



Additional instructions

for the registration of the doctoral dissertation proposal and *a brief summary of the procedure for obtaining the title of Doctor of Science at the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Ljubljana*

Additional instructions have been updated according to the Rules and Regulations for Doctoral Studies at the University of Ljubljana, in force from 1.10.2021¹

Address for sending applications:

Faculty of Medicine
Administration Office (for the UL MF Doctor of Science Committee)
Vrazov trg 2
1000 Ljubljana

Doctoral candidates must register the doctoral dissertation proposal by the end of the first semester of the second year of study.

1. Procedure for registering the doctoral dissertation proposal

The procedure for registering the doctoral dissertation proposal at UL MF has two phases. In the first phase the doctoral candidate sends structured abstract of his/her doctoral dissertation proposal by e-mail. After submitting the structured abstract, the doctoral candidate shall also submit the application for approval of the doctoral dissertation proposal.

Meetings of the UL MF Doctor of Science Committee and the UL MF Senate with stipulated deadlines for the submission of structured abstract and application for approval of the doctoral dissertation proposal for the 2023/2024 academic year are listed in article 1.3. of these additional instructions.

1.1. Structured abstract of the proposed topic

Structured abstract of the doctoral dissertation proposal is prepared for the UL MF Doctor of Science Committee. Structured abstract contains information, needed for the nomination of Doctoral Studies Committee (DSC).

The doctoral candidate must send their ***structured abstract of the doctoral dissertation proposal***, including the **title of the doctoral dissertation** in Slovenian and English, a brief **summary** of the introduction, objectives with hypotheses (clearly outlined objectives and hypotheses), **methods**, and anticipated **results**. The structured abstract should not exceed two pages. In addition to the structured abstract, the same document must also include the name of the doctoral candidate, name of the supervisor/co-supervisor and the institution where the work will be conducted, and three to five references of the supervisor/co-supervisor in the field of the topic of the doctoral dissertation. The researcher code and the number of earned SICRIS points (Z) in the last five years as well as the number of earned points for the A^{1/2} (important achievements) indicator have to be indicated for the supervisor/co-supervisor. The document

¹ The additional instructions were last updated on September 12, 2023.

must be prepared as a MS Word document and named with the name of the doctoral candidate (name_surname.doc). The subject line of the email should read: Doctoral dissertation – registration. Doctoral candidates must email the structured abstract to doktorati@mf.uni-lj.si. Meetings of the UL MF Senate and the UL MF Doctor of Science Committee with stipulated deadlines for the submission of documents for registration and approval of the doctoral dissertation proposal for the 2022/2023 academic year are listed in article 1.3. of this additional instructions.

1.2. Application for approval of the doctoral dissertation proposal

The written application for the approval of the doctoral dissertation proposal must be delivered to the UL MF Administration Office.

Doctoral candidates wishing to register their doctoral dissertation proposal, must submit, **in writing**, (including an original signature and the indication of the professional title) the following documents in Slovenian to the address of the Faculty of Medicine:

1. **Application** ([form](#) – Registration of the doctoral dissertation proposal)
2. **Biography** (the full dates of previously obtained diplomas must be indicated and not just years)
3. **Bibliography**
4. **Doctoral dissertation proposal (proposed topic of the doctoral dissertation) in four copies**, prepared in accordance with the Rules and Regulations for Doctoral Studies at the University of Ljubljana and additional instructions of UL MF. The title of the topic must be provided in Slovenian and English². **The doctoral dissertation proposal should range from 3 to no more than 7 pages of text and the list of the most important references. Pages of the doctoral dissertation proposal must be numbered.** The doctoral dissertation proposal must include information on **which statistical methods will be used.**

Doctoral candidates, who enrolled in doctoral studies for the first time in the 2021/2022 academic year or later, must also include a draft of the research data management plan. You can find more information on [web page of University of Ljubljana](#).

If the supervisor or co-supervisor or a member of the committee is a foreign professor, doctoral candidates must prepare the doctoral dissertation proposal and their CV in Slovenian and English.

5. **Written consent of the supervisor/co-supervisor** that they assume the supervision/co-supervision of the doctoral dissertation.

The following adopted criteria must be considered when preparing proposals for supervisors/co-supervisors:

Supervisors and co-supervisors in doctoral studies can be teachers of the UL with the title of assistant professor, associate professor or professor, or a researcher with the title of research associate, senior research associate or senior research fellow, and have proof of research activity with a relevant scientific bibliography in the broader field covered by the doctoral dissertation.

Supervisors and co-supervisors may also be teachers with the appropriate habilitation of another institute (domestic or foreign). They must have references from the broader field of the doctoral dissertation topic, and work in a doctoral programme or be employed by an institution with which the UL or a UL member has concluded an agreement or entered into a cooperation agreement.

² *The title of the doctoral dissertation proposal should reflect the content of the topic of the doctoral dissertation in the shortest possible format, preferably in one sentence. There should be no colons, semi-colons, dashes or dependent clauses in the title.*

In addition to the basic criteria for supervisors and co-supervisors, the minimum requirements for demonstrating the supervisor's and co-supervisor's research activity are also 150 Z SICRIS points and an A^{1/2} score higher than 0 (important achievements indicator).

One person may supervise or co-supervise a maximum of six doctoral candidates enrolled in any doctoral programme at the UL, and no more than two years may have elapsed since their last enrolment in a year or additional year. This number does not include doctoral candidates who have already submitted their dissertation for assessment.

The supervisor and co-supervisor are appointed by the UL MF Senate. When approving the doctoral dissertation proposal, the UL Senate or an UL Doctoral Studies Committee authorised by the Senate verifies the fulfilment of conditions for supervision or co-supervision, and calls on the UL member to make a replacement if those conditions are not met.

6. Where the nature of the proposed topic of the doctoral dissertation so requires, the **consent of the Medical Ethics Committee of the Republic of Slovenia or another ethics committee or the consent of the Administration of the Republic of Slovenia for Food Safety, Veterinary Sector and Plant Protection for animal testing must be submitted together with the application.**

If the application documents are incomplete, the UL MF Doctor of Science Committee invites the doctoral candidate to complete it within a specified period, which may not exceed one year. If the doctoral candidate fails to complete the application within this period, the application is rejected by means of a decision.

1.3 Meetings of the UL MF Doctor of Science Committee and UL MF Senate with stipulated deadlines for the submission of the structured abstract and documents for application for approval of doctoral dissertation proposal for the academic year 2022/2023

Deadline for the submission of the structured abstract	Deadline for the submission of the documents for application for approval of the doctoral dissertation proposal	Meeting of the UL MF Doctor of Science Committee	Meeting of the UL MF Senate
<i>7. 9. 2023</i>	<i>14. 9. 2023</i>	<i>18. 9. 2023</i>	<i>2. 10. 2023</i>
<i>19. 10. 2023</i>	<i>26. 10. 2023</i>	<i>30. 10. 2023</i>	<i>13. 11. 2023</i>
<i>23. 11. 2023</i>	<i>30. 11. 2023</i>	<i>4. 12. 2023</i>	<i>18. 12. 2023</i>
<i>4. 1. 2024</i>	<i>11. 1. 2024</i>	<i>15. 1. 2024</i>	<i>29. 1. 2024</i>
<i>15. 2. 2024</i>	<i>22. 2. 2024</i>	<i>26. 2. 2024</i>	<i>11. 3. 2024</i>
<i>21. 3. 2024</i>	<i>28. 3. 2024</i>	<i>2. 4. 2024</i>	<i>15. 4. 2024</i>
<i>25. 4. 2024</i>	<i>30. 4. 2024</i>	<i>6. 5. 2024</i>	<i>20. 5. 2024</i>
<i>23. 5. 2024</i>	<i>30. 5. 2024</i>	<i>3. 6. 2024</i>	<i>17. 6. 2024</i>

*The Dates of UL MF Senate meetings and meetings of the UL MF Doctor of Science Committee are also published on the UL MF website – [link](#).

*** Doctoral candidates must submit their application for approval of the doctoral dissertation proposal by the end of the first semester of the second year of study.**

2. PROCEDURE FROM THE SUBMISSION OF THE APPLICATION FOR THE APPROVAL OF THE DOCTORAL DISSERTATION PROPOSAL UNTIL THE DEFENCE OF THE DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

2.1 Procedure of appointing the Doctoral Studies Committee (DSC)

Once the doctoral dissertation proposal is registered, the UL MF Senate, at the proposal of the UL MF Doctor of Science Committee, appoints, as a general rule, a three-member Doctoral Studies Committee (hereinafter the DSC)³, which establishes whether the doctoral candidate meets the conditions for obtaining the title of Doctor of Philosophy and which assesses whether the registered doctoral dissertation proposal is appropriate. If a foreign member is appointed to the DSC, the doctoral candidate will be asked to subsequently provide their doctoral dissertation proposal and CV in English.

The doctoral candidate presents their doctoral dissertation proposal to the DSC and research audience generally within one month of the appointment of the DSC. The presentation is organised by the doctoral candidate, who harmonises the time and location with the supervisor/co-supervisor and DSC members. The location of the presentation of the topic is not linked to the university member managing the procedure and where the doctoral candidate is enrolled.

A record is kept of the presentation, including remarks and the deadline for supplementing the doctoral dissertation proposal, where necessary. The record must be signed by DSC members.

If the doctoral candidate fails to present the doctoral dissertation proposal within one month after the appointment of the DSC, the deadline within which the DSC must provide its assessment of the doctoral dissertation proposal is also postponed.

If the doctoral candidate, supervisor/co-supervisor or a DSC member are foreign nationals, the presentation of the doctoral dissertation proposal is made in English. If a member of the DSC is a foreign national, they may participate at the doctoral candidate's presentation via videoconferencing tools.

2.2 Assessment of the doctoral dissertation proposal

Within one month following the presentation of the doctoral dissertation proposal or following the submission of a supplemented doctoral dissertation proposal, the DSC submits an assessment of the doctoral dissertation proposal to the UL MF Doctor of Science Committee and the UL MF Senate. If the assessment is not a positive one, the UL MF Senate makes a decision in accordance with Article 12 of the Rules on Procedures for Obtaining the Scientific Title of Doktor/Doktorica Znanosti ("Doctor of Philosophy") in the Interdisciplinary Doctoral Programme in BIOMEDICINE.

Once the UL MF Senate adopts a positive assessment of the doctoral dissertation proposal, the UL MF expert services send the doctoral dissertation proposal with the required documents to the UL Senate for confirmation.

Doctoral candidates enrolled in a four-year doctoral programme can enrol in the third year if they have passed all study obligations of the first and second year and if the UL MF Senate **confirmed the positive assessment** of the proposed topic of the doctoral dissertation prepared by the DSC.

Doctoral candidates enrolled in a three-year doctoral programme can enrol in the third year if they have passed all study obligations of the first and second year and if they have a **positive assessment** of the proposed topic of the doctoral dissertation prepared by the DSC.

³The UL MF Doctor of Science Committee suggests the supervisors provide the name of a foreign professor as a member of the DSC.

2.3 Approval of the doctoral dissertation proposal

The UL Senate or the UL Doctoral Studies Committee decides on the proposed doctoral dissertation proposal within two months and informs the UL MF of its decision. The UL MF informs the doctoral candidate, supervisor/co-supervisor and members of the DSC of the decision of the UL Doctoral Studies Committee.

2.4 Interim report/report on the results of the doctoral dissertation

The doctoral candidate **presents the results of research work in the doctoral dissertation** to the Doctoral Studies Committee (DSC), preferably 6 months prior to the planned public defence of the doctoral dissertation or when conclusions can be made in accordance with the set hypotheses. Ideally, this defence should be prepared during the compilation of the doctoral dissertation. The presentation of the interim report is usually public.

The procedure for the presentation of the results of research work in the doctoral dissertation (interim report) is instigated by the supervisor and organised by the doctoral candidate, who provides the members of the DSC with a written report on the results of the doctoral thesis, which, **unlike the doctoral dissertation proposal, also present the results and a summary of the discussion**. Doctoral candidates, who enrolled in doctoral studies for the first time in the 2021/2022 academic year or later, must also submit the **updated version of the research data management plan**.

The DSC prepares a report in the form of minutes on the presentation of the doctoral dissertation **(the form on the minutes is delivered to the candidate and the president of the committee, together with the decision on the approval of the doctoral dissertation proposal)**. The president of the DSC sends the signed report – minutes – to the UL MF Administration Office.

For doctoral students enrolled in three-year doctoral studies, the interim report is the obligation of the third year and is worth 5 ECTS credits.

For doctoral students enrolled in four-year doctoral studies, the interim report is the obligation of the fourth year and is worth 5 ECTS credits.

2.5 Submission of the doctoral dissertation – notification by the supervisor/co-supervisor

Three-year doctoral studies

Once the **supervisor/co-supervisor informs the UL MF Administration Office** that the doctoral dissertation has been completed and is ready to be assessed (an original scientific article is a mandatory attachment to this notification), the doctoral candidate submits the doctoral dissertation to the competent service of the UL member in electronic and printed format **within four years from the day their doctoral dissertation topic was approved by the UL Senate**. A doctoral candidate unable to submit their doctoral dissertation within four years from the day their doctoral dissertation topic was approved may, with the consent of their supervisor/co-supervisor, request an extension prior to the expiry of the aforementioned deadline. The decision in this regard shall be made by the UL MF Senate, which may extend the deadline for the preparation of the doctoral dissertation for one year.

The doctoral candidate must address the request for the extension of the deadline for the preparation of the doctoral dissertation to the UL MF Administration Office, Doctor of Science Committee, Vrazov trg 2, 1000 Ljubljana, **prior to the expiry of the deadline for the submission of the doctoral dissertation**.

If the UL Senate confirms a change to the topic of the doctoral dissertation prior to the expiry of the deadline for the submission of the doctoral dissertation, the deadline for the submission of the doctoral dissertation, which had been set upon the confirmation of the original topic of the doctoral dissertation at the UL Senate, remains unchanged.

Upon submission of the doctoral dissertation, the doctoral candidate must submit a written statement confirming that the doctoral dissertation is the result of their independent work, that the written format of the doctoral dissertation is identical to the electronic format, and with which they consent to the use of the electronic format of their doctoral dissertation for content similarity detection with other works and transfer to the university, free of charge and unlimited by time and territory, the non-exclusive right of reproduction, including the right to storage in electronic format and the right to make the doctoral dissertation available to the public on the World Wide Web through the UL Repository.

Four-year doctoral studies

Once the **supervisor/co-supervisor informs the UL MF Administration Office** that the doctoral dissertation has been completed and is ready to be assessed (an original scientific article is a mandatory attachment to this notification), the doctoral candidate submits the doctoral dissertation to the competent service of the UL member in electronic and printed format **within two years from the day of enrolment in the last year of the study programme or enrolment in an additional year.** In the event of justifiable reasons (e.g. motherhood, fatherhood, longer documented sick leave of at least six months), which happened **in the period from the last enrolment in the programme until the deadline for the submission of the dissertation**, the UL MF may exceptionally grant the doctoral candidate, on the basis of their request, an extension of the deadline for the submission of the dissertation for one year.

The doctoral candidate must address the request for the extension of the deadline for the preparation of the doctoral dissertation to the UL MF Administration Office, Doctor of Science Committee, Vrazov trg 2, 1000 Ljubljana, **prior to the expiry of the deadline for the submission of the doctoral dissertation.**

Upon submission of the doctoral dissertation, the doctoral candidate must submit a written statement confirming that the doctoral dissertation is the result of their independent work, that the written format of the doctoral dissertation is identical to the electronic format, and with which they consent to the use of the electronic format of their doctoral dissertation for content similarity detection with other works and transfer to the university, free of charge and unlimited by time and territory, the non-exclusive right of reproduction, including the right to storage in electronic format and the right to make the doctoral dissertation available to the public on the World Wide Web through the UL Repository.

If the doctoral candidate fails to submit their doctoral dissertation by the stipulated deadline, the possibility of their continuing or completing the studies may be assessed in accordance with the procedures set out in Article 49 of the Rules and Regulations for Doctoral Studies at the UL – [link](#).

2.5.1. Procedure for submitting the doctoral dissertation

The supervisor (and potential co-supervisor) notifies the UL MF Administration Office in writing that the doctoral dissertation has been completed, that they have reviewed it and that it is ready to be assessed. In the notification, the supervisor must describe the scientific contribution of the prepared doctoral dissertation. An original scientific article from the same field as the doctoral dissertation, which has been **published or accepted for publication in a scientific journal indexed by SCI or. SSCI with IF higher than one (1)**, must be attached to the notification. **The doctoral candidate must be the first author of the article.** The published original scientific article or article accepted for publication must be from the field of the topic of the doctoral dissertation and can be sensibly included in the doctoral dissertation. **DSC members must not be co-authors of the article(s).**

When first authorship is not possible, the assessment of the relevance of the original scientific articles in the scientific fields coordinated by the UL MF may **exceptionally** consider:

- **Publications in journals where authors are stated in alphabetical order.** For such an article, the supervisor must issue a statement confirming that the doctoral candidate's contribution in the article is significant and that none of the co-authors will be submitting this article as a requirement for obtaining the title of Doctor of Philosophy.

- **Publications with shared first authorship.** In the event of shared first authorship, the original scientific article must be published in an **SCI or SSCI-indexed journal with an impact factor of more than four (4).** As a condition for obtaining the title of Doctor of Philosophy, such an article may be used by only one of the authors sharing first authorship. For such an article, the supervisor must issue a statement confirming that the doctoral candidate's contribution in the article is significant and that none of the co-authors will be submitting this article as a requirement for obtaining the title of Doctor of Philosophy.

Affiliation to the University of Ljubljana must be stated in all publications in connection with research in the scope of doctoral studies. This also applies when the doctoral candidate, supervisor or co-supervisor are employed by another organisation.

At the same time that the supervisor/co-supervisor informs the UL MF Administration Office that the doctoral dissertation has been completed, the doctoral candidate submits the **doctoral dissertation in the VIS** so as to allow the implementation of the content similarity detection process (plagiarism). During the submission procedure, the doctoral candidate enters the required data in the VIS and uploads the final dissertation in .pdf format. They confirm the entered data by clicking Submit Dissertation. The instructions for students on how to submit electronic formats of their final theses and the content similarity detection process at the University of Ljubljana are available from the [Repository of the UL](#).

At the same time, the doctoral candidate must submit the printed copy of the doctoral dissertation (spiral-bound) and a signed **doctoral dissertation submission statement**.

Brief presentation of instructions for content similarity detection for supervisors and co-supervisors:

The instructions for supervisors/co-supervisors for content similarity detection at the University of Ljubljana are available at <https://repozitorij.uni-lj.si/IzpisGradiva.php?id=83160&lang=slv>.

The supervisor receives the first, and in the event of corrections also the second, notification on the analysis of similarity of content. After the first, and in the event of corrections also after the second, review of the analysis of similarity of content, they communicate the decision, which they have harmonised with a potential co-supervisor, through their VIS interface or by email.

Possible decisions of supervisors and co-supervisors after the first content similarity detection process:

- they approve the work,
- they request the student to accordingly amend the work and re-submit it,
- if conditions for the instigation of disciplinary proceedings are met, they submit the case to the disciplinary body or the competent person for the instigation of the proceedings.

Possible decisions of supervisors and co-supervisors after the second content similarity detection process:

- they approve the work and submit it for further processing,
- they give the work a negative assessment and the expert services submit the analysis, together with the doctoral dissertation and the opinions of the supervisor and co-supervisor to the Senate of the UL member, who decides on the doctoral dissertation,
- if conditions for the instigation of disciplinary proceedings are met, they submit the case to the disciplinary body or the competent person for the instigation of the proceedings.

2.6 Assessment of the doctoral dissertation

After the completed content similarity detection process, the competent services of the UL MF notify the doctoral candidate and the members of the DSC that the doctoral dissertation is ready to be assessed. The doctoral candidate provides each member of the DSC with a copy of the doctoral dissertation and a copy of the original scientific article.

Within two months after receiving the doctoral dissertation and the original scientific article, DSC members submit separate assessments of the doctoral dissertation and assessments of the suitability of the published

article or article accepted for publication to the **UL MF Senate**, whereby assessments are not implemented in July and August. In the opinion on the suitability of the article they also verify the reference stating affiliation to the UL.

2.7 Adoption of the assessment and appointment of the defence committee

Based on the assessments received by the DSC members, the UL MF Senate accepts the dissertation, rejects it or calls on the doctoral candidate to supplement and/or correct their dissertation by a specific deadline, taking into account potential comments, and/or submit a suitable article.

In the event of required amendments or corrections, the DSC conducts a new assessment of the submitted corrected dissertation and/or new article. The new assessments are processed once again by the UL MF Senate, which approves or rejects the dissertation. If the doctoral candidate fails to correct their doctoral dissertation by the set deadline, the dissertation is rejected. A doctoral candidate may not re-submit a rejected doctoral dissertation.

After receiving notification from the UL MF Administration Office that the UL Senate has drawn up an assessment of the doctoral dissertation, the doctoral candidate arranges a date for the public defence of the doctoral dissertation together with the DSC members and the supervisor/co-supervisor.

The doctoral candidate must inform the MF Administration Office of the date of the defence at least **8 days prior to the scheduled defence**. The defence usually takes place in the meeting room at the school's Administration Office. The doctoral candidate must harmonise the date of the defence taking into account the availability of the meeting room (information available by phone at 01 543 7802). As a rule, the defence takes place no more than **one month** after acceptance of the doctoral dissertation.

Prior to the defence, the doctoral candidate must submit to the UL MF Administration Office **5 hard-bound copies** of the doctoral dissertation signed by the supervisor/co-supervisor. If the defence of the doctoral dissertation does not take place at UL MF facilities, the copies must also be signed by all members of the DSC.

At least 5 days prior to the defence, the doctoral candidate must submit hard-bound copies of the doctoral dissertation also to all members of the committee and the supervisor/co-supervisor.

When preparing the doctoral dissertation, the doctoral candidate must take into account the recommendations for writing a doctoral dissertation, which are laid down in the Rules on Procedures for Obtaining the Scientific Title of Doktor/Doktorica Znanosti ("Doctor of Philosophy") in the Interdisciplinary Doctoral Programme in Biomedicine.

The cover and first inner page template are available on the UL website – [link](#)

The second inner page of the doctoral dissertation must include information on the acceptance of the doctoral dissertation, appointment of the committee, and the signatures of all members of the committee and the supervisor/co-supervisor in accordance with the instructions that the doctoral candidate receives with the notification on the appointment of the defence committee. A template of the second page is available on the UL MF website.

3. ADDITIONAL EXPLANATIONS

3.1 Doctoral dissertation written in the form of articles

A doctoral dissertation written in the form of articles must comprise **a minimum of three original scientific articles**. Research articles must be published or accepted for publication in an SCI or SSCI or SCIE-indexed journal with an impact factor, of which at least one article must meet the conditions for the completion of a doctoral dissertation, in accordance with the [decision of the Senate UL MF, on November 15th 2021](#). **The doctoral student must be the first author of all three articles.**

Exceptionally, one of the original scientific articles may be published or accepted for publication with shared first authorship. In the event of shared first authorship, the original scientific article must be published in an **SCI or SSCI-indexed journal with an impact factor of more than four (4)**. As a condition for obtaining the title of Doctor of Philosophy, such an article may be used by only one of the authors sharing first authorship. For such an article, the supervisor must issue a statement confirming that the doctoral candidate's contribution in the article is significant and that none of the co-authors will be submitting this article as a requirement for obtaining the title of Doctor of Philosophy.

Research articles shall be connected in terms of content (i.e. complementary) and shall be the of the doctoral candidate's work on an approved doctoral dissertation proposal. As the articles must represent a coherent whole in terms of content, the doctoral candidate must include not only articles but also an additional introduction and conclusions of the dissertation with which they present the theoretical and methodological design of their research, link the content of individual articles, and provide the main findings.

Detailed instructions are available on the UL MF website – [link](#).

3.2 Writing the doctoral dissertation in English

The UL Senate may exceptionally approve the writing of the doctoral dissertation in English if the doctoral candidate is a foreign national, if their supervisor or co-supervisor are a foreign national or if a foreign national is a member of the DSC, or if the dissertation is composed of original scientific articles published in English.

In the event of writing the doctoral dissertation in a foreign language, the dissertation must contain an extensive summary (approximately ten per cent of the text of the dissertation) using appropriate scientific terminology in Slovenian.