UNIVERSITY OF LJUBLJANA | MF Faculty of Medicine

Additional instructions

for the registration of the doctoral dissertation proposal and a summary of the doctoral dissertation submission procedure 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[1]

Address for sending applications:

Faculty of Medicine
Doctoral Studies 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 A DOCTORAL DISSERTATION PROPOSAL

To register a doctoral dissertation proposal, a doctoral student must submit the proposal (in Word or PDF format) and **the Research Data Management Plan draft (in Word or PDF format)** by email. At the same time, they must send the doctoral thesis proposal documentation, together with all attachments in paper form by mail, for approval. **Dates of meetings of the UL MF Doctor of Science Committee and the UL MF Senate, along with the stipulated deadlines for submitting the doctoral dissertation proposal, are listed in Article 1.3 of these additional instructions.**

1.1. 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 Doctoral Studies Office (for the UL MF Doctor of Science Committee), Vrazov trg 2, 1000 Ljubljana.

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

[1] The additional instructions were last updated on October 20, 2026.

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1. **Application** (form – Registration of the doctoral dissertation proposal).

2. **Biography** (the full dates of previously obtained diplomas must be provided, not just years).

3. **Bibliography.**

4. **Doctoral dissertation proposal 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 English[2]. **The doctoral dissertation proposal should be between 3 and 7 pages long and include a list of the most important references.** *Pages of the doctoral dissertation proposal must be numbered.* **The doctoral dissertation proposal must specify the statistical methods that will be employed.**

5. **A draft of the research data management plan in four copies**. You can find more information on the **University of Ljubljana's website**.

6. **Written consent from the supervisor/co-supervisor confirming that they are taking on the supervision/co-supervision of the doctoral dissertation, along with their references.** (The consent of the supervisor/co-supervisor is a mandatory attachment only for doctoral candidates who enrolled in the program from the academic year 2024/2025 onwards).

7. Where the nature of the proposed doctoral dissertation topic 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**. The consent must be obtained no later than by the first session of the UL MF Senate, at which the adequacy of the dissertation proposal is decided.

8. **Request to write the doctoral dissertation in English (if required).** A doctoral candidate should write their doctoral dissertation in English if he/she is a foreign national, if their supervisor or co-supervisor are from abroad, if a member of the DSC is from abroad, or if the doctoral dissertation will consist of original scientific articles published in English. In this case the doctoral candidate must prepare the doctoral dissertation proposal, a draft of research data management plan and CV in both Slovene and English. If the doctoral candidate is a foreigner, these documents may be written only in English.

[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.

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1.3 Dates of meetings of the UL MF Doctor of Science Committee and UL MF Senate, with deadlines for submitting documents for doctoral dissertation proposal approval. for the academic year 2026/2027

Deadline for the submission of the doctoral dissertation proposal and DMP **(doktorati@mf.uni-lj.si)**	Deadline for the submission of the documents for application for approval of the doctoral dissertation proposal with attachments (by mail)	Meeting of the UL MF Doctor of Science Committee	Meeting of the UL MF Senate
4. 9. 2025	***4. 9. 2025***	*14. 9. 2026*	*28. 9. 2026*
14. 10. 2026	***14. 10. 2026***	*26. 10. 2026*	*9. 11. 2026*
18. 11. 2026	***18. 11. 2026***	*30. 11. 2026*	*14. 12. 2026*
6. 1. 2027	***6. 1. 2027***	*18. 1. 2027*	*1. 2. 2027*
10. 2. 2027	***10. 2. 2027***	*22. 2. 2027*	*8. 3. 2027*
17. 3. 2027	***17. 3. 2027***	*30.3.2027*	*12. 4. 2027*
21. 4. 2027	***21. 4. 2027***	*3. 5. 2027*	*17. 5. 2027*
19. 5. 2027	***19. 5. 2027***	*31. 5. 2027*	*14. 6. 2027*

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 has been 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]. The Committee determines whether the doctoral candidate meets the requirements for obtaining the title of Doctor of Philosophy and assesses the suitability of the proposal for the doctoral thesis.

If a foreign member is appointed to the DSC, doctoral dissertation will be written in English. The doctoral candidate must subsequently provide their doctoral dissertation proposal, a draft of the research data management plan and CV in English.

Within one month of receiving notification on their DSC appointment, the doctoral candidate presents their doctoral dissertation proposal to the DSC and general research audience. The presentation is organised by the doctoral candidate, in coordination with the supervisor/co-supervisor and the DSC members, who together decide on the

[3] When submitting the doctoral dissertation proposal, the supervisor may propose members of the DSC to the UL MF Doctor of Science Committee. This proposal is not binding on the UL MF Doctor of Science Committee.
The UL MF Doctor of Science Committee suggests the supervisors provide the name of a foreign professor as a member of the DSC.

time and location. The presentation does not have to be organised on the university member managing the procedure and where the doctoral candidate is enrolled.
The DSC writes the minutes of the presentation, including, where necessary, comments which the doctoral student must take into account in the revised proposal of their doctoral thesis, as well as determine the deadline for supplementing the doctoral dissertation proposal. The minutes must be signed by DSC members.
The student must send the completed revised disposition, which was approved by DSC, to the email address: doktorati@mf.uni-lj.si.
If the doctoral candidate fails to present the doctoral dissertation proposal within one month of the appointment of the DSC, the deadline by which the DSC must provide its assessment of the doctoral dissertation proposal, is also extended. **The deadlines for submitting the DSC assessments do not apply in July and August.**
If the doctoral candidate, supervisor/co-supervisor or a DSC member is a foreign national, the doctoral dissertation proposal is presented in English. If a member of the DSC is a foreign national, they are allowed to participate at the doctoral candidate's presentation via videoconferencing tools.

2.2 Assessment of the doctoral dissertation proposal

Within one month of presenting the doctoral dissertation proposal, or submitting a supplemented proposal, the DSC submits an assessment of the doctoral dissertation proposal to the UL MF Doctor of Science Committee. If the assessment is not positive, the UL MF Senate (on the proposal of the Doctor of Science Committee) makes a decision in accordance with Article 11 of the PRAVILA na interdisciplinarnem doktorskem študijskem programu BIOMEDICINA.

Once the UL MF Senate has adopted a positive assessment of the doctoral dissertation proposal, the UL MF Doctoral Studies Office will send the doctoral dissertation proposal with the required documents to the University of Ljubljana Senate for confirmation.

Doctoral students can enrol in the third year of study if they have passed all study obligations of the first and second year and if the UL MF Senate has confirmed the positive assessment of the doctoral dissertation proposal, prepared by the DSC.

2.3 Approval of the doctoral dissertation proposal

The UL Doctoral Studies Committee UL (under authority of the UL Senate) decides on the proposed doctoral dissertation proposal within two months and informs the UL MF of its decision. The UL MF notifies the doctoral candidate, supervisor/co-supervisor and the members of the DSC of the UL Doctoral Studies Committee's decision.

Doctoral candidates can enrol in the fourth year of study if they have passed all study obligations of the first three years and if the UL Doctoral Studies Committee (acting under the authority of the UL Senate) has approved their doctoral dissertation proposal.

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

The programme obligation is also a presentation of the results of the research work before the public defence of the doctoral dissertation (5 ECTS). The presentation takes place when the research work is in the final stage, when it is already possible to draw conclusions in accordance with the hypotheses.

The presentation is organised by the doctoral candidate, with the approval and help of the supervisor. The doctoral candidate presents a detailed summary to the members of the DSC, **presenting the results and summarising the debate**. It is optimal if the doctoral candidate prepares the presentation while writing the doctoral dissertation. The DSC then prepares the report on the presentation in the form of a record.
For doctoral candidates enrolled in three-year doctoral studies, the interim report is the obligation of the third year and is worth 5 ECTS credits.
For doctoral candidates 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

Three-year doctoral studies

Once the **supervisor/co-supervisor informs the UL MF Doctoral Studies 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 UL MF Doctoral Studies Office in electronic format (via VIS). The doctoral candidate must submit their dissertation **within four years from the day their doctoral dissertation topic was approved by the UL Senate.** When submitting their doctoral dissertation, the candidate must sign a written statement confirming that it is the result of their independent work and that the written version is identical to the electronic version. By signing this statement, the candidate also consents to the electronic version of their dissertation being checked for similarity of content with other works and agrees to transfer it to the university free of charge and without time or territorial limitations. This includes granting the university the non-exclusive right to reproduce the dissertation and the right to store the dissertation in electronic format. It also includes the right to make it available to the public on the World Wide Web through the UL Repository.

A doctoral candidate who is unable to submit his/her doctoral dissertation within four years from the day their doctoral dissertation proposal was approved may request an **extension prior to the submission deadline for the**

doctoral dissertation, with the consent of their supervisor/co-supervisor**.** The UL MF Senate makes the decision on extension and may extend the deadline for completing a doctoral dissertation once, for a maximum of one year. The doctoral candidate must address the request for an extension of the deadline for completing the doctoral dissertation to the UL MF Doctoral Studies Office (for Doctor of Science Committee), Vrazov trg 2, 1000 Ljubljana, or send to doktorati@mf.uni-lj.si **prior to the deadline for the submission of the doctoral dissertation.**

Four-year doctoral studies

Once the supervisor/co-supervisor informs the UL MF Doctoral Studies 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 **UL MF Doctoral Studies Office** in electronic format (via VIS). The doctoral candidate must submit their dissertation **within two years from the day of enrolment in the last year of the study programme or in an additional year.** When submitting their doctoral dissertation, the candidate must sign a written statement confirming that it is the result of their independent work and that the written version is identical to the electronic version. By signing this statement, the candidate also consents to the electronic version of their dissertation being checked for similarity of content with other works and agrees to transfer it to the university free of charge and without time or territorial limitations. This includes granting the university the non-exclusive right to reproduce the dissertation and the right to store the dissertation in electronic format. It also includes the right to make it available to the public on the World Wide Web through the UL Repository.

If there are justifiable reasons for an extension to the dissertation submission deadline (e.g. maternity or paternity leave, or a documented period of sick leave of at least six months) that occurred between the last enrolment in the programme and the deadline, the UL MF may grant the doctoral candidate an extension of one year on the basis of their request. The request must also be accompanied by the relevant supporting documentation.
The doctoral candidate must send the request for an extension to the deadline for preparing the doctoral dissertation to the UL MF, Doctoral Studies Office (for Doctor of Science Committee), Vrazov trg 2, 1000 Ljubljana or sent to doktorati@mf.uni-lj.si **prior to the deadline for submitting the doctoral dissertation.**

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. In accordance with the University of Ljubljana's price list, the cost of the second registration of a doctoral dissertation proposal is equivalent to the tuition fee for the third year of the doctoral programme.

2.5.1. Procedure for submitting the doctoral dissertation

The supervisor (and potential co-supervisor) notifies the UL MF Doctoral Studies Office **in writing that the doctoral dissertation has been completed, reviewed, and is ready for assessment.** In the notification, the

supervisor must describe the scientific contribution of the completed doctoral dissertation. An original scientific article must be attached to the notification.

While the supervisor/co-supervisor informs the UL MF Doctoral Studies Office that the doctoral dissertation has been completed, the doctoral candidate submits the **doctoral dissertation to the VIS** to allow the content similarity detection process (plagiarism) to be implemented. During the submission procedure, the doctoral candidate enters the necessary data into the VIS and uploads the final dissertation in PDF/A format. They confirm the entered data by clicking 'Submit Dissertation'. Instructions for candidates on how to submit electronic versions of their final theses and details of 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 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 notification of the content similarity analysis, and, if corrections are necessary, the second notification as well. After the first, and, if necessary, after the second review, the supervisor communicates the decision, agreed with a 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 candidate 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 Doctoral Studies Office 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 Conditions for completing the programme

To complete the programme, a doctoral student must fulfil all the specified study requirements and successfully defend their doctoral thesis. The programme also requires the publication of at least one original scientific article.

2.6.1. Doctoral candidates first enrolled in the program **before** the academic year 2025/2026

The doctoral candidate is required to publish at least one original scientific article from the same field as their doctoral dissertation. This article must have been **published or accepted for publication in a scientific journal indexed by SCI or SSCI with an IF higher than one (1)**. **The doctoral candidate must be the first author of the article.** The content of the article must contribute to the validation of the hypothesis of the doctoral thesis. Where appropriate, an original scientific article may be incorporated into the thesis. **DSC members must not be co-authors of the article(s).**

In cases where first authorship is not possible, the following may be **exceptionally** considered when assessing the suitability of original scientific articles in the scientific fields coordinated by the UL MF:

- **Publications in journals where authors are stated in alphabetical order**. For such an article, the supervisor must issue a written statement confirming that the doctoral candidate's contribution in the article is significant and that none of other co-authors of this article will use it as a requirement for obtaining the title of Doctor of Philosophy.
- **Publications with shared first authorship**. In the case 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)**. Only one of the authors sharing first authorship may claim such an article as a requirement for a PhD degree. For such an article, the supervisor must issue a written 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.

All publications relating to research carried out as part of a doctoral programme must state the affiliation 'University of Ljubljana'. This also applies if the doctoral candidate, supervisor or co-supervisor are employed by another organisation. The affiliation of the University of Ljubljana must be stated alongside the doctoral candidate's name.

2.6.2. Doctoral candidates first enrolled in the program **after** the academic year 2025/2026

The following rules regarding the publication of an original scientific article as a requirement for completing the program shall apply to **doctoral candidates who first enrol in the program from the academic year 2025/2026 onwards**, as well as to those who have **not progressed regularly and whose doctoral dissertation proposal has not been approved by the University of Ljubljana Senate by October 1, 2025**:

The doctoral candidate is required to publish at least one original scientific article in the first three quartiles within each category of scientific journals with an impact factor (1Q-3Q). The classification of a scientific journal into a specific quartile must be demonstrated through the JCR database, with the submission date of the article for publication serving as the cut-off date. **The doctoral candidate must be the first author of the article**. The article must relate to the field of hypothesis testing or the validation of the research questions or objectives of the doctoral dissertation. A doctoral student must submit proof that an original scientific article has been published or accepted for publication by the time the doctoral thesis is submitted for assessment.

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. The affiliation of the University of Ljubljana must be stated alongside the doctoral candidate's name.

2.7 Assessment of the doctoral dissertation

Once the content similarity detection process is complete, the Doctoral Studies Office at UL MF will notify the doctoral candidate and the members of the DSC that the doctoral dissertation is ready for assessment. 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 of receiving it, members of the DSC must submit their assessment of the doctoral thesis to the Doctoral Studies Office. However, the Doctoral Committee's assessment deadlines do not apply in July and August. In the opinion on the suitability of the article, they also verify the reference stating affiliation to the UL. The Committee also verifies the affiliation of the University of Ljubljana in the doctoral student's article.

2.8 Review and evaluation of the doctoral dissertation assessments

Based on the assessments received by the DSC members, the UL MF Senate approves the dissertation, rejects it or request the doctoral candidate to supplement and/or correct their dissertation within a specific timeframe in accordance with any comments, and/or to submit a suitable article.
If they have requested additions or corrections, the members of the DSC will reassess the revised doctoral thesis and/or the new article that has been submitted.
The new assessments are reviewed 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 cannot re-submit a rejected doctoral dissertation.

Once the UL MF has notified the doctoral candidate that the Senate has confirmed the assessment of their doctoral dissertation, they may arrange a date for the public defence with the DSC members and their supervisor/co-supervisor. The doctoral candidate must inform the UL MF Doctoral Studies Office of the date of the defence at least ***8 days prior to the scheduled defence***.
As a general rule, the defence takes place at the UL MF. The doctoral student must coordinate the date of the defence with the availability of the UL MF facilities. As a general rule, no more than one month should elapse between acceptance of the dissertation and the defence..

When preparing the doctoral dissertation, the doctoral candidate must consider the recommendations for writing a doctoral dissertation, which are set in the PRAVILA na interdisciplinarnem doktorskem študijskem programu BIOMEDICINA. There are no binding technical or formatting requirements for the preparation of a doctoral thesis.

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 approval 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 of **a minimum of three original scientific articles**. These research articles must be published or accepted for publication in an SCI- or SSCI- or SCIE-indexed journal with an impact factor. At least one of the articles must meet the conditions for the completion of a doctoral dissertation. **The doctoral candidate must be the first author of all three articles.**

Original scientific articles must be thematically related (complementary) and represent the outcome of the student's work on the approved proposal of their doctoral thesis. In addition to the articles, the doctoral student must write an introduction and conclusion to the dissertation. In these, they present the theoretical and methodological framework of their research, tie together the content of the individual articles and present the key findings.

For the inclusion of such articles in the printed and electronic forms of the dissertation, the author of a doctoral dissertation written in the form of articles must obtain consent from the publishers to whom they have previously exclusively transferred material copyrights for the articles.

Detailed instructions are available on the UL MF website – link.

3.2 Writing the doctoral dissertation in English

The UL Senate may 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.

If the dissertation is written in English, the dissertation must contain an extensive summary (approximately ten per cent of the text of the dissertation) using appropriate scientific terminology in Slovenian.