter referred to as a supervisor) is a researcher who meets the requirements of the Regulations of Doctoral Studies and supervises studies and scientific research of the doctoral student.

Work plan of the doctoral student (hereinafter referred to as the work plan of the doctoral student) is an individual work plan of the doctoral student which provides stages and deadlines of doctoral studies, scientific research and dissertation preparation.

Committee of Doctoral Studies (hereinafter referred to as the Committee) is a group of researchers who are carrying out high-level scientific research and are responsible for the content, quality, management and implementation of doctoral studies.

Research Support Group is a support group of researchers assigned to each doctoral student from the first semester of the first year of studies. This group is formed by the Research Institute of Education in cooperation with a particular department of the Academy of Education, to which a doctoral student is assigned according to the topic of the dissertation and the scientific problem. The Research Support Group consists of at least one professor or associate professor who is not a supervisor and/or a consultant of a doctoral student, and of at least two doctoral students. The main responsibility of this group is to ensure that a doctoral student is able to obtain a degree of the Doctor of Science no longer than during the formally planned and approved period of doctoral studies.

6. Structural units for the implementation of doctoral studies at Vytautas Magnus University ensure the transfer of personal data of doctoral students and externs, which are required for the implementation of the process of doctoral studies before and during the defence of the dissertation and for the external administration of the dissertation defence, in accordance with the procedure established by legislation.

7. The Committee of Doctoral Studies (hereinafter referred to as the Committee) is composed of at least 9 high-level researchers working (in a competitively selected position of at least 0.5 full-time equivalent) at the institution which has acquired the right to award a doctoral degree (the Doctoral Institution). The members of the Committee and its chairperson shall meet the requirements of at least a chief research worker² and the other members of the Committee shall meet the requirements of at least a senior research worker³. At least two thirds of individuals among the Committee members shall be from the science field of education. The member-scientist of the Committee can be a member of no more than two doctoral committees. The Committee may also include scientists of high international level from foreign research and study institutions with which the contract of international cooperation for participation in the doctoral study process has been signed. The contract shall establish conditions for participation in the activities of the Committee by the researcher from a foreign research and study institution and to ensure continuity in case a foreign member is replaced. The contract shall be signed for at least 5 years.

² The requirements of clause 5.2 of the Description of Minimum Qualification Requirements for the Positions of Researchers at State Research and Study Institutions, approved by Resolution No. V-340 of the Research Council of Lithuania of 28 June 2018.

³ The requirements of clause 5.2 of the Description of Minimum Qualification Requirements for the Positions of Researchers at State Research and Study Institutions, approved by Resolution No. V-340 of the Research Council of Lithuania of 28 June 2018.

8. After acquiring the right of doctoral studies in the science field of education, the Doctoral Institution shall publicly announce the composition of the Committee on the website of the Doctoral Institution. The Committee shall elect a chairperson at its first meeting, who can serve for a maximum of one five-year term or for one year, applying the principle of rotation, when a different member of the Committee is elected every year.

9. The composition of the Committee shall be agreed with the Research Council of Lithuania.

10. The doctoral dissertation shall be defended and a scientific degree shall be awarded in the Defence Council of the science field of education, which shall be formed for defence of a specific dissertation after the dissertation has been completed, evaluated by the institution and the specific unit where it was prepared, appointed by internal (two scientists from the science field of education, working in the Doctoral Institution) and external (one scientist from the science field of education, representing an external research institution) scientists and improved after their recommendations and officially recommended by the Committee and submitted for public defence. The Council shall consist of at least five Committee members.

II. Coordination of doctoral studies

11. Doctoral studies and scientific research shall be coordinated and controlled by **the Committee of Doctoral Studies**.

12. The process of doctoral studies shall be coordinated, and the course of studies shall be administered by the university that has received the right to conduct doctoral degree studies (hereinafter referred to as the **Doctoral Institution**).

13. **The Committee of Doctoral Studies shall:**

13.1. approve the terms and procedure of dissertation themes/topics and a competition of doctoral students' supervisors as well as open competition for admission to the doctoral studies;

13.2. perform the selection of dissertation themes/topics and supervisors of doctoral students;

13.3. administer admission to the doctoral studies;

13.4. consider and present for approval the candidacies of doctoral students' scientific supervisors and formal scientific consultants; mediate in the appointment of formal scientific consultants; consider applications for the replacement of scientific supervisor and/or formal scientific consultant;

13.5. approve the doctoral study programme of the science field of education as well as changes in the programme, the work plans of doctoral students and examination committees;

13.6. provide conclusions on the content and quality of doctoral studies, formation and implementation of plans for the preparation of doctoral dissertations, execution of dissertation scientific research in harmony with the themes/topics of the unit where the doctoral studies are conducted, and the publication of these research results, as well as the postponement of the deadlines for the doctoral student's study and research plan;

13.7. conduct certification of doctoral students;

13.8. ensure a successful process of doctoral studies and take care of raising the quality level of doctoral studies and research;

13.9. evaluate the completeness of prepared doctoral dissertations, i.e., originality, validity, ethics;

13.10. form the Defence Councils and appoint the date for dissertation defence.

14. Documents of the Committee meetings shall be managed by the meeting secretary; the minutes of meeting shall be signed by the chairperson of the Committee and the meeting secretary. The Committee shall present its recommendations, proposals and the minutes of resolutions to the Doctoral School of the Doctoral Institution, which in turn shall deliver the material to the unit of the Doctoral Institution where the doctoral studies are conducted.

15. Decisions made by the Committee shall be valid if no less than two thirds of all members of the Committee vote in favour of them. The minutes of the meeting of the Committee shall be

preserved at the Doctoral School of the Doctoral Institution for 7 years, later in the archive of the Doctoral Institution.

16. A survey for a discussion on the issue considered by the Committee may be prepared using electronic means of communication. Using electronic means of communication, the members of Committee shall express their opinion regarding the considered issue and vote. Issues that require secret voting shall not be included into the agenda of online meeting. Voting shall then be organised by IT means, ensuring confidentiality and anonymity as well as impartiality and objectivity.

17. The chairperson shall deliver the documents of the meetings of the Committee to the Doctoral School of the Doctoral Institution.

18. The Doctoral Institution shall:

18.1. announce, in accordance with the terms and procedures laid down by the Committee, a competition for themes/topics and supervisors of doctoral students;

18.2. announce, in accordance with the terms and procedures laid down by the Committee, an open competition for admission to the doctoral studies;

18.3. manage state budget funds dedicated to the implementation of doctoral studies at the Doctoral Institution;

18.4. accept documents of applicants for the doctoral studies;

18.5. sign a contract with the Doctoral Institution when it is not the Doctoral Institution in the science field of education, which shall define commitments and conditions of studies;

18.6. manage the production, accounting and registration of doctoral diploma templates, issue and register doctoral diplomas;

18.7. organise competition of topics and doctoral students' supervisors;

18.8. organise an open competition for admission to the doctoral studies;

18.9. present reports on the implementation of doctoral studies to the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania, the Research Council of Lithuania and other institutions subordinate to the Doctoral Institution;

18.10. collect information on the quality of doctoral studies;

18.11. archive and preserve the minutes of the Committee meetings and other documents related to the organisation and implementation of doctoral studies and research processes;

18.12. based on the Committee's documents, prepare material for the Doctoral Institution;

18.13. collect documents from the Doctoral Institution and give them to the Committee;

18.14. prepare document projects;

18.15. manage the production, accounting and registration of doctoral diploma templates;

18.16. issue the Doctor of Science diplomas and register them;

18.17. manage the funds transferred from the state budget for the doctoral study programme and dissertation research, for the preparation and defence of the doctoral dissertation, for the work of the supervisor and/or formal scientific consultant, and for the payment of related expenses;

18.18. award scholarships for doctoral students;

18.19. prepare resolutions regarding implementation of doctoral studies, appointment of supervisors and formal scientific consultants of doctoral students, and establishment of the Defence Council;

18.20. organise the preparation of the plan for the study programme and scientific research of a doctoral student, the publication of doctoral dissertations, the defence of dissertations;

18.21. create suitable conditions for the doctoral student to prepare and implement the doctoral study programme and the individual plan for scientific research, and to prepare and successfully defend the doctoral dissertation;

18.22. formulate and preserve the doctoral student's file for seven years after the defence of the dissertation;

18.23. prepare and provide reports to the Doctoral Institution regarding the process of doctoral studies;

18.24. submit documents of doctoral students to the unit of the Doctoral Institution.

19. If the Doctoral Institution is another Lithuanian or foreign university or scientific research institute which does not possess the right to conduct doctoral studies in the science field of education, then a doctoral student shall only conduct scientific research and prepare the dissertation at this institution. Studies of the doctoral student shall be organised, the applications of the doctoral student shall be registered, resolutions on the implementation of doctoral studies, appointment of a supervisor and a formal scientific consultant and defence of doctoral dissertation shall be prepared, and a doctoral student's file shall be formulated by the Doctoral Institution with which this Lithuanian or foreign university or scientific research institute signs a separate written agreement.

20. Doctoral studies and research shall be organised by the research unit of the Doctoral Institution to which doctoral students are assigned by order of the head of the Doctoral Institution on the recommendation of the Committee, in cooperation with academic units the expertise of which is in line with a doctoral student's research topic and scientific problem. These units shall:

20.1. participate in the preparation of a doctoral student's study programme and enable a doctoral student to carry out his/her study and research plan in a timely and high-quality manner;

20.2. monitor the process of a doctoral student's doctoral studies;

20.3. provide methodological support;

20.4. promote and support mobility of a doctoral student;

20.5. for each certification of the doctoral student, the Committee shall draw conclusions on the doctoral student's study and research activities in accordance with the resulting doctoral study plan, and shall make recommendations on the improvement of the plan and on the doctoral student's continuation of his/her studies (by certifying the doctoral student, postponing the doctoral student's certification, or not certifying the doctoral student);

20.6. after the doctoral student has prepared a dissertation, these units shall organise preliminary considerations of the doctoral dissertation and appoint reviewers (two internal and one external) for these considerations, and provide the Committee with conclusions on whether the doctoral dissertation fulfils the requirements for a doctoral dissertation in education.

III. Admission to the doctoral studies

21. Persons shall be accepted to the doctoral studies in the science field of education on the basis of open competition. Persons who have a master's degree in social sciences or its equivalent in higher education may participate in the open competition. Persons who have a master's degree or its equivalent under the Higher Education Qualifications Framework in a field other than social sciences and who are enrolled in the doctoral programme of education shall undertake additional courses of doctoral studies in accordance with the Committee's recommendation.

22. State-funded doctoral study places in the science field of education shall be distributed between the Doctoral Institutions by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania.

23. No later than one month before the announcement of admission to doctoral studies, a competition of dissertation topics and a competition of doctoral students' supervisors shall be announced. The topics shall comply with the areas of scientific research conducted by the Doctoral Institution. The procedure and terms of the competition shall be approved by the Committee.

24. If the topic and the supervisor is suggested not by the Doctoral Institution, the Institution shall provide the official approval regarding assurance of funding for doctoral studies.

25. The competition shall be organised by the Doctoral School of the Doctoral Institution and shall be implemented by the Committee. Relying on the competition procedures of the Committee, a list of selected doctoral dissertation topics of the Doctoral Institutions and supervisors shall be finalised by the minutes of the Committee, signed by the chairperson of the Committee and the meeting secretary. The Committee shall present the minutes of the meeting concerning the dissertation topics and doctoral students' supervisors to the Doctoral School of the Doctoral

Institution, which shall be responsible for the announcement of the list of dissertation topics selected during the competition on the website of the Doctoral Institution.

26. On the recommendation of the Committee, the Doctoral Institutions shall announce an open competition for admission to the doctoral studies and terms of admission. The competition shall be conducted for the topics of the Doctoral Institution.

27. An applicant may submit a request for permission to participate in the open competition for doctoral studies to the Doctoral School of the Doctoral Institution. Along with the request, which specifies the field of science, study form of doctoral studies as well as one dissertation theme/topic, the following documents shall be provided:

27.1. a diploma which confirms a master's degree or its equivalent qualification as well as diploma supplement; a certificate issued by the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education regarding recognition of higher education qualification acquired abroad;

27.2. recommendations of two scientists (in the social sciences, one of whom must have a PhD in education);

27.3. a curriculum vitae;

27.4. a list of published scientific works and reprints of works;

27.5. other documents specified in the conditions of admission to the doctoral studies.

28. The competition of admission to the doctoral studies funded by the state shall be held once a year. The admission competition shall be organised by the Doctoral School of the Doctoral Institution and implemented by the Committee. Under the competition procedure, persons shall be accepted separately for the themes/topics of the Doctoral Institution of the science field of education. All applicants shall come to the meeting with the members of the Committee. In the country represented by the Doctoral Institution and/or in the country of origin and representation of the applicant, in the event of a declared epidemiological emergency (quarantine) in which the mobility of the person is not possible, the interview shall be organised remotely by the Doctoral Institution by providing information on the technical details of the interview (the log-in address, the platform to be used for the interview, and the rules of how to log in to the platform, the time of the beginning and the time of the end of the interview and any other necessary details) to each applicant individually by e-mail.

29. The head of the Doctoral Institution or his/her authorised representative shall sign bilateral agreements in the prescribed form with the persons admitted to full-time and part-time doctoral studies in the field of education on the basis of a competitive procedure.

30. Selection criteria for the applicants to the doctoral studies shall be as follows:

30.1. publications evaluated by points in accordance with valid methodology of assessment of scientific production approved by the Minister of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania;

30.2. the average of the applicant's assessments in the master's degree studies or equivalent cycle higher education studies and the assessment of the final thesis;

30.3. command of foreign languages (a minimum level of B2 in English);

30.4. compliance of the scientific qualification, scientific publications and scientific experience with the selected topic;

30.5. research project (proposal of planned dissertation research);

30.6. motivation interview;

30.7. other criteria approved by the minutes of the Committee.

31. Selection criteria, their weight coefficients and calculation of the competition score shall be approved every academic year by the minutes of the Committee.

32. Based on the selection criteria, the Committee shall evaluate applicants by scores and form the priority queues for the topics of the Doctoral Institution in accordance with the highest competition score. Competition lists of the applicants and the decision regarding the proposal to accept or reject applicants to the doctoral studies shall be recorded by the minutes of the Committee. The minutes shall be signed by the chairperson of the Committee and the meeting secretary. The Committee shall present the minutes of the meeting to the Doctoral School of the Doctoral Institution.

33. On the basis of the minutes of the Committee, the applicants shall be accepted to the doctoral studies by orders of the head of the Doctoral Institution, specifying the field of science, the type of funding, the Doctoral Institution, the topic of the dissertation and the form of doctoral studies.

34. If free places are available after the admission in accordance with the quotas of the Doctoral Institution or if some of the accepted persons do not arrive to study at the beginning of the academic year, the Doctoral School of the Doctoral Institution may organise the second stage of admission, which shall be conducted following the same procedure.

35. Upon proposal by the Committee, those who were not accepted to state-funded places in the competition may choose paid doctoral studies upon paying the doctoral study fee established by the Doctoral Institution with which they will sign a contract.

36. Persons, who are applying for the doctoral studies and have the qualification of a master's degree, or its equivalent higher education diploma acquired abroad, shall provide a certificate issued by the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education regarding recognition of higher education qualification acquired abroad (clause 27.1) in addition to the documents specified in clause 27.

37. For state-funded doctoral studies, citizens of the EU shall participate in the competition in accordance with the general procedure; non-EU citizens shall participate in the competition in accordance with the legislation in force at the time.

38. No later than in a month's time after the beginning of the academic year, the Committee shall organise a meeting (meetings) of the Committee, which includes (include) participation of the newly accepted doctoral students and the supervisors who won the competition of dissertation topics. New doctoral students shall be assigned supervisors, dissertation topics, and the research unit of the Doctoral Institution. The Committee's recommendation shall be recorded by the minutes of the Committee. The minutes and the records of the minutes shall be submitted to the Doctoral School of the Doctoral Institution.

39. By the Committee's recommendations, the head of the Doctoral Institution or his/her authorised representative shall approve the doctoral students' intended topics and supervisors and assign the doctoral students to the research unit. The order shall be prepared by the Doctoral School/Research unit of the Doctoral Institution.

40. The file of a person who is not accepted to the doctoral studies shall be preserved for a year in the Doctoral School of the Doctoral Institution to which he/she was applying.

41. A person who has submitted an application for participation in the admission to the doctoral studies of education and was not accepted or who disagrees with the dissertation topic assigned to him/her, within three days from the announcement of the minutes of the Committee, may:

41.1. submit a motivated request or appeal to the Committee;

41.2. after receiving a negative response by the Committee, within three days submit an appeal to the head of the Doctoral Institution to which the doctoral student was assigned or to which he/she was applying.

IV. Scientific supervision of doctoral students and provision of scientific consultations to them

42. Studies and scientific research of the doctoral student shall be supervised by the scientific supervisor (hereinafter referred to as the supervisor). The supervisor may supervise not more than five doctoral students at the same time.

43. At the recommendation of the Committee, no later than one month after the admission of the doctoral student, the head of the Doctoral Institution or his/her authorised representative shall approve the head by order.

44. A formal scientific consultant (hereinafter referred to as **the consultant**) of the doctoral student, who may be a researcher in the same or a different science field and/or branch, shall be appointed at the earliest in the autumn semester of the second year of doctoral studies and at the latest in the autumn semester of the third year of doctoral studies. On the recommendation of the Committee, the head of the Doctoral Institution or his/her authorised representative shall approve the consultant by order.

45. The supervisor and the consultant shall meet the requirements no lower than those of a senior research worker⁴ and participate in the process of doctoral studies and international scientific and expert activities. A researcher from a foreign institution of research and studies can be the supervisor or the consultant of the doctoral student. In the cases when the supervisor is from a foreign research and study institution, the consultant shall be from the university in which the doctoral student is studying, i.e., from the Doctoral Institution.

46. Written agreements of supervisors and consultants as well as the lists of their main scientific publications and other research activities shall be submitted by the Committee to the Doctoral School of the Doctoral Institution along with the recommendation to approve the supervisors and the consultants. The Doctoral School of the Doctoral Institution shall submit the Committee's recommendations and the documents of the consultants' research activities to the Doctoral School of the Doctoral Institution.

47. At the start of the doctoral studies, the supervisor and the doctoral student shall agree on the ways in which they intend to work together. The doctoral student and the supervisor shall discuss the aim of the dissertation, the list of optional courses, the timetable for the preparation of the dissertation, the appointment of the supervisor from the second or third year of studies, and other issues related to the progress of the dissertation.

48. Duties and responsibilities of the supervisor related to:

48.1. *Education.* In cooperation with the doctoral student, the supervisor shall draw up drafts of the doctoral student's study programme and research plan;

48.2. *Supervision.* The supervisor shall maintain a supervision-based contact with the doctoral student; support the doctoral student, especially at the beginning of the research work, when it is important to start the theoretical part, and later on in the construction and execution of the empirical studies or research, and in the finalisation of the dissertation and the drafting of the report; encourage the doctoral student's initiative and motivation to pursue the defence of his/her dissertation and the doctoral degree after successful completion of his or her doctoral studies; maintain a constant dialogue with the doctoral student through supervision meetings, and be committed to guiding and consistently assessing the doctoral student's progress throughout each semester;

48.3. *Support for the student's progress.* The supervisor shall systematically monitor and discuss with the doctoral student the progress of his/her studies and the planned dissertation research; recommend the candidacy of the scientific advisor; assist the doctoral student in solving the organisational issues related to his/her studies and the preparation of his/her dissertation; and recommend foreign research and study institutions for the doctoral student's internship, which are relevant to the research topic/theme and research problem of the dissertation;

48.4. *Funding, participation and internationality.* The supervisor shall assist the doctoral student in applying for research funding to various institutions through advice, guidance, recommendations, etc.; and encourage the doctoral student to participate in, and present, his/her research in various scientific forums, research meetings and national and international scientific conferences;

48.5. *Preparation and publication of research reports and publications.* The supervisor shall read and comment orally and in writing on doctoral dissertation manuscripts; consult with the doctoral student and the consultant regarding each author's contribution in co-authored publications. The dissertation candidate shall take the lead in preparing publications based on the results of the dissertation research;

48.6. *Academic practice and research ethics.* The supervisor shall introduce the doctoral student to ethically responsible research, ethical principles in publishing and data management;

⁴ The requirements of clause 5.2 of the Description of Minimum Qualification Requirements for the Positions of Researchers at State Research and Study Institutions, approved by the Resolution No. V-340 of the Research Council of Lithuania of 28 June 2018.

48.7. *Expertise and career planning.* The supervisor shall promote the development of the doctoral student as a researcher and future scientist and his/her involvement in scientific projects, research groups carried out in the research units and to cooperate with academic units that implement study programmes in the science field of education at the bachelor's and master's levels by gaining academic-pedagogical experience;

48.8. Evaluation of the dissertation at the Doctoral Institution and defence at the public hearing before submitting it for the internal expert examination at the Doctoral Institution. Making sure that the manuscript of the prepared doctoral dissertation in the field of education meets the required standard of dissertation preparation adopted by the Doctoral Institution; participation in the selection of internal and external reviewers in the evaluation of the dissertation at the Doctoral Institution and in formation of the dissertation Defence Council.

49. Duties and responsibilities of the consultant related to:

49.1. *Education.* The consultant shall form, in cooperation with the doctoral student and the supervisor, specific tasks to solve a specific problem (conceptual and/or empirical), for the solution of which he/she is appointed as the consultant; advise the doctoral student in a specific science field/branch and the topic of scientific research;

49.2. *Supervision.* The consultant shall contact the doctoral student and cooperate with the supervisor in implementing the triangulation of researchers, in order to achieve the quality of the dissertation; support the doctoral student at the beginning, during the course and at the end of the theoretical and/or empirical research; promote the initiative and motivation of the doctoral student, so that the person seeks to defend the dissertation and obtain the qualifying degree of the Doctor of Science after successfully completing doctoral studies; maintain a constant dialogue during supervision meetings with the doctoral student, be committed to guiding and consistently evaluating the progress of the doctoral student throughout each semester;

49.3. *Support for the student's progress.* The consultant shall help the doctoral student organise research in other units of the Doctoral Institution or in other Lithuanian or foreign universities and/or research institutes;

49.4. *Preparation and publication of research reports and publications.* The consultant shall read and comment orally and in writing on the doctoral dissertation manuscripts in cooperation with the supervisor; agree with the doctoral student and his/her supervisor on each author's contribution in co-authored publications. The dissertation candidate shall take the lead in preparing publications based on the results of the dissertation research;

49.5. *Expertise and career planning.* The consultant shall promote the development of the doctoral student as a researcher and future scientist and involvement in research groups;

49.6. Evaluation of the dissertation at the Doctoral Institution and defence at the public hearing before submitting it for the internal expert examination at the Doctoral Institution. Making sure that the manuscript of the prepared doctoral dissertation in the field of education meets the quality criteria of scientific reports, on which the international scientific community relies.

50. The dissertation candidate, the supervisor and the consultant shall share responsibility for the quality of the prepared dissertation.

51. If, for important reasons, the supervisor and/or the consultant has to be replaced, such replacement shall be coordinated and approved following the same procedure as appointment of the supervisor and/or the consultant.

52. The doctoral student shall have the right to submit a motivated request addressed to the head of the Doctoral Institution to change his/her supervisor and/or the consultant if not less than two years till completion of the doctoral studies are left. The change of the supervisor and/or the consultant shall be possible only once during the doctoral study period. The head of the Doctoral Institution or his/her authorised representative shall direct the request to the Committee, in whose meeting it shall be considered within 1 month. If the doctoral student's request is accepted, the Committee shall announce a competition for applications for the position of the supervisor, taking

into account the topic of the doctoral student's dissertation. In the case of a replacement of the consultant - in consultation with the supervisor, the Committee shall propose another consultant, when the supervisor remains the same and the consultant is replaced. The change of the supervisor shall not affect the change of the consultant. If the Committee does not satisfy the doctoral student's application, the supervisor shall continue to supervise and/or the consultant shall continue to provide scientific consulting. The change of the supervisor and/or the consultant less than one year before the end of the doctoral studies shall not be possible.

V. Planning the doctoral student's work

53. No later than within one month after the approval of the supervisor, the supervisor and the doctoral student shall prepare the plan of scientific research. The plan shall include the deadlines for the completion of studies and research. Doctoral students shall start their focused doctoral research in the first year of their studies.

54. Doctoral studies shall consist of no less than 30 ECTS credits. It is recommended that the courses studied include academic professional competences (functional and operational) and transferable competences (role and development). These competences shall be acquired in the study programme through the courses focused on four directions. i.e., scientific research methodology, conceptualisation of the subject of the education science, in-depth/specialisation studies, and scientific communication. The scope of the courses representing the conceptualisation of education science shall not be less than 5 credits, and the study courses representing the other three directions shall not be less than 4 credits. Credits shall be obtained by studying at least 7 courses, the studies of which can be planned in five semesters (i.e., in the first and second year of studies and in the first semester of the third year of studies). Credits for specialisation/in-depth and science communication courses can also be accumulated by enrolling in international doctoral schools, when the doctoral student is in partial studies abroad. A decision regarding the acceptance of the credits shall be made by the Committee.

55. If the master's degree of a person admitted to the doctoral studies or the higher education equivalent to this degree is not in the field of education or at least in the field of social sciences, he/she may be assigned to additionally study bridging courses in accordance with the Committee's recommendations from the list of doctoral courses in education, which focus on the conceptualisation of the discipline of education and the deepening and specialisation of the themes/topics.

56. The doctoral study programme in the field of education shall consist of the following: scientific research methodology, conceptualisation of the discipline of education science, in-depth/specialisation studies and science communication courses. The doctoral study programme in the field of education and its changes shall be approved at the meeting of the Committee.

57. From this programme, the doctoral student shall take two compulsory courses in the research methodology block (which constitute this block), from the other two blocks - conceptualisation of the discipline of education science, and in-depth/specialisation studies - he/she shall choose two courses from the list provided, and from the fourth block - science communication - he/she shall choose one course from the list of courses provided. The list of doctoral study courses formed by the doctoral student shall be approved by the Committee.

58. The doctoral study programme shall consist of only the study courses that were approved by the Committee. It is the Doctoral Institutions' responsibility that only the courses that are approved and compatible with the doctoral study programme are included in the individual study programmes of the doctoral student.

59. The doctoral student, after coordinating with the supervisor and the Committee, shall record the courses he/she plans to study in the individual study programme, which shall be an integral part of the doctoral student's individual doctoral studies and research plan.

60. Persons, who have a scientific degree and meet the requirements no lower than those of a senior research worker, whose research and publications in the last five years are related to the field and area of science, and the topics of the courses taught, may give lectures in the doctoral studies⁵.

61. Lectures and/or seminars for the doctoral studies shall be conducted by the research unit (research institute) and study units (departments) of the Doctoral Institution whose employees have been approved by the Committee to teach doctoral courses and by the Doctoral School of the Doctoral Institution. Lectures may be organised for those courses that are included in the individual study programmes of at least eight doctoral students. In all other cases, doctoral students study their chosen courses in a consultative mode, in systematic consultation with the course supervisors/scientists, performing targeted assignments and obtaining credit for them, and passing exams.

62. Research plan of the doctoral student, which is another integral part of the work plan of the doctoral student, shall consist of the following: review and analysis of scientific sources, research related to the topic of the dissertation (some of them may be carried out in high-level foreign research centres), analysis, systematisation, and summarisation of empirical data, preparation and improvement of scientific articles according to the recommendations of reviewers, in cooperation with the editors of scientific journals, reading of scientific reports at international scientific conferences or other scientific events, preparation of a dissertation, participation in the processes of preparation and implementation of scientific projects by joining scientific teams, etc.

63. The research unit of the Doctoral Institution shall consider the work plan of the doctoral student and present its conclusions to the Committee. The work plan of the doctoral student and its amendments (if required) shall be approved by the Committee. No later than within a month after the approval of the supervisor, the doctoral student shall present this plan to the Doctoral School of the Doctoral Institution and it shall be stored in the doctoral student's file.

64. The doctoral student shall carry out his/her study programme and research in accordance with the approved work plan. The content, quality, scope and deadlines of the conducted research shall be evaluated during certification of the doctoral student.

65. Conditions shall be created for the doctoral student to use the equipment present at the department, laboratories and other research units of the Doctoral Institution, needed for the scientific research included into his/her scientific research plan. If it is impossible to carry out some of the research at the Doctoral Institution, the doctoral student may be sent to carry out the research in some other state or foreign research institution.

66. Duties and responsibilities of the doctoral student related to:

66.1. *Supervision.* The doctoral student shall actively maintain contact with the supervisor and the consultant; be the main representative of one's own research and studies and the initiating leader regarding the supervisor's and the consultant's consultations, recommendations, targeted discussions on issues of dissertation preparation;

66.2. *Progress.* The doctoral student shall follow his/her doctoral study programme and constantly review and update it based on achievements/results; accumulate and develop knowledge and intellectual skills necessary for conducting research; maintain communication with the supervisor and the consultant during research, preparation of publications, selection of scientific conferences and internships; prepare a personal report on the progress of doctoral studies, which helps to assess the quality of doctoral studies according to the drawn up and approved doctoral study plan during a specific semester;

66.3. *Funding, participation and internationality.* The doctoral student shall take lead in requesting and/or seeking funding for participation in scientific events, publishing scientific articles in journals of higher education level published abroad and included in international databases (WoS and/or Scopus); contribute to the internationalisation of the dissertation research by cooperating with researchers from international networks, associations, etc.;

⁵ The requirements of clause 5.2 of the Description of Minimum Qualification Requirements for the Positions of Researchers at State Research and Study Institutions, approved by the Resolution No. V-340 of the Research Council of Lithuania of 29 June 2018.

66.4. *Reports and their publication.* The doctoral student shall submit interim reports of dissertation research carried out every semester and the draft-manuscript of the dissertation prepared in the last semester of studies; submit the interim and final report (prepared doctoral dissertation) to the supervisor and the consultant to read, which the supervisor and the consultant could read and evaluate its completeness/readiness;

66.5. *Expert examination and career planning.* The doctoral student shall systematically and consistently conduct dissertation conceptual and empirical research from the first year of doctoral studies; actively participate in seminars organised by research and study units, various meetings of researchers, as well as national and international conferences by presenting dissertation research; cooperate with the Research Support Group in preparing methodology seminars (at least one per semester), preparing a report after each methodological seminar, and submitting the reports of the methodological seminars held during the semester at the certification of each semester.

67. The Research Support Group shall be formed for each doctoral student for the entire period of studies, starting from the first semester of studies. This group shall be formed by the Research Institute of Education in cooperation with a specific department of the Academy of Education, to which the doctoral student is assigned according to the topic of the dissertation and the scientific problem. The Research Support Group shall consist of at least one professor or associate professor who is not the supervisor and/or the consultant and at least two doctoral students (second-fourth year of studies). It is preferable that the professor or associate professor would be related to the field of the research problem of the dissertation of the doctoral student that is being prepared through his/her research and/or the courses taught. The members of the Research Support Group can represent not only the VMU Academy of Education or the Research Institute of Education; may be a member or members who do not work at the Doctoral Institution and/or members who represent a field other than the social sciences and/or the science field of education. The Research Support Group shall meet several times during one year of doctoral studies (at least once per semester) with the doctoral student, the supervisor and the consultant to provide supervision support for the preparation of the dissertation. The main responsibility of this group is to ensure that the doctoral student is able to obtain a degree of the Doctor of Science no longer than during the formally planned and approved period of doctoral studies.

68. The Research Support Group shall be approved by the Doctoral Institution. The main responsibility of this group is to ensure that the student is able to obtain a degree of the Doctor of Science in no more than four years (in the case of full-time studies) or in six years (in the case of part-time doctoral studies).

69. The Research Support Group in cooperation with the doctoral student shall initiate and organise targeted methodological seminars at least once per semester; each seminar shall be attended by the supervisor and the consultant. During the seminars, the doctoral student shall present the completed activities and ask the group questions related to theoretical studies, conduction of dissertation research, preparation of reports for scientific events, preparation of publications, writing of a dissertation, the possibility of being part of scientific groups and/or networks of scientists or other questions. These methodological seminars shall not replace the systematic consultations of the supervisor and the consultant.

70. Duties and responsibilities of the Research Support Group related to:

70.1. support and continuous supervision of the progress of doctoral studies and dissertation and support to the doctoral student, the supervisor and the consultant in improving the studies and/or research plan according to the need expressed by the doctoral student;

70.2. support for the doctoral student's career planning and discussion with him/her of the possibilities of postdoctoral studies;

70.3. supervision whether the volume of the doctoral student's studies and other responsibilities is appropriate, taking into account the expected time of studies in years, without preventing the completion of studies within the stipulated time;

- 70.4. notification of possible doctoral progress or funding problems to the Committee and the head of the research unit where the doctoral studies are being conducted;
- 70.5. provision the doctoral student with specific suggestions and answers on the topic of the questions he/she submits;
- 70.6. methodological seminars focusing on the progress of the doctoral student's studies and research and the factors limiting it, timely publication of research results in scientific journals and dissemination at scientific events, leadership of the doctoral student in managing of his/her doctoral studies and communication with the supervisor and the consultant.

VI. Examination and certification of the doctoral student

71. Studies of every course shall be completed by taking an exam. At least two examiners shall be required. The composition of the examination commission shall be approved by the Committee along with the individual plans of the doctoral students' study programme and scientific research plans. Lecturers who taught the course/module, the Committee members, also other scientists, active specialists of that science field (may be from another institution of research and studies) including supervisors and consultants may be appointed members of the examination commission. Exams shall be held in writing, and exam papers shall be stored in the research unit of the Doctoral Institution for one year.

72. After having passed the exam, an exam sheet shall be filled in by the doctoral student and signed by all examiners. The examination sheets shall be stored in the doctoral student's file at the Doctoral School of the Doctoral Institution.

73. The doctoral student who has failed the exam may retake it once, but not earlier than one month after the exam, in order to provide the opportunity for the doctoral student to prepare for the retake. If the exam is failed the second time, special certification of the doctoral student shall be initiated.

74. Full-time doctoral students shall pass all exams within the first five years of doctoral studies; part-time doctoral students shall pass them within the first seven years of doctoral studies. The Committee may decide to postpone exams to the following semesters, i.e., to the sixth semester for full-time doctoral students and to the eighth semester for part-time students.

75. The Committee may, upon the doctoral student's request and with the supervisor's approval, credit examinations of previously passed courses studied in accordance with the doctoral study programmes in the field of social sciences at the universities in Lithuania and/or abroad other than the Doctoral Institution.

76. In accordance with the deadlines set by the Committee, the doctoral student shall report to the unit of the Doctoral Institution twice a year. After evaluating the doctoral student's performance of the work plan, the unit, with participation of the doctoral student and his/her supervisor shall submit its conclusion to the Committee. The supervisor shall present the written evaluation/review of the doctoral student's performance to the research unit. The Doctoral School of the Doctoral Institution shall submit the documents of the doctoral student's certification that were considered in the unit to the Committee, which shall certify the doctoral student positively (thus agreeing with continuation of doctoral studies and correcting the programme for the next academic year) or negatively (thus proposing for the doctoral studies to be terminated), or propose postponement of certification for the period no longer than 3 months until the drawbacks in the implementation of the work plan are removed. The doctoral student, his/her supervisor and the consultant shall be invited to the meeting of the Committee.

77. If the doctoral student does not fulfil the requirements of studies or scientific research programme, at the proposal of the doctoral student's supervisor, an extraordinary certification of the doctoral student may be initiated.

78. A negatively assessed doctoral student shall be removed from the doctoral studies by order of the head of the Doctoral Institution.

79. The minutes of the Committee regarding certification of the doctoral student and the documents presented for the doctoral student's certification shall be submitted to the Doctoral School of the Doctoral Institution, which shall submit these documents to be stored in the doctoral student's file at the Doctoral School of the Doctoral Institution.

80. Upon receiving the doctoral student's request and the supervisor's agreement, the head of the Doctoral Institution or his/her authorised representative may grant academic leave up to one academic year, which includes two semesters. During the academic leave, scholarship shall not be paid.

81. The head of the Doctoral Institution or his/her authorised representative, after having received the doctoral student's request, the supervisor's approval and the research unit's approval, for important reasons (illness, maternity leave, etc.) by order may:

81.1. extend the academic leave for a period of no longer than one academic year (two semesters);

81.2. postpone the deadline for the passing of exams and annual certification specified in the individual programme for the period no longer than 3 months;

81.3. doctoral students' applications shall be registered and draft orders shall be drawn up by the Doctoral School of the Doctoral Institution.

VII. Trips, scholarships, appeals, other conditions

82. Persons, who are accepted to full-time state-funded doctoral study positions, during the period of their studies shall be paid a scholarship fixed by the Government of the Republic of Lithuania. The scholarship shall be paid by the Doctoral Institution.

83. If, on the recommendation of the Committee, the certification of the doctoral student of full-time state-funded studies is postponed, the scholarship shall not be paid during the period of the postponement of certification.

84. When studies are temporarily suspended and the return to continue the doctoral studies occurs not on the last or first day of the month, the calendar days of incomplete months shall be also included in the duration of doctoral studies; for them, the respective amount of the scholarship shall be paid to the doctoral student.

85. In the event of illness, the doctoral student or his/her relatives shall notify the Doctoral School of the Doctoral Institution within three days. Upon return from illness, the doctoral student shall present a certificate of the period during which his/her doctoral studies were suspended. The certificate shall be the basis for authorising, by order of the head of the Doctoral Institution or his/her authorised representative, a postponement of the examination deadlines. The duration of doctoral studies shall not be altered as a result of sickness. In the event of prolonged illness, the doctoral student may apply for permission to temporarily terminate his/her studies and to take an academic leave.

86. The doctoral student may conduct scientific research or spend a period of time studying at other institutions in the country or abroad. This time period shall be included in the overall duration of the doctoral studies and full scholarship shall be paid for it. The costs of the trip may be covered by projects or programmes administered by the Research Council of Lithuania, by the unit of the Doctoral Institution, by the host institution and by other sources. The allowance to cover the costs of the trip, or part of it, may be paid before departure. After returning from the trip, within three working days, the doctoral student shall submit documents confirming incurred expenses to the Finance Department/Unit of the Doctoral Institution.

87. After receiving the supervisor's approval and agreement from the research unit, doctoral students may be employed in full-time or part-time positions at the units of the Doctoral Institution. The doctoral student may be provided with an academic teaching practice of not less than 120 academic hours and not more than 150 academic hours, the duration of which shall be determined by order of the head of the Doctoral Institution or his/her authorised representative.

88. A motivated appeal or complaint related to the science degree that has not been awarded, rejection of an external student's or doctoral student's request to defend the dissertation and other

issues related to the implementation of doctoral studies shall be submitted to the office of the Doctoral Institution on behalf of the head of the Doctoral Institution within 14 working days. The head of the Doctoral Institution shall submit the appeal or complaint to be considered by the Committee, the respective units of Doctoral Institutions, or the structures established for that purpose. The appeal or complaint shall be considered and decision shall be made in two months from its receipt. The decision of the Doctoral Institution shall be sent to the appellant or the complainant in 5 working days after it has been made.

VIII. Preparing and examining the doctoral dissertation

89. A dissertation of the Doctor of Science shall be an integral publication. Its presentation shall depend on the chosen format: a) in the case of a monographic format, the publication shall consist of the text of the dissertation (written in a language other than the text of the monograph, namely English) and the summary (written in Lithuanian or English, but in a language other than the text of the dissertation), also copies of, or references to, scientific publications on the subject of the dissertation by the person submitting the dissertation for defence (hereinafter referred to as the dissertation candidate) as well as any other necessary annexes, the necessity of which shall be assessed by the doctoral student in consultation with his/her supervisor and the consultant; b) in the case of a summarising report based on scientific articles, the publication shall consist of the text (written in Lithuanian and English) and copies of scientific publications on the subject of the dissertation and other necessary annexes, the necessity of which shall be assessed by the doctoral student together with the supervisor and the consultant. The volume of the dissertation in monographic format, without annexes, shall not be less than 8 author's sheets and shall not exceed 10 author's sheets. A dissertation in monograph format, excluding annexes, shall be at least 8 author's sheets and shall not exceed 10 author's sheets.

90. A doctoral dissertation may be also defended on the basis of a collection of scientific articles. In this case, the dissertation shall consist of a text (called the summarising report) of at least 3 author's sheets and not more than 4 author's sheets, prepared in two languages, i.e., Lithuanian and English. The structure of the summarising report shall include an introduction (justification of the research problem), with the research questions and/or hypotheses, the object of the research, and the purpose of the research; literature review; the methodology of the research (design, scope, methods of data collection and analysis, instrument, and ethics of the research), results, discussion, conclusions, and the list of references. Copies of scientific publications on the subject of the dissertation shall be submitted as annexes. The annexes may contain other relevant material, such as the instrument, ethical documentation, tables or graphs illustrating the results. Decisions on the inclusion of material in the annexes shall be taken by the doctoral student together with the supervisor and the consultant. The text of the summarising report shall not reproduce text from published articles representing the results of the dissertation research, i.e., the text shall be original. The dissertation candidate must have published the results of the dissertation research in at least four scientific articles published or accepted for publication (with a digital object identifier (hereinafter referred to as the DOI)) in international scientific publications with a citation index in Clarivate Analytics Web of Science (CA WoS) and/or Elsevier Scopus (Scopus) databases, when the journal is ranked in the Q1-Q4 quartiles. After defending the dissertation on the basis of a collection of scientific articles, these articles cannot be used in the defence of other dissertations. In the preparation of scientific articles, the doctoral student shall take the lead responsibility, and the co-authors shall be the supervisor and the consultant. Other co-authors unrelated to the dissertation research shall not be included in the list of authors. Articles that are written while the doctoral student is involved in other activities, e.g., project activities, which, although related to the dissertation topic, do not incorporate the results of the dissertation research, shall not be considered to be the equivalent of disseminating the results of the dissertation research in a scientific article.

91. A doctoral dissertation may be also submitted for defence as a scientific monograph published by a publishing house (a published book), written by the dissertation candidate without co-authors. The abstract of the monograph shall be submitted in a different language than the scientific monograph, in Lithuanian or English respectively. In this case, other scientific publications may also be submitted if they are relevant to the dissertation topic. The scope of the monograph as a single-author work shall not be less than 8 author's sheets.

92. The research dissertation (hereinafter referred to as the dissertation) shall formulate the aim of the research, describe the research problem, raise research questions and/or form research hypotheses, describe the relevance (level of research) and novelty of the dissertation research (contribution of the results of the dissertation research in the field of education), review the research carried out at the international and national level in the area of the dissertation topic, describe the methodology (research design, sample selection and sample characteristics, methods of data collection and analysis, research instrument(s), research ethics), provide presentation and description of the results of the dissertation research as empirical facts, interpretation of the results as part of the scientific written discussion, identification of limitations of the research, recommendations for education science and practice, conclusions and a precise list of scientific sources used in the preparation of the dissertation. At the end of the introduction of the dissertation, the international scientific conferences at which co-authored papers were presented (co-authored with the supervisor and the consultant) in the framework of the dissemination of the results of the dissertation research shall be identified, and at least two scientific publications shall be presented, published or accepted (with a Digital Object Identifier (hereinafter referred to as the DOI)) for publication in international scientific journals with a citation index in the Clarivate Analytics Web of Science (CA WoS) and/or Elsevier Scopus databases, where the journals are ranked in the Q1-Q4 quartiles.

93. The text of the dissertation shall be written in Lithuanian or English, subject to the approval of the Committee of Doctoral Studies. The abstract of the dissertation (not less than 1.5 author's sheets and not more than 2 author's sheets), if the dissertation is prepared in a monographic format, it shall be written in Lithuanian or English (a language other than the language in which the text of the dissertation is written). The abstract of the dissertation shall be structured as follows: introduction (research problem, research questions and/or research hypotheses, research object, research purpose, relevance of the topic, novelty of the research; key concepts; literature review representing the essential aspects of the dissertation research; research methodology (design, research sample, methods - data collection and analysis methods, research instrument(s), research ethics); research results - essential, answering the research questions or research hypotheses, discussion - interpretation of the results; conclusions. The texts of the dissertation and the abstract shall be written in the correct languages; the texts shall be edited by language specialists, who shall provide the Committee with confirmations signed by these specialists about professionally performed language editing.

94. The supervisor, consultant, duration of doctoral studies, composition of the Defence Council shall be indicated in the dissertation and the dissertation abstract. If the supervisor and/or the consultant has been replaced, the previous supervisor and/or the consultant and the period of work of each of them with the dissertation candidate and the institution represented shall be indicated⁶.

95. The doctoral student can submit the dissertation for defence after he/she:

- 95.1. has passed all the exams provided for in the work plan of the doctoral student and has fulfilled other research activities provided for in the work plan of the doctoral student;
- 95.2. has published the results of the dissertation research in at least two scientific articles (when the dissertation is prepared in a monograph format) or in at least four scientific articles (when the dissertation is prepared on the basis of scientific articles). Original articles that were not published anywhere else shall be published in international peer-reviewed and

⁶Specific requirements for the dissertation and examples of the first and second pages of the dissertation in Lithuanian and English are presented in Annex 1.

DOI-bearing scientific journals with a citation index in the Clarivate Analytics Web of Science or Elsevier Scopus (Scopus) databases;

95.3. has presented the results of the dissertation research at least two international scientific conferences in the science field of education and/or in the area of social sciences;

95.4. has prepared the dissertation and its abstract in accordance with the requirements of the Doctoral Institution⁷.

95.5. has completed an internship of at least three months in a foreign research and study institution(s). According to the procedure provided by the Doctoral Institution, the doctoral student can complete an internship in a Lithuanian or foreign company, institution or organisation.

96. The doctoral student shall present the prepared dissertation at the meeting of the research unit of the Doctoral Institution, with participation by the supervisor and the consultant. The research unit shall evaluate the dissertation, as well as the doctoral student's published scientific articles and achieved scientific qualification and submit its conclusion to the Committee. The Doctoral School of the Doctoral Institution shall submit the documents on the consideration of the doctoral dissertation in the research unit to the Committee.

97. The doctoral student of the Doctoral Institution or of another Lithuanian or foreign scientific institution shall prepare an application on behalf of the head of the Doctoral Institution for permission to defend his/her doctoral dissertation and submit it to the Doctoral School of the Doctoral Institution, together with the following documents:

97.1 copies of the diploma of master qualification degree (or its equivalent higher education) and its supplements/appendages (doctoral students of Doctoral Institutions do not have to submit them, they shall be prepared by the Doctoral School of the Doctoral Institution based on the documents presented during the admission);

97.2. a curriculum vitae of the dissertation candidate, i.e., a description of the doctoral student's life and scientific and creative activities;

97.3. approved copies of the pages of exams passed in accordance with the doctoral study programme (doctoral students of the Doctoral Institutions do not have to submit them, they are prepared by the Doctoral School of the Doctoral Institution based on the documents accumulated in the doctoral student's file and database records);

97.4. the prepared dissertation (2 copies: in a hard copy and electronic version);

97.5. the record from the minutes of the evaluation of the dissertation by the department or other unit in which the dissertation has been prepared (if the minutes' record has been submitted to the Doctoral School during the period of doctoral studies, its copy does not have to be submitted, it shall be prepared by the Doctoral School of the Doctoral Institution); when the dissertation is submitted not by the doctoral students of Doctoral Institutions – the record of the minutes of the dissertation's assessment by the Institution at which the dissertation has been prepared and the recommendation to defend the dissertation signed by its head;

97.6. comments by the supervisor and the consultant (if the comments have already been submitted to the Doctoral School, their copies do not have to be provided, they shall be prepared by the Doctoral School of the Doctoral Institution);

97.7. agreement to publish the dissertation in the Lithuanian Database of Electronic Theses and Dissertations (ETD) within 2 weeks after the public meeting of the dissertation defence.

98. After determining that the provided documents meet the established formal requirements and correspond to the request and other documents, the Doctoral School of the Doctoral Institution shall submit them to the Committee.

99. No later than within two weeks after receiving the documents, the chairperson of the Committee shall summon a meeting in which two reviewers shall be appointed. The members of

⁷ see Annex 1.

the Committee and researchers from the Doctoral Institutions, other research institutions and social partners can be reviewers.

100. No later than a month after receiving the documents for the defence of the dissertation, the chairperson of the Committee shall summon a meeting of the Committee, which shall be attended by the dissertation candidate, his/her supervisor and the consultant. The Committee shall hear out the feedback of the appointed reviewers (the feedback of the reviewers shall be submitted in writing to the Doctoral School of the Doctoral Institution) about the dissertation that is being presented, get acquainted with the responses of the doctoral student to the reviewers' comments and report on the improvements made to the text of the dissertation, as well as get acquainted with the feedback of the supervisor and the consultant on the dissertation.

101. The Committee shall evaluate the structure of the dissertation, parameters (research problem, research questions/hypotheses, research object, research objective, topic relevance and research novelty, and research methodology), originality of the dissertation research, research ethics; completeness, reliability, and validity of the obtained results; conceptuality of results interpretation; the soundness of the wording of the conclusions formed and consistency thereof with the research questions or hypotheses; the conformity of the published scientific articles and the results of the research described in them to the scientific problem and research topic of the dissertation that is being defended.

102. The Committee can make the following decisions:

102.1. *the dissertation has been prepared properly.* It corresponds with clauses 30–34 of the Regulations of Doctoral Studies, the doctoral student has fulfilled the requirements of clause 36 of the Regulations of Doctoral Studies and the dissertation can be submitted for defence without any modifications or with small modifications⁸;

102.2. *the dissertation has to be modified.* The dissertation is returned to the doctoral student. The consideration of the modified dissertation shall be initiated in accordance with the requirements of clause 85 and/or further clauses.

102.3. *the dissertation does not meet the requirements.*

103. After having decided that it is possible to submit the dissertation for defence, the Committee shall:

103.1. decide whether the meeting of the dissertation defence at the Defence Council will be public or closed;

103.2. draft the composition of the Defence Council;

103.3. together with the research unit, the Doctoral School of the Doctoral Institution shall organise the reception of documents on the agreement of the planned Defence Council members and on the substantiation of their compliance with the qualification requirements for participants in the doctoral study process (lists, certificates, etc.);

103.4. propose the date and place of the dissertation defence;

103.5. draft the recommendation for the head of the Doctoral Institution and submit it to the Doctoral School of the Doctoral Institution;

103.6. the Doctoral School of the Doctoral Institution shall submit the documents of the doctoral dissertation's consideration in the Committee meeting and the Committee's recommendation to defend the doctoral dissertation to the Doctoral School of the Doctoral Institution.

104. The Committee shall form the Defence Council from at least five members. Members of the Defence Council shall meet the requirements that are no lower than those of a senior research worker and participate in the process of doctoral studies and in international scientific and expert activities⁹. There must be no conflict of interest between the members of the Defence Council and the dissertation candidate, the supervisor and the consultant, and therefore the supervisor and

⁸ Order No. V-739 of the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport of 18 May 2020 "Regulation of Doctoral Studies".

⁹ The requirements of clause 5.2 of the Description of Minimum Qualification Requirements for the Positions of Researchers at State Research and Study Institutions, approved by the Resolution No. V-340 of the Research Council of Lithuania of 29 June 2018.

the consultant may not be members of the Defence Council. Members of the Defence Council cannot have co-authored publications with the dissertation candidate. More than half of the members of the Defence Council cannot have joint publications with the supervisor and the consultant in the last five years. At least one member of the Defence Council may be from a foreign institution of research and studies. At least two members of the Defence Council shall be researchers from other than the Doctoral Institution. If the work has been done at the intersection of multiple science fields or if it is required for the defended work to be evaluated comprehensively, two members of the Defence Council can be researchers of other science fields. On the recommendation of the Committee, the composition and the chairperson of the Defence Council shall be approved by order of the head of the Doctoral Institution or his/her authorised representative.

105. The members of the Defence Council shall submit written comments on the dissertation to the Doctoral School of the Doctoral Institution no later than seven days before the defence of the doctoral dissertation. The person defending the dissertation has the right to become acquainted with the submitted reviews but shall not be allowed to communicate with the authors of the reviews until the day of the dissertation defence, thus ensuring impartiality and objectivity. In the case of a precedent, when feedback questions-answers are discussed before the defence, the issue of another composition of the Defence Council and postponement of the defence date may be considered.

106. After verifying the documents, the Doctoral School of the Doctoral Institution shall draft the order by the head of the Doctoral Institution or his/her authorised representative on the approval of the Defence Council and the date and place of the dissertation defence.

107. After the head of the Doctoral Institution or his/her authorised representative signs the order:

107.1. the Doctoral School of the Doctoral Institution shall help to organise publication of the dissertation in the required number of copies;

107.2. the Doctoral School of the Doctoral Institution shall send a copy of the dissertation to the members of the Defence Council at least one month before the defence of the dissertation;

107.3. the Doctoral School of the Doctoral Institution shall announce the defence of the dissertation in the special sections of the online websites of the Doctoral Institutions and the Research Council of Lithuania. The announcement of the dissertation defence can also additionally be announced in the press. The announcement shall include the name and surname of the dissertation candidate, the institution where the dissertation was prepared, the title of the dissertation, the place and time of the defence, the supervisor, the consultant, the members of the Defence Council, the fields and areas of science and the institutions that they represent, and the website of the Doctoral Institution's where the dissertation is published;

107.4. the Doctoral School of the Doctoral Institution shall submit the dissertation which is being prepared for defence to the libraries of the Doctoral Institutions.

108. Expenses for printing and sending of the dissertations submitted by the doctoral students of the Doctoral Institutions shall be covered from the funds of the Doctoral Institution that have been received for the implementation of doctoral studies.

109. The dissertation shall be defended in a public meeting of the Defence Council in accordance with the Regulations of the Defence Council on the Defence of Doctoral Dissertations in the Science Field of Education.¹⁰

110. A dissertation which may contain information constituting a state, professional or commercial secret can be defended in a closed meeting.

111. The defence of the dissertation can be held in Lithuanian or English. In cases where a language other than the official language is used at the meeting, the need for translation into

¹⁰ see Annex 2.

Lithuanian shall be assessed by the Committee. The meeting shall be chaired by the chairperson of the Defence Council. The meeting shall be valid if it is attended by more than half of the members of the Defence Council (including those participating by videoconferencing). Comments on the dissertation received from non-participating members of the Defence Council and other persons shall be also read during the meeting. A decision to award a degree of the Doctor of Science shall be deemed valid if more than half of Defence Council members vote in favour. If a decision is made that the degree of the Doctor of Science is not granted, then the arguments for such a decision shall be specified in the minutes of the voting. The chairperson of the Defence Council shall read the ruling of the Defence Council to the participants of the meeting and declare the end of the meeting. The meeting may be held by contact and distance way, or by a combination of contact and distance ways. The dissertation candidate, the supervisor and the consultant shall participate in the dissertation defence meeting. If the participation of the supervisor or the consultant is not possible for any reason, written feedback on the assessment of the quality of work with the doctoral student during a specific period must be submitted to the Council.

112. After the dissertation defence, the Doctoral School of the Doctoral Institution shall be given all documents of the defence, including the minutes of the meeting and the ruling of the Defence Council on whether the dissertation candidate is to be awarded the degree of the Doctor of Science. On its basis, the Doctoral School shall issue a diploma of the Doctor of Science.

113. If the Defence Council rules that the degree of the Doctor of Science is not to be awarded, the modified and/or amended dissertation may be submitted for defence no sooner than one year later. In such a case, the doctor's degree may be acquired externally in accordance with the requirements of Chapter IX of these Regulations. If the fact of scientific dishonesty (plagiarism, etc.) is determined, the dissertation cannot be defended.

114. No later than within 2 weeks after the meeting of the dissertation's public defence, in accordance with the procedure established by the Regulations of Doctoral Studies, the Doctoral Institution shall submit one copy of the defended dissertation (except for dissertations defended in a closed meeting) to the Martynas Mažvydas National Library of Lithuania and the dissertation shall be published on the Lithuanian Database of Electronic Theses and Dissertations (ETD).

115. No later than within 20 working days after the meeting of the dissertation defence, the Doctoral Institution shall notify the Research Council of Lithuania about the results of the doctoral dissertation defence. The notification to the Research Council of Lithuania shall also include information on the reasons why the dissertation was not successfully defended or was not defended at all.

116. The registered doctor's diploma shall be awarded to the scientist in accordance with the procedure established by each Doctoral Institution, after the dissertation has been published in the Lithuanian Database of Electronic Theses and Dissertations (ETD).

117. The file of the person who has defended the doctoral dissertation shall be stored for one year in the Doctoral School of the Doctoral Institution; later it shall be submitted to the archive of the Doctoral Institution. The file shall contain:

117.1. a request for permission to defend the dissertation along with the attached documents and the Committee's recommendation to defend the doctoral dissertation;

117.2. an agreement to publish the dissertation in the Lithuanian Database of Electronic Theses and Dissertations (ETD) within two weeks after the meeting of the dissertation defence;

117.3. documents on the composition of the Defence Council;

117.4. documents confirming that the dissertation has been submitted or sent to the Martynas Mažvydas National Library of Lithuania;

117.5. the electronic file of the audio recording of the dissertation defence;

117.6. the Defence Council's ruling on the award of a degree of the Doctor of Science;

117.7. a copy of the diploma of the Doctor of Science.

118. If the doctoral student submits the dissertation before the end of the doctoral studies but does not defend it on time, the dissertation can be defended in accordance with standard procedure within 12 months after the end of doctoral studies. A dissertation which was not defended within this period shall be defended externally in accordance with the requirements of Chapter IX of these Regulations. A dissertation defended on time is a dissertation which has been defended no later than within one year after the end of doctoral studies.

IX. Degree of the Doctor of Science obtained externally

119. A person who has a master's qualification degree or its equivalent higher education can seek to obtain a degree of the Doctor of Science externally. A person who studies externally must have published a scientific monograph or must have published the main results of the dissertation in at least two articles published in international scientific publications specified in clauses 90, 92 and 95 of these Regulations.

120. The request addressed to the head of the Doctoral Institution for the permission to defend the doctoral dissertation externally shall be submitted to the Doctoral School of the Doctoral Institution. The following shall be attached to the request:

120.1. a copy of identity document;

120.2. a dissertation manuscript or a published scientific monograph;

120.3. a list of scientific publications and electronic copies of publications;

120.4. a diploma confirming the master's degree or its equivalent qualification, its supplement or appendage (originals and copies, the originals are returned immediately); a certificate issued by the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education regarding recognition of higher education qualification acquired abroad;

120.5. copies or extracts of approved doctoral examination minutes and assessment documents;

120.6. a curriculum vitae, i.e., a description of life and scientific and creative activities;

121. The head of the Doctoral Institution or his/her authorised representative shall direct the request with the supplements to the Committee, which shall appoint at least two experts and the corresponding research unit of the Doctoral Institution for the assessment of the preparedness of the dissertation. Experts may include researchers from the Doctoral Institutions, other research institutions and social partners. The research unit of the Doctoral Institution shall organise a meeting and determine whether the presented material meets the requirements of clauses 30–34 of the Regulations of Doctoral Studies¹¹. Experts shall give their conclusion within one month of the submission of the dissertation (in monograph and paper-based format) or scientific monograph.

122. After receiving the conclusions, no later than within two months from the submission of the request, the Committee shall hold a meeting in which the person who studies externally shall participate as well. After listening to the experts and the person who studies externally, in accordance with the requirements of the Regulations of Doctoral Studies, the Committee shall rule whether the dissertation of the person who studies externally meets the requirements of a doctoral dissertation. If a positive decision is made, in accordance with the procedure of these Regulations, the Committee shall:

122.1. assign the person who studies externally to the unit of the Doctoral Institution;

122.2. present the recommendation for the head of the Doctoral Institution to which the request of the person who studies externally was addressed or his/her authorised representative to approve the external student's consultant who shall perform the functions of the external student's supervisor; if the acquisition of the doctoral degree is sought by the person who studies externally who had already studied in the doctoral studies but did not present a dissertation, the Committee can appoint the doctoral student's former supervisor or another individual as his/her consultant;

¹¹ Order No. V-739 of the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport of 18 May 2020 "Regulation of Doctoral Studies".

122.3. decide on the issue of the accepting of the doctoral study exams that have already been passed by the person who studies externally; determine which other doctoral study exams the person who studies externally must pass and until when;

122.4. schedule the date of the dissertation defence, which shall be no later than one year after the day the decision was made.

123. The exams for the person who studies externally shall be organised in accordance with the requirements of Chapter VI, whereas the dissertation shall be examined and defended in accordance with the requirements of Chapter VIII of these Regulations.

124. If the Committee decides that the dissertation cannot be prepared for defence in one year from the submission of the request, the person who studies externally can submit an appeal, which shall be examined in accordance with the procedure established in these Regulations. If the negative decision of the Committee is approved, the person who studies externally may re-submit the request to defend the dissertation no earlier than after one year.

125. The person who studies externally shall cover only those expenses of the Doctoral Institution that are directly related to the acquisition of a degree of the Doctor of Science.

X. Awarding of a degree of the Doctor of Science

126. A degree of the Doctor of Science shall be awarded to a person who has successfully defended the dissertation and the diploma shall be issued by the University signed by the Rector and the chairperson of the Defence Council.

127. The form of the diploma of a degree of the Doctor of Science and the procedure of the production, accounting, registration and issuing of the diploma forms shall be established by the Minister of Education, Science and Sport.

128. Appeals regarding a degree of the Doctor of Science that has not been awarded shall be examined in accordance with the procedure set forth in these Regulations.

129. The Doctoral Institution may cancel the ruling to award a degree of the Doctor of Science (including the degrees of science awarded until the entry into force of these Regulations) when:

129.1. the fact of scientific dishonesty is determined;

129.2. a degree of the Doctor of Science is awarded after violating these Regulations.

130. The university which has awarded a degree of the Doctor of Science may cancel the ruling to award a degree of the Doctor of Science when the Ombudsman for Academic Ethics and Procedures makes the ruling which obligates it to do so. The Ombudsman for Academic Ethics and Procedures can also obligate the university to cancel the ruling to award a degree of the Doctor of Science made before the entry into force of these Regulations.

131. If the institution which has awarded a degree of the Doctor of Science has been liquidated, the ruling regarding the recognition of the awarded a degree of the Doctor of Science shall be made by the Defence Council.

XI. Funding of doctoral studies

132. Doctoral studies shall be funded from the appropriations allocated from the state budget, funds of state investment programmes and state investment projects, income received as the fees of studies, also income from economy and research-related activities and provided services, funds of programme and competition-based funding of scientific research, funds allocated by international and foreign foundations and organisations as well as other legally obtained funds.

133. Funds for the payment of doctoral students' scholarships and payment for work and social security of the Defence Council members, doctoral students (except for those who study externally), scientific supervisors and consultants, for the scientific research of doctoral students (if possible, for the publishing of scientific articles of doctoral students in international publications listed in the WoS and/or Scopus databases, ranked Q1-Q4), for copying of the dissertation and its summarising

report, also other expenses related to the awarding of a degree of the Doctor of Science, shall be allocated in the estimates of the budgetary programmes implemented in the Doctoral Institutions.

XII. Quality assurance of doctoral studies

134. Doctoral quality assurance shall be governed by the following external documents: Regulations of Doctoral Studies approved by the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania, resolutions of the Research Council of Lithuania, and internal documents of doctoral studies, such as the Regulation of Doctoral Studies in the Field of Education, work regulations of the Committee of Doctoral Studies, and other internal documents and agreements of doctoral studies.

135. For the internal assurance of the quality of doctoral studies in the science field of education, the Committee shall conduct assessment of the quality of doctoral studies in the science field at least once every three years, taking into account the following indicators:

135.1. *Efficiency and effectiveness.* Proportion between the doctoral students and the prepared Doctors of Science in the science field of education; the scientific works published by the doctoral students over the period of doctoral studies; the doctoral students' participation in scientific internships and conferences; the doctoral students' participation in scientific research projects that correspond to the topic of their dissertation; employment and further career of doctoral students who have successfully defended the dissertation;

135.2. *Scientific resources.* The qualification of scientists participating in the preparation of the doctoral students in the science field of education meets the established qualification requirements;

135.3. *Organisational indicator.* The preparation of doctoral students in the science field of education is organised as an orderly process, providing reasoned justification for all stages of this process;

135.4. *Infrastructure.* The appropriate organisational and material prerequisites are provided for high-quality studies of doctoral students in the science field of education and for the promotion of their scientific achievements.

136. The Committee shall carry out the evaluation in accordance with the following procedure:

136.1. get acquainted with the self-analysis material in the science field of education provided by the Doctoral Institutions, analyse the questionnaires of doctoral students on the quality of doctoral studies;

136.2. while visiting the Doctoral Institution, the Committee shall:

- hold a discussion with the employees and scientists responsible for the doctoral study process (the process of admission to the doctoral studies, study process, doctoral graduation procedures, problems and areas for improvement in doctoral studies and dissertation preparation);
- hold a discussion with doctoral students (progress, expectations and satisfaction of doctoral studies; supervision and consulting; organisation and material support of studies, problems and areas for improvement).
- on the basis of the received qualitative and quantitative information, evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness; the scientific resources; the organisation of studies and infrastructure of the doctoral studies in education science field of the Doctoral Institutions.

136.3. present summarised conclusions and recommendations on how the quality of doctoral studies could be improved to the Senate Research Commissions, the Senates and the heads of the Doctoral Institutions.

For the period of doctoral studies and for one year after the completion of doctoral studies, the personal file of the doctoral student of the Doctoral Institution (or a person wishing to acquire a doctoral degree externally) shall be stored in the Doctoral School of the Doctoral Institution, later it shall be submitted to the archive of the Doctoral Institution. The file shall contain:

- an application for admission to the doctoral studies, together with the documents specified in the doctoral admission notice;
- the contract of studies;
- the doctoral student's declaration of honesty;
- documents on the appointment of the doctoral student's supervisor and consultant;
- the doctoral student's programme (work plan) for the studies, scientific research, publication of its results and doctoral dissertation preparation;
- documents of the doctoral student's annual certifications;
- the Rector's orders (on scholarship payment, postponement of deadlines of doctoral student's programme, etc.);
- pages of study exams of the doctoral student;
- the ruling regarding termination of doctoral studies – if the doctoral student has been removed from doctoral studies because of the conclusions of certification or for other reasons or if he/she did not present the dissertation for defence before the end of doctoral studies;
- the doctoral student's application for permission to defend the dissertation and related documents (minutes from initial considerations, the doctoral student's supervisor's and the Committee's recommendations to permit the defence of the dissertation, the minutes of the final assessment of the dissertation, etc.);
- the Rector's order on the approval of the Defence Council and the setting of the date and place of the defence;
- dissertation abstract; the list of addressees to whom the dissertation abstract has been sent;
- defence documents: transcript of the dissertation defence meeting, minutes of the Defence Council's vote on the awarding of the scientific degree of the doctor, the received comments on the dissertation by the Defence Council members and others;
- the documents confirming that the dissertation has been submitted (sent) to the Martynas Mažvydas National Library of Lithuania, also the library of Vytautas Magnus University;
- a copy of the diploma of the Doctor of Science.

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DISSERTATION OF THE DOCTOR OF SCIENCE

1. A dissertation of the Doctor of Science shall be an integral publication. Its submission shall depend on the chosen format: a) in the case of a monographic format, the publication shall consist of the text of the dissertation (written in a language other than the text of the monograph, namely English) and the summary (written in Lithuanian or English, but in a language other than the text of the dissertation), also copies of, or references to, scientific publications on the subject of the dissertation by the person submitting the dissertation for defence (hereinafter referred to as the dissertation candidate) as well as any other necessary annexes, the necessity of which shall be assessed by the doctoral student in consultation with his/her supervisor and the consultant; b) in the case of a summarising report based on scientific articles, the publication shall consist of the text (written in Lithuanian and English) and copies of scientific publications on the subject of the dissertation and other necessary annexes, the necessity of which shall be assessed by the doctoral student together with the supervisor and the consultant. The volume of the dissertation in monographic format, without annexes, shall not be less than 8 author's sheets and shall not exceed 10 author's sheets. A dissertation in monograph format, excluding annexes, shall be at least 8 author's sheets and shall not exceed 10 author's sheets.

2. A doctoral dissertation may be also defended on the basis of a collection of scientific articles. In this case, the dissertation shall consist of a text, called the summarising report, which shall not be shorter than 3 author's sheets and shall not be longer than 4 author's sheets, prepared in two languages, i.e., Lithuanian and English. The structure of the summarising report shall include an introduction (justification of the research problem), with the research questions and/or hypotheses, the object of the research, and the purpose of the research; literature review; the methodology of the research (design, scope, methods of data collection and analysis, instrument, and ethics of the research), results, discussion, conclusions, and the list of references. Copies of scientific publications on the subject of the dissertation shall be submitted as annexes. The annexes may contain other relevant material, such as the instrument, ethical documentation, tables or graphs illustrating the results. Decisions on the inclusion of material in the annexes shall be taken by the doctoral student together with the supervisor and the consultant. The text of the summarising report shall not reproduce text from published articles representing the results of the dissertation research, i.e., the text shall be original. The dissertation candidate must have published the results of the dissertation research in at least four scientific articles published or accepted for publication (with a digital object identifier (hereinafter referred to as the DOI)) in international scientific publications with a citation index in Clarivate Analytics Web of Science (CA WoS) and/or Elsevier Scopus (Scopus) databases, when the journal is ranked in the Q1-Q4 quartiles. After defending the dissertation on the basis of a collection of scientific articles, these articles cannot be used in the defence of other dissertations. In the preparation of scientific articles, the doctoral student shall take the lead responsibility, and the co-authors shall be the supervisor and the consultant. Other co-authors unrelated to the dissertation research shall not be included in the list of authors. Articles that are written while the doctoral student is involved in other activities, e.g., project activities, which, although related to the dissertation topic, do not incorporate the results of the dissertation research, shall not be considered to be the equivalent of disseminating the results of the dissertation research in a scientific article.

3. A doctoral dissertation may be also submitted for defence as a scientific monograph published by a publishing house (a published book), written by the dissertation candidate without co-authors. The abstract of the monograph shall be submitted in a different language than the scientific monograph, in Lithuanian or English respectively. In this case, other

scientific publications may also be submitted if they are relevant to the dissertation topic. The scope of the monograph as a single-author work shall not be less than 8 author's sheets.

4. The text of the dissertation shall be written in Lithuanian or English, subject to the approval of the Committee of Doctoral Studies. The abstract of the dissertation (not less than 1.5 author's sheets and not more than 2 author's sheets), if the dissertation is prepared in a monographic format, it shall be written in Lithuanian or English (a language other than the language in which the text of the dissertation is written). The abstract of the dissertation shall be structured as follows: introduction (research problem, research questions and/or research hypotheses, research object, research purpose, relevance of the topic, novelty of the research; key concepts; literature review representing the essential aspects of the dissertation research; research methodology (design, research sample, methods - data collection and analysis methods, research instrument(s), research ethics); research results - essential, answering the research questions or research hypotheses, discussion - interpretation of the results; conclusions. The texts of the dissertation and the abstract shall be written in the correct languages; the texts shall be edited by language specialists, who shall provide the Committee with confirmations signed by these specialists about professionally performed language editing.

5. A dissertation in monograph format, excluding annexes, shall be at least 8 author's sheets and shall not exceed 10 author's sheets¹². The length of the abstract of the dissertation based on scientific articles shall be at least 3 author's sheets and shall not exceed 4 author's sheets.

6. The dissertation shall consist of the following parts:

6.1. The text of the dissertation prepared in monograph format:

6.1.1. *Introduction*: the scientific problem is justified, the relevance of the research topic and problem is described, the research questions or research hypotheses are presented, the research object and research objective are formulated, the novelty and originality of the dissertation research and the contribution to the theory and practice of education are substantiated. Research questions are not raised for review of scientific sources; they focus only on empirical research. At the end of the introduction, a list of scientific publications of the author of the dissertation on the topic of the dissertation and scientific conferences where the results of the dissertation research were published, is presented.

6.1.2. *Overview of scientific sources*: scientific sources are analysed, compared, summarised (primary scientific sources shall dominate), as well as documents (as needed) related to the dissertation research problem, research questions, research object, and research aim. Sources reflect local and international levels. The results of the review of scientific sources shall/may include the following: formed classifications, systems, definitions, models, and other conceptual-intellectual products that reflect the intellectual contribution of the dissertation author to the research field of the research problem at the conceptual level.

6.1.3. *Research methodology*: the following methodological parameters shall be presented and described in detail - research design, research sample selection and sample characteristics, methods - data collection and analysis, research instrument(s), principles of research ethics (steps and obstacles to their implementation and how the challenges that have arisen were addressed).

6.1.4. *Research results*: research results, which answer the set research questions and either confirm or reject the set research hypotheses, are presented. The results are analysed, summarised, but not interpreted. No authors are cited in this chapter, i.e., the text of this section is factual, based only on the original empirical factual data and results of the completed dissertation research.

¹² One author's sheet is equal to 24 pages of A4 format.

6.1.5. *Discussion*: the results of the study are interpreted by answering the research questions or linking the interpretations to the research hypotheses. In this part, only those scientific sources are used for interpretation, i.e., authors thereof are mentioned, which were referred to in the overview of scientific sources of the dissertation. This part does not introduce new authors, new key concepts, and does not change the research object, does not expand the scope (list) of the research questions or hypotheses set at the beginning of the research. The discussion highlights problematic aspects that emerged in the research results, tensions between factors, atypical empirical evidence, gaps between theory and practice and empirics, unanswered questions, etc. At the end of the discussion part, the author of the dissertation shall provide a description of the limitations of the study and recommendations for further scientific research and the specific audience (practitioners, politicians, scientists, students, schoolchildren, parents of schoolchildren, institutions, etc.) to whom the dissertation is intended. The discussion part shall not be larger than the part of the research results. The text of the discussion part shall be at least 20 percent but no more than 25 percent of the volume of the part of the research results.

6.1.6. *Conclusions*: conclusions shall provide answers to research questions or research hypotheses. The conclusions shall not be a replication of the results. They shall be based on the evidence of empirical results, but they shall be abstract and generalise at a high level of abstraction. Conclusions shall not include numbers, interview excerpts, or cite authors or documents. Conclusions shall be original, clear, summarising statements that tell the essence of the research conducted. Conclusions shall not be formulated for the scientific overview part. The number of conclusions shall be optimised by focusing on the raised research questions or formed research hypotheses.

6.1.7. *References*: a list of references shall be provided based on the APA citation system.

6.2. Abstract of the dissertation. If the dissertation is prepared as a monograph, the abstract of the dissertation (which shall be at least 1.5 author's sheets and shall not exceed 2 author's sheets) shall be written in Lithuanian or in English (in a language other than the language of the dissertation text). The abstract of the dissertation shall be structured as follows: introduction (research problem, research questions and/or research hypotheses, research object, research purpose, relevance of the topic, novelty of the research; key concepts; literature review representing the essential aspects of the dissertation research; research methodology (design, research sample, methods - data collection and analysis methods, research instrument(s), research ethics); research results - essential, answering the research questions or research hypotheses, discussion - interpretation of the results; conclusions. The texts of the dissertation and the abstract shall be written in the correct languages; the texts shall be edited by language specialists, who shall provide the Committee with confirmations signed by these specialists about professionally performed language editing.

6.3. A dissertation based on scientific articles shall have the following basic structure:

6.3.1. introduction (substantiation of the scientific problem with research questions and/or hypotheses, research object and research goal);

6.3.2. review of scientific sources;

6.3.3. research methodology (design, sample, data collection and analysis methods, instrument, research ethics);

6.3.4. results;

6.3.5. discussion;

6.3.6. conclusions;

6.3.7. literature;

6.3.8. annexes: copies of scientific publications on the topic of the dissertation research shall be submitted. The annexes may contain other relevant material, such as the instrument, ethical documentation, tables or graphs illustrating the results.

7. The form of the title page of the dissertation is presented in example 1 of Annex 1. The first page shall contain the following information:

- 7.1. the institution where the doctoral dissertation is defended;
- 7.2. name and surname of the dissertation candidate;
- 7.3. dissertation title;
- 7.4. text “Doctoral dissertation”;
- 7.5. area of science, field of science and its code.
- 7.6. place (city) and year.

8. The form of the second page of the dissertation is presented in example 1 of Annex 2. The second page shall contain the following information:

8.1. the period and place of the preparation of the dissertation and the legal basis for the exercise of doctoral rights;

if the dissertation is defended externally, the words “Dissertation is defended externally” shall be entered;

8.2. the dissertation candidate’s supervisor and the consultant. Information about the supervisor and the consultant(s) is written in the following order: current pedagogical/scientific position, academic degree, name, surname, workplace (full name), area of science, field of science and its code. If the supervisor and/or the consultant of the dissertation candidate is replaced, the previous supervisor and/or the consultant and the period of their work with the dissertation are indicated as well. If the scientific supervisor or the consultant of the dissertation candidate is a foreign scientist, the state shall be indicated next to the workplace that he/she represents;

8.3. name of the dissertation Defence Council;

8.4. chairperson and members of the dissertation Defence Council. Information about the members of the Council shall be written in the following order: current pedagogical/scientific position, academic degree, name, surname, workplace (full name), area of science, field of science and its code. If the member of the Defence Council is a foreign scientist, the state is indicated next to the workplace that he/she represents;

8.5. date and place of dissertation defence (full address, i.e., street name, house number, zip code and the city).

9. The third and fourth pages of the dissertation are the English version of the first title page and the second page of the dissertation (Examples 3 and 4 of Annex 1).

(PILNAS DOKTORANTŪROS INSTITUCIJOS, KURIOJE GINAMA DAKTARO
DISERTACIJA, PAVADINIMAS)

Vardas Pavardė

MOKSLO DAKTARO DISERTACIJOS PAVADINIMAS

Mokslo daktaro disertacija
Socialinių mokslų sritis, edukologijos mokslo kryptis (S 007)

Kaunas, 2021

Example of the second page of the doctoral dissertation

Mokslo daktaro disertacija rengta xxxx-xxxx metais, ginama (Doktorantūros institucijos pavadinimas) pagal suteiktą (doktorantūros institucijos pavadinimas) institucijai (suteikimo data, dokumento Nr.) doktorantūros teisę.

(Jei mokslo daktaro disertaciją gina eksternas)

Mokslo daktaro disertacija rengta xxxx-xxxx metais Xxxx Yyyy institucijoje ir xxxx-xxxx metais (Doktorantūros institucijos pavadinimas) pagal suteiktą (doktorantūros institucijos pavadinimas) institucijai (suteikimo data, dokumento Nr.) doktorantūros teisę.

Daktaro disertacija ginama eksternu.

Mokslinis vadovas:

prof. habil. dr. Vardenis Pavardenis (Institucijos pavadinimas, mokslų sritis, mokslo kryptis, mokslo krypties kodas) *(Jeigu buvo du doktoranto moksliniai vadovai, nurodomas vadovavimo laikotarpis)*

Mokslinis konsultantas:

prof. habil. dr. Vardenis Pavardenis (Institucijos pavadinimas, mokslų sritis, mokslo kryptis, mokslo krypties kodas) *(Jeigu buvo du doktoranto moksliniai konsultantai, nurodomas konsultavimo laikotarpis)*

Mokslo daktaro disertacija ginama Vytauto Didžiojo universiteto Edukologijos mokslo krypties taryboje:

Pirmininkas

prof. habil. dr. Vardas Vardaitis (Institucijos pavadinimas, mokslų sritis, mokslo kryptis, mokslo krypties kodas)

Nariai:

prof. habil. dr. Vardas Vardaitis (Institucijos pavadinimas, mokslų sritis, mokslo kryptis, mokslo krypties kodas)

prof. dr. Vardas Vardaitis (Institucijos pavadinimas, mokslų sritis, mokslo kryptis, mokslo krypties kodas)

doc. dr. Vardas Vardaitis (Institucijos pavadinimas, mokslų sritis, mokslo kryptis, mokslo krypties kodas)

dr. Vardas Vardaitis (Institucijos pavadinimas, mokslų sritis, mokslo kryptis, mokslo krypties kodas)

Mokslo daktaro disertacija bus ginama viešame/uždareame Edukologijos mokslo krypties tarybos posėdyje 202xxxx m. xxx mėn. xxx d. xxx val. (Institucijos pavadinimas ir vieta).

Adresas: xxxxx g. xxxx, LT - xxxxxx Kaunas, Lietuva

(INSTITUTION OF DOCTORAL STUDIES / UNIVERSITY)

Name Surname

THE TITLE OF DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

Doctoral Dissertation
Social Sciences, Education science (S 007)

Kaunas, xxxx

The doctoral dissertation was prepared during the period of xxxx-xxxx at the Department of.....of the (Faculty) at institution (Vytautas Magnus University), under the doctoral programme right conferred to Vytautas Magnus University on by Order No..... of the Minister of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania.

(In case the doctoral dissertation is prepared externally)

The doctoral dissertation was prepared during the period xxxx-xxxx at (name of the doctoral institution) and during the period xxxx-xxxx at (name of the doctoral institution) under the doctoral programme right conferred to Vytautas Magnus University by Order No..... of the Minister of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania.

The doctoral dissertation is defended externally.

Scientific supervisor:

Pedagogical title, Scientific degree Name Surname (Institution, area of science, field of science and its code)

Scientific consultant:

Pedagogical title, Scientific degree Name Surname (Institution, area of science, field of science and its code)

The doctoral dissertation will be defended at the Committee of Education Science of Vytautas Magnus University:

Chairperson

Pedagogical title, Scientific degree Name Surname (Institution, area of science, field of science and its code)

Members:

Pedagogical title, Scientific degree Name Surname (Institution, area of science, field of science and its code)

Pedagogical title, Scientific degree Name Surname (Institution, area of science, field of science and its code)

Pedagogical title, Scientific degree Name Surname (Institution, area of science, field of science and its code)

Pedagogical title, Scientific degree Name Surname (Institution, area of science, field of science and its code)

The doctoral dissertation will be defended in the public/closed meeting of the Committee of Education Science at(time).... on date, place.

Address: xxxxxx str. No. xxxxx, LT - xxxx Kaunas, Lithuania

REGULATIONS OF THE DEFENCE COUNCIL ON THE DEFENCE OF DOCTORAL DISSERTATION IN THE SCIENCE FIELD OF EDUCATION

1. These Regulations define the procedure of defence of doctoral dissertations in the science field of education established by the Defence Council (hereinafter referred to as the Council) composed in accordance with the Regulations of Doctoral Studies approved by Order No. V-739 of the Minister of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania of 18 May 2020.
2. The doctoral dissertation shall be defended, and a scientific degree shall be awarded in the Defence Council of the science field of education, which shall be composed for defence of the specific dissertation after the dissertation has been completed and presented for defence. The Committee shall establish the Defence Council which shall consist of at least five members and appoint one of its members as a chairperson.
3. The members of the Defence Council shall present written comments on the dissertation to the Doctoral School of the Doctoral Institution no later than 5 working days before the defence of the dissertation¹³.
4. The Committee shall form the Defence Council from at least five members. Members of the Defence Council shall meet the requirements no lower than those of a senior research worker and participate in the process of doctoral studies and international scientific and expert activities¹⁴. A conflict of interests cannot emerge between the Defence Council members and the dissertation candidate or between his/her supervisor and the consultant. Members of the Defence Council cannot have co-authored publications with the dissertation candidate. More than half of the members of the Defence Council cannot have had co-authored publications with the dissertation candidate's supervisor or consultant for the last five years. The supervisor and the consultant of the doctoral student cannot be a member of the Defence Council. At least one member of the Defence Council may be from a foreign institution of research and studies. When a dissertation is defended in Lithuanian, scientists from foreign institutions of research and studies shall be included in the Defence Council as needed. At least two members of the Defence Council shall be researchers from other than the Doctoral Institution. If the work has been done at the intersection of multiple science fields or if it is required for the defended work to be evaluated comprehensively, two members of the Defence Council can be researchers of other fields of science. On the recommendation of the Committee, the composition and the chairperson of the Defence Council shall be approved by the head of the Doctoral Institution or his/her authorised representative.
5. Documents of the Defence Council shall be managed and the meeting for the dissertation defence shall be organised by the Doctoral School of the Doctoral Institution.
6. Work of the Defence Council shall be organised by the chairperson of the Defence Council. He/she shall:
 - 6.1. examine the file of the person who will defend the dissertation (hereinafter referred to as the dissertation candidate) in advance and make sure that the file and all documents of the meeting (voting ballots, voting minutes' template, etc.) are prepared;

¹³ **Doctoral Institution** - if the institution is not a Doctoral Institution, the documents of the Defence Council shall be handled and the meeting for the defence of the dissertation shall be organised by the Doctoral Institution with which the institution represented by the doctoral student has concluded a doctoral study agreement.

¹⁴ The requirements of clause 5.2 of the Description of Minimum Qualification Requirements for the Positions of Researchers at State Research and Study Institutions, approved by the Resolution No. V-340 of the Research Council of Lithuania of 29 June 2018.

- 6.2. examine the received comments which shall be presented during the Defence Council meeting or delegate this task to the member of the Defence Council;
- 6.3. make sure whether the appropriate preparations have been made for the meeting (for the meeting's audio recording or transcribing, demonstration of video material and, if required, translation of the meeting);
- 6.4. chair the Defence Council's meeting;
- 6.5. sign the documents of the Defence Council's meeting.
7. The member of the Defence Council shall:
 - 7.1. examine the dissertation presented for defence in advance and evaluate whether it is an original scientific work, which summarises the scientific research conducted by the doctoral student that explores the issue of the science field, whether its content corresponds with other requirements of a doctoral dissertation;
 - 7.2. evaluate whether the dissertation candidate's scientific publications have been published in accordance with the requirements specified in these Regulations and whether they include presentation of the key research results;
 - 7.3. evaluate whether the results of the research have been presented at least two international scientific events.
8. The meeting can be held in Lithuanian or English. In the cases when English is used in the meeting, the need for translation into Lithuanian shall be determined by the Committee.
9. The meeting shall be valid if it is attended by more than half members of the Defence Council (including those participating by videoconferencing).
10. The meeting of the Defence Council shall be public. A dissertation which may contain information constituting a state, professional or commercial secret can be defended in a closed meeting.
11. The proceedings of the meeting shall be as follows:
 - 11.1. after making sure that more than half of the members of the Defence Council attend the meeting (including those participating by teleconferencing) and that the non-participating members have presented their comments about the dissertation in writing, inform participants of the meeting about the quorum and present the dissertation candidate's file;
 - 11.2. the dissertation candidate presents dissertation research problem, research questions, research object, research goal, research methodology, main results, conclusions, recommendations, specifies the contribution of the research results to the science and practice of education; answers the questions of the participants of the dissertation defence meeting; indicates his/her contribution to the publications presented in the dissertation;
 - 11.3. the opportunity is granted for the dissertation candidate's supervisor and his/her consultants to speak;
 - 11.4. the chairperson of the Defence Council announces a scientific discussion;
 - 11.5. the chairperson or the member of the Defence Council delegated by him/her reads publicly the comments about the dissertation received from the non-participating members of the Defence Council and other persons; present the comments and conclusions formulated in the comments, and the dissertation candidate may express his/her comments;
 - 11.6. the opportunity is granted for the members of the Defence Council and guests to speak; after each speech, the dissertation candidate may request a word, which shall be granted to him/her;

- 11.7. at the end of the scientific discussion, the dissertation candidate speaks if he/she sees the need to specify, supplement, substantiate the empirical and conceptual information presented during the defence, i.e., the information to be communicated has to be relevant to the context of the dissertation research;
- 11.8. after discussions with the dissertation candidate, the members of the Defence Council decide by voting whether he/she is to be awarded a degree of the Doctor of Science. The members of the Defence Council participating by teleconferencing vote as well by sending a ballot by e-mail to the representative of the University hosting the defence. A ruling is made if more than half of all members of the Defence Council vote in favour of it. The minutes of the voting are signed by all members of the Defence Council who participated directly in the meeting.
- 11.9. the chairperson of the Defence Council reads the ruling of the Defence Council to the participants of the meeting and declares the end of the meeting.
12. After the meeting, the chairperson of the Defence Council returns the dissertation defence documents to the Doctoral School of the Doctoral Institution.