

**Annex to the Order of the Minister of National Education and Scientific Research no.  
3482 of March 24, 2016**

**ORGANIZATIONAL AND OPERATIONAL REGULATIONS OF THE NATIONAL  
COUNCIL FOR ATTESTATION OF UNIVERSITY DEGREES, DIPLOMAS AND  
CERTIFICATES (NCAUDDC)**

**CHAPTER I. General provisions.**

**Article 1.**

The National Council for Attestation of University Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates, hereinafter referred to as the NCAUDDC, is an advisory body—with no legal personality of its own—of the Ministry of National Education and Scientific Research, hereinafter referred to as the MNESR.

**Article 2.**

- (1) The NCAUDDC is established and operates pursuant to the provisions of these Regulations, as approved pursuant to the laws in force.
- (2) The terms and phrases herein have the following meanings:
  - a) Doctoral advisor: an education professional or research scientist with experience in the field of scientific research who coordinates the activity of the doctoral student after having acquired this right pursuant to Article 166 of the National Education Law no. 1/2011;
  - b) Doctoral studies program, hereinafter referred to as the doctoral program: all of the activities involving the doctoral student that are relevant from the standpoint of doctoral studies;
  - c) Doctoral thesis: an original scientific paper prepared by a doctoral student during his/her doctoral studies—a legal requirement to obtain the doctoral degree;
  - d) IODS: an institution, university or Romanian Academy that has organized or is entitled to organize doctoral programs;
  - e) Doctoral school: an organizational and administrative structure that is established within the IODS and that provides the support required for the conduct of disciplinary or interdisciplinary doctoral studies;

- f) Quality or professional ethics standards: any provisions that ensure the originality of the doctoral thesis;
  - g) Plagiarism: the presentation in a written work or an oral communication (including in electronic format) of texts, phrases, ideas, demonstrations, data, hypotheses, theories, results or scientific methods extracted from written works (including in electronic format) of other authors, without mentioning this and without reference to the original sources;
  - h) Conflict of interest: a situation in which a person is in a spousal relationship or a relationship by affinity or consanguinity up to and including the third degree with the doctoral student or his/her doctoral advisor, is or has been employed in the five-year period prior to the evaluation by the IODS proposing the award of the doctoral degree or has been in any contractual relationship with the doctoral student or his/her doctoral advisor;
  - i) Electronic signature: a document signed with an advanced (extended) electronic signature, with legal value, as defined by Law no. 455/2001 on electronic signatures;
- (3) Throughout its activity, the NCAUDDC complies with the legal regulations in force on incompatibilities and conflicts of interest. NCAUDDC members who find themselves in a situation of conflict of interest regarding one of the items on the agenda must notify the chair of the NCAUDDC of this matter, must not vote on the items in question and are not counted toward the quorum required for voting.

## **Duties of NCAUDDC**

### **Article 3.**

Mainly, the NCAUDDC has the following duties:

- a) Validates the committees that evaluate habilitation theses, validates the contents of the habilitation file and proposes whether the habilitation certificate should be awarded by order of the Minister of National Education and Scientific Research, pursuant to Article 300 of Law no. 1/2011, as subsequently amended and supplemented, and Government Decision no. 681/2011 on the Code of Doctoral Studies, as amended and supplemented by Government Decision no. 134/2016;
- b) Assesses the file for the award of the doctoral degree according to the Methodology in Annex 1, which is an integral part hereof, and proposes whether the doctoral degree

should be awarded or not pursuant to Article 168 of Law no. 1/2011, as subsequently amended and supplemented, and Government Decision no. 681/2011 on the Code of Doctoral Studies, as amended and supplemented by Government Decision no. 134/2016;

- c) Analyzes and decides on complaints regarding violations of professional ethics standards, including plagiarism, pursuant to Government Decision no. 681/2011 on the Code of Doctoral Studies, as amended and supplemented by Government Decision no. 134/2016, according to the Methodology in Annex 2, which is an integral part hereof;
- d) Assesses the application files for the award of the professional grades of Research Scientist I and II, hereinafter referred to as RS I and RS II respectively, provides a reasoned confirmation or invalidation of the file-based selection results and proposes the issuance of the order of the Minister of National Education and Scientific Research for the award/non-award of such professional grades pursuant to Article 17 of Law no. 319/2003 on the status of research and development staff;
- e) Proposes the periodic assessment procedures for doctoral advisors to the MNESR and performs such assessments pursuant to Article 170(4) of Law no. 1/2011, as subsequently amended and supplemented;
- f) Provides the MNESR with an annual report regarding the higher education teaching and research staff, based on specific indicators, pursuant to Article 219(1)(d) of Law no. 1/2011, as subsequently amended and supplemented;
- g) Proposes a set of minimum standards that are necessary and mandatory for participation in the competitions to fill the higher education academic positions of Assistant Professor/Lecturer, Associate Professor and Professor and for the award of the professional grades of RS I and RS II. Such standards are approved by order of the Minister of National Education and Scientific Research pursuant to Article 219(1)(a) of Law no. 1/2011, as subsequently amended and supplemented.
- h) Proposes a set of minimum standards that are necessary and mandatory for the award of the doctoral advisor status and habilitation certificate. Such standards are approved by order of the Minister of National Education and Scientific Research pursuant to Article 219(1)(a) of Law no. 1/2011, as subsequently amended and supplemented.
- i) Proposes the Framework Methodology for competitions to fill vacancies in universities, which is established by a Government decision pursuant to Article 295 of Law no. 1/2011, as subsequently amended and supplemented;

- j) Assesses and makes proposals for the issuance of an order by the Minister of National Education and Scientific Research concerning the award of merit pay, pursuant to Law no. 118/2002 on the introduction of merit pay, as subsequently amended and supplemented, and Government Decision no. 859/2003 approving the Implementing Regulations of Law no. 118/2002 on the introduction of merit pay and the Operational Regulations of the National Merit Pay Committee, as subsequently amended and supplemented;
- k) Proposes field-specific standards for doctoral theses;
- l) Other duties as laid down by law or these Regulations.

## **Structures of NCAUDDC**

### **Article 4.**

- (1) The NCAUDDC is composed of the following structures:
  - a) General Council;
  - b) specialist committees and appeal committees;
  - c) working committees appointed for a fixed term and for specific tasks by the chair of the NCAUDDC or by the chair of the specialist committee.
- (2) Both the members of the General Council and the members of specialist committees are NCAUDDC members.

## **Decisions of NCAUDDC**

### **Article 5.**

- (1) Decisions of the NCAUDDC structures are approved by their members' vote. To adopt a decision, the members of the NCAUDDC structures may vote both during meetings and remotely, casting their vote by electronic means.
- (2) The quorum required to adopt decisions within NCAUDDC structures is half plus one of the total members with voting rights.
- (3) NCAUDDC meetings may also be attended by video conferencing.
- (4) To ensure the possibility of electronic voting, any documents subject to approval are usually delivered to the members at least three (3) days prior to the voting deadline.

## **CHAPTER II. Establishment.**

## **Article 6**

Higher education professionals and research scientists who have at least the qualification of Associate Professor or RS II or equivalent qualifications obtained abroad, the members of the Romanian Academy and the members of some cultural institutions may be members of the NCAUDDC.

## **General Council**

### **Article 7.**

- (1) The General Council of the NCAUDDC, hereinafter referred to as the General Council, is composed of a maximum of 47 members, of which no more than 35 are the specialist committee chairs.
- (2) The General Council is presided over by a chair and three (3) vice-chairs and a secretary-general, all of whom are elected by the members of the General Council at the first meeting thereof.
- (3) The chair of the General Council is also the chair of the NCAUDDC, and the vice-chairs of the General Council are also vice-chairs of the NCAUDDC.

### **Article 8.**

The members of the NCAUDDC are nationally/internationally recognized personalities of academic, scientific, cultural and moral prestige who are appointed by order of the Minister of National Education and Scientific Research for a term of maximum four (4) years.

## **Specialist committees**

### **Article 9.**

- (1) Each specialist committee has a chair and one or two vice-chairs.
- (2) Specialist NCAUDDC committees are composed of experts in the relevant scientific field(s) who are appointed as NCAUDDC members by order of the Minister of National Education and Scientific Research.
- (3) The number of specialist committee members is established by the NCAUDDC structure in such a way as to ensure evaluation quality through the members' uniform and reasonable workloads. To this end, the Minister of National Education and

Scientific Research may also order the addition of new experts to the specialist committees during a NCAUDDC term of office, based on the same selection process. The additional experts' terms end upon the expiry of the NCAUDDC term of office specified in Article 8.

- (4) If a specialist NCAUDDC committee does not have the required number of members without a conflict of interest with regard to the thesis evaluation, the chair of the specialist committee will send the chair of the NCAUDDC a proposal to add supplementary members to the specialist committee solely for the evaluation in question, specifying their names. The chair of the NCAUDDC will submit this proposal to the Minister of National Education and Scientific Research for approval by order of the latter.

### **Removal of NCAUDDC members**

#### **Article 10.**

- (1) NCAUDDC members have the following obligations:
- a) To attend the working meetings and activities of the NCAUDDC;
  - b) To comply with the rules of ethics or professional deontology;
  - c) To perform the tasks incumbent on them by virtue of their position.
- (2) NCAUDDC members may be removed from this position in compliance with the legal symmetry principle (*mutuus consensus, mutuus dissensus*).
- (3) In the event of failure to perform the obligations in paragraph (1), the Minister of National Education and Scientific Research may proceed to remove the members in question based on a reasoned proposal by the NCAUDDC.
- (4) A new member who meets the legal requirements will be appointed, after consultation with the NCAUDDC, by order of the Minister of National Education and Scientific Research, to fill the position that remains vacant after removal.

### **CHAPTER III. Duties and powers of the NCAUDDC.**

#### **General Council**

#### **Article 11.**

The General Council has the following duties and powers:

- a) Drafts and proposes for approval by the Minister of National Education and Scientific Research the internal rules of operation of the NCAUDDC and the NCAUDDC committees;
- b) Continuously monitors the specialist committees' compliance with the regulations, procedures and standards in force, preparing annual reports for the Minister of National Education and Scientific Research;
- c) Receives complaints regarding violations of professional ethics standards, including plagiarism, in doctoral theses and analyzes the responsibility of the doctoral thesis author, doctoral advisor or doctoral school with a view to enforcing Article 69(5) of Government Decision no. 681/2011 and point 5 paragraph (6) of Government Decision no. 134/2016. The complaint resolution procedure is presented in Annex 2, which is an integral part hereof.
- d) Requests an opinion from the institution organizing doctoral studies (IODS) regarding the violation of professional ethics standards, including plagiarism, in doctoral theses, within the time limit laid down in point 7 paragraph (3) of Government Decision no. 134/2016;
- e) Approves and proposes to the Minister of National Education and Scientific Research actions required to improve the activity of the NCAUDDC, as resulting from monitoring;
- f) Adopts resolutions pursuant to these Regulations;
- g) Validates the proposals made by specialist committees and/or working committees established under Article 4(c) following the assessment of compliance with quality and professional ethics standards, including the assessment of plagiarism;
- h) Analyzes appeals and issues decisions regarding violations of quality and professional ethics standards, including plagiarism, in doctoral theses;
- i) Proposes one or several measures—such as removal from the position of doctoral advisor, revocation of the doctoral degree or revocation of the doctoral school accreditation—to the MNESR, according to law and these Regulations;
- j) Other duties established by law or by order of the Minister of National Education and Scientific Research.

**Article 12.**

- (1) The General Council may carry out the following types of activities:
  - a) Assessment of staff quality in doctoral schools;

- b) Analysis of complaints regarding compliance with professional ethics standards, including plagiarism, in doctoral theses;
  - c) Examination of the conduct of competitions to fill teaching and research vacancies in universities;
  - d) Preparation of the HR report for teaching and research in higher education;
  - e) Preparation of proposals for methodologies and regulations falling within the remit of the NCAUDDC.
- (2) The members of the General Council may also participate, as necessary or at the request of the Minister of National Education and Scientific Research or the chair of the NCAUDDC, in fixed-term working committees for other types of activities, according to law.

### **Chair of NCAUDDC**

#### **Article 13.**

- (1) The chair of the NCAUDDC has the following duties:
- a) Directs the work of the General Council;
  - b) Establishes the agenda of the working meetings of the General Council based on the proposals of the General Council members; the agenda may be amended by decision of the General Council members at the request of any General Council member;
  - c) Represents the NCAUDDC before the Minister of National Education and Scientific Research and third parties;
  - d) Other duties laid down by order of the Minister of National Education and Scientific Research;
  - e) The chair of the NCAUDDC may establish, for a fixed term, working committees which may include NCAUDDC members or external experts.
- (2) In the event that the chair of the NCAUDDC is absent, one of the vice-chairs will direct the work and establish the agenda of the General Council meetings. Vice-chairs perform such activities by taking turns in alphabetical order.
- (3) The chair of the NCAUDDC may delegate some of his/her duties to the vice-chairs of the NCAUDDC either for a fixed term or permanently and may revoke such delegations.



**Article 14.**

Meetings of the General Council and the committees are convened by the chair of the NCAUDDC or by the MNESR whenever necessary.

**Article 15.**

The decisions of the NCAUDDC General Council may be appealed, according to law.

**Article 16.**

The Minister of National Education and Scientific Research or a representative thereof is entitled to attend both the meetings of the General Council and the meetings of the specialist committees, without the right to vote therein.

**Chair of a specialist committee**

**Article 17.**

- (1) The chair of a specialist committee has the following duties:
  - a) Coordinates the activity of the specialist committee in question;
  - b) Represents the committee in the General Council;
  - c) Other duties laid down by order of the Minister of National Education and Scientific Research or by decision of the General Council.
- (2) The chair of a specialist committee may delegate some of his/her duties to the vice-chair(s) of the committee either for a fixed term or permanently.

**CHAPTER IV. Minimum standards.**

**Article 18.**

- (1) The NCAUDDC will propose the minimum standards mentioned in Article 219(1)(a) of Law no. 1/2011, as subsequently amended and supplemented, according to the following procedure:
  - a) Each specialist committee will propose by a committee decision the minimum standards applicable to the fields covered by such committee, based on the proposals made by the members of such committee;

- b) The General Council will validate by decision the minimum standards, based on the proposals made by the specialist committees, and will propose such standards for approval by the Minister of National Education and Scientific Research;
  - c) The proposal of the General Council will be forwarded by the chair of the NCAUDDC to the Minister of National Education and Scientific Research;
  - d) The minimum standards will be laid down by order of the Minister of National Education and Scientific Research, based on the proposal of the General Council.
- (2) The minimum standards that are necessary and mandatory for habilitation certification are identical to those for the award of the title of Professor.
- (3) The minimum standards that are necessary and mandatory for the award of the professional grades of RS I and RS II are established by the specialist NCAUDDC committee in such a way as to ensure equivalence with the title of Professor and Associate Professor respectively.
- (4) After the procedure in paragraph (1) is restarted, the NCAUDDC may propose the amendment of the minimum standards to the Minister of National Education and Scientific Research.

## **CHAPTER V. Final provisions.**

### **Article 19.**

The activity of the NCAUDDC according to law is assisted from a technical standpoint by a Technical Secretariat approved by order of the Minister.

### **Article 20.**

The material and financial resources required for the operation of the NCAUDDC and its working committees are provided by the MNESR according to law.

### **Article 21.**

The budget of the NCAUDDC is managed by the Executive Agency for Higher Education, Research, Development and Innovation Funding (*EAHERDIF*) and is established on a contractual basis by the Ministry of National Education and Scientific Research and the EAHERDIF or from other legally established sources that are managed by the EAHERDIF.

**Article 22.**

For their participation in meetings or working meetings, the members of the NCAUDDC and its working bodies receive a gross remuneration of 1/20 of the gross base salary (corresponding to the maximum ranking coefficient) of a professor in a publicly funded higher education institution, according to law.

**Article 23.**

For their participation in meetings or working meetings, the members of the NCAUDDC and its working bodies are reimbursed for their transportation, per diem and accommodation expenses, according to law.

**Article 24.**

The remuneration of the activity performed by members of NCAUDDC committees or working groups outside their core activity and the reimbursement of their transportation, per diem and accommodation expenses for their participation in meetings or working meetings will be provided according to law and within the limits of the budget earmarked for this purpose.

**ANNEX 1**  
**to the Regulations**  
**DOCTORAL THESIS EVALUATION METHODOLOGY**

**Chapter I. General provisions.**

**Article 1.**

The doctoral thesis is an original paper, and the source of any material used therein must be specified.

**Article 2.**

The doctoral student is the author of the doctoral thesis and takes full responsibility for the accuracy of the data and information presented in the thesis as well as the accuracy of the opinions and demonstrations provided in the thesis.

**Article 3.**

The doctoral advisor is jointly liable with the author of the thesis for compliance with quality or professional ethics standards, including for ensuring the originality of the thesis content, pursuant to Article 170 of Law no. 1/2011, as subsequently amended and supplemented.

**Chapter II. Public defense of the doctoral thesis.**

**Article 4.**

The rules below must be observed for the public defense of the doctoral thesis:

- a) Upon the doctoral student's submission of the thesis in electronic format (soft copy) and, as applicable, in printed format (hard copy) to the registrar's office of the doctoral school, IODS will issue a supporting document registered in the records of the institution and part of the doctoral file;
- b) The doctoral school will perform a similarity analysis using NCAUDDC-approved software. The doctoral school may additionally request the use of similarity detection software developed at a national level. Similarity reports will be included in the doctoral file. The verification period must not exceed 30 days from the submission of the thesis to the IODS.

- c) The thesis will be presented before the advisory committee of the doctoral school; after this pre-defense, which can be public, the doctoral advisor and the advisory committee will decide on the official thesis submission and the organization of the public defense. The acceptance report of the doctoral advisor and the approval of the advisory committee members will be included in the doctoral file. The duration of the thesis evaluation by the advisory and inspection committee is 30 days.
- d) The doctoral thesis will be officially submitted to the doctoral school registrar's office as both hard (printed) and soft (electronic) copies, together with the abstract of the thesis and the doctoral student's CV; the doctoral school registrar's office will certify that the doctoral student has performed all of his/her obligations within the doctoral studies program and has observed the procedures described in letters (a), (b) and (c).
- e) The application to schedule the public defense date, endorsed by the doctoral advisor and the chair of the defense committee, will be submitted to the doctoral school registrar's office at least 20 calendar days prior to the proposed defense date;
- f) The doctoral school will prepare and post the public defense announcement at least 20 calendar days prior to the proposed defense date. The notice must include the defense date, time and place, the doctoral advisor(s) as well as the location where the full printed of the thesis can be consulted. The public defense notice, the electronic abstract, the doctoral student's CV and the CVs of the public defense committee members or links thereto will be posted on the IODS website.
- g) The doctoral committee must meet the requirements of Article 76 of Government Decision no. 681 of June 29, 2011, on the Code of Doctoral Studies.

**Article 5.**

Based on the public defense of the doctoral thesis and the reports of official specialists, the doctoral committee will evaluate and decide the grade to be assigned to the doctoral thesis. A thesis can be graded as "Excellent," "Very Good," "Good," "Satisfactory" or "Unsatisfactory."

**Article 6.**

If the doctoral student has met all of the requirements of the scientific research program and the assessments of the doctoral thesis allow the award of the grade "Excellent," "Very Good," "Good" or "Satisfactory," the doctoral committee will propose the award of the doctoral degree. The proposal will be submitted to the NCAUDDC for validation. After evaluating the file, the

NCAUDDC will propose to the Minister of National Education, Science and Research the award or non-award of the doctoral degree.

**Article 7.**

If the thesis is graded as “Unsatisfactory,” the doctoral committee will specify the doctoral thesis content elements to be redone or supplemented and will request a new public defense. The second public defense will take place before the same doctoral committee as the first defense. If the thesis is still graded as “Unsatisfactory” in the second public defense, the doctoral degree will not be awarded and the doctoral student will be expelled.

**Article 8.**

The doctoral file will be permanently archived by the IODS.

**Chapter III. The doctoral file.**

**Article 9.**

The doctoral file must contain the following items:

- a) Scanned copy of the doctoral student’s ID;
- b) Scanned copy of the doctoral student’s birth certificate;
- c) Scanned copy of the doctoral student’s marriage certificate, if applicable;
- d) Doctoral student’s CV;
- e) Decision of admission to the doctoral studies program;
- f) The doctoral learning agreement and addenda, if applicable. Aside from the name, personal data will not be publicly visible;
- g) Application for pre-defense—signed by the doctoral student, registered at the doctoral school and endorsed by the doctoral advisor—regarding the commencement of the thesis evaluation by the advisory committee;
- h) Scanned copy of the statement—signed by the doctoral student and the doctoral advisor—on the assumption of responsibility for thesis content originality as well as compliance with quality and professional ethics standards, pursuant to Articles 143(4) and 170 of the National Education Law no. 1/2011, as subsequently amended and supplemented, and Article 65 paragraphs (5) to (7) of the Code of Doctoral Studies, as approved by Government Decision no. 681/2011;

- i) At least one similarity report that must include the resolution of the doctoral advisor and of other individuals who analyzed the report, as applicable;
- j) A report prepared by the doctoral school prior to the public thesis defense as well as documentation certifying the course of the study program;
- k) A proposal regarding the members of the public defense committee, made by the doctoral advisor and approved by the Council of Doctoral Studies;
- l) CVs of the members of the public defense committee;
- m) Decision regarding the appointment of the public defense committee;
- n) Application to schedule the public defense date, endorsed by the doctoral advisor and the chair of the defense committee and submitted to the registrar's office of the doctoral school at least 20 calendar days prior to the proposed defense date;
- o) The public defense announcement prepared by the doctoral school at least 20 calendar days prior to the proposed defense date;
- p) Certificate regarding the submission of a hard copy of the doctoral thesis to the library;
- q) Reports of the official specialists who are members of the doctoral committee, signed by such specialists, in the form of scanned copies or electronically signed documents;
- r) Acceptance report issued by the doctoral advisor;
- s) The advisory committee's approval regarding the submission of the doctoral thesis to the registrar's office of the doctoral school;
- t) Report regarding the public defense of the doctoral thesis and Q&A annex containing the proposal to award the doctoral degree, signed by all members of the doctoral committee, in the form of a scanned copy or an electronically signed document or, as applicable, a full audio recording of the public defense of the doctoral thesis, which must be accompanied by a notice certifying the duration of the recording and its proper preservation (optional);
- u) Abstract of the doctoral thesis;
- v) Doctoral thesis and its annexes in electronic format;
- w) List of publications resulting from the scientific research conducted during the doctoral studies program, either published or accepted for publication, if applicable, and scanned copies thereof;
- x) Statement of the doctoral student regarding his/her options in terms of doctoral thesis publication;
- y) The request of the IODS to start the NCAUDDC evaluation of the doctoral thesis, registered at the MNESR.

**Article 10.**

Electronically signed PDF copies (with legal value) of the doctoral file documents must be uploaded to the national electronic platform.

**Article 11.**

The public defense report specified in paragraph (9)(q) must also include:

- a) The proposed grade;
- b) A mention of the specialist NCAUDDC committee that covers the field of doctoral studies in which the program of study was completed;
- c) The public defense date of the doctoral thesis.

**Article 12.**

The doctoral thesis and its annexes included in the file will be uploaded to the national electronic platform as electronically signed PDFs with legal value, in which the main text is represented as such and not through images. Audio materials, video materials or graphic illustrations may be exempt from this rule.

**Chapter IV. Evaluation of the doctoral thesis by the NCAUDDC.**

**Article 13.**

The evaluation by the National Council for Attestation of University Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates, hereinafter referred to as the NCAUDDC, of any files submitted to it for doctoral thesis validation and doctoral degree award/non-award proposal will be conducted in accordance with the provisions of this methodology.

**Article 14.**

- (1) The evaluation of files by the NCAUDDC is supported by an information system hereinafter referred to as the “national platform,” which is provided by the MNESR.
- (2) The national platform enables the transmission of information in electronic format within the procedures laid down in this methodology.

**Article 15.**

For the conduct of doctoral thesis evaluations, institutions organizing doctoral studies, i.e., higher education institutions and the Romanian Academy, hereinafter generically referred to as



the IODS, must compile an electronic file for each doctoral student. The file is delivered to the NCAUDDC via the national platform. The file must be uploaded to the platform no later than 30 days after the public defense of the doctoral thesis.

**Article 16.**

- (1) The file uploaded to the national platform must be electronically signed by the legal representative of IODS or by an individual delegated by the latter.
- (2) By the signature specified in paragraph (1), the signatory assumes responsibility that the documents in the file are true copies of the originals and guarantees that the information uploaded to the national platform is accurate and complete.

**Article 17.**

- (1) The MNESR will check from an administrative standpoint the elements of the electronic file uploaded by the IODS to the national platform and must notify any registration errors or missing documents to the institutions that have sent such files.
- (2) Pursuant to Article 168(8) of Law no. 1/2011, as subsequently amended and supplemented, the NCAUDDC will not restart the analysis of doctoral thesis files that have been analyzed and invalidated once by NCAUDDC and that are not resubmitted within one year from such invalidation and will not restart the analysis of doctoral thesis files that have been analyzed and invalidated twice by the NCAUDDC.

**Article 18.**

- (1) The MNESR may analyze the doctoral thesis using plagiarism checking software. The result of such analysis will be included in the file.
- (2) No later than 15 business days after the registration of the file, the MNESR will forward the file to the chair of the specialist NCAUDDC committee (according to the fields assigned by order of the Minister).

**Article 19.**

- (1) No later than 5 business days after the receipt of the file, the chair of the specialist committee must nominate three (3) committee members as evaluators, according to the topic of the doctoral thesis.

- (2) For theses covering multi- or interdisciplinary topics, the number of evaluators may be increased, and such evaluators may be part of several specialist NCAUDDC committees.
- (3) After gaining access to the file information, nominee evaluators will notify their acceptance to participate in the thesis evaluation committee, declaring that they are not in a conflict of interest with regard to the evaluation of such thesis; if some of the nominees decline to be part of the evaluation committee, the nominee list will be supplemented—external experts may be called upon, provided that the nominee specialists have the expertise required to evaluate the thesis in question and to meet the minimum standards required to hold the position of Associate Professor.
- (4) The proposed evaluators must be confirmed by all members of the specialist committee.
- (5) If the members of the specialist committee do not raise any objections within three (3) days, the evaluators are deemed validated.
- (6) The chair of the specialist committee will issue the decision to appoint the evaluation committee composed of such validated evaluators.

**Article 20.**

Individuals who meet one or several of the following criteria are in a conflict of interest regarding the evaluation of a file:

- a) Are in a spousal relationship or a relationship by affinity or consanguinity up to and including the third degree with the doctoral student or his/her doctoral advisor;
- b) Are or have been employed, in the five-year period prior to the evaluation, by the IODS proposing the award of the doctoral degree;
- c) Have been in any type of contractual relationship with the doctoral student or his/her doctoral advisor;

**Article 21.**

The evaluation process starts immediately after the establishment of the evaluation committee and the issuance of its appointment decision.

**Article 22.**

The members of the evaluation committee may consult with one another with a view to evaluating the file.

**Article 23.**

The evaluation committee will analyze the file as to compliance with procedures leading to the proposal to award the doctoral degree and the achievement of standards specific to doctoral theses in that field. If the specialist committee has not yet adopted standards specific to theses in that field, the evaluators will analyze the doctoral thesis based on the following criteria:

- a) Scientific relevance;
- b) Potential impact of the results and the extent to which the thesis makes substantial contributions to knowledge;
- c) Originality and innovation or creativity and the extent to which the doctoral student demonstrates independent critical thinking skills;
- d) The extent to which the doctoral student has adequately used research methods and methodologies;
- e) The extent to which information is adequately presented in the thesis;
- f) The extent to which the doctoral student demonstrates an understanding of and familiarity with the relevant literature in the field;
- g) The extent to which the results presented in the thesis have been published or accepted for publication following evaluation by external evaluators (by peer review) or represent the basis of patent applications or applications or the extent to which the results presented in the thesis have the potential to be published in this way or to be applied;
- h) Compliance with the rules of good conduct in research and development.

**Article 24.**

- (1) The individual thesis evaluation report includes one of the following elements:
  - a) Vote to validate the thesis and the grade proposed by the defense committee;
  - b) Vote to invalidate the thesis, accompanied by the reasoning thereof;
  - c) Vote to validate the thesis and to amend the grade proposed by the defense committee, accompanied by the reasoning of the amendment proposal.
- (2) The report specified in paragraph (1)(b) may be prepared in Romanian and, as applicable, in the language of the doctoral thesis.

**Article 25.**

The summary thesis evaluation report prepared by the evaluation committee is composed of the number of validation/invalidation votes from the reports specified in Article 17 paragraph

(1) letter (b) (without specifying the individual vote of each evaluator) and, if thesis validation was decided, the grade proposed by the evaluation committee.

**Article 26.**

(1) Individual thesis evaluation reports and the thesis grade must be transmitted to the chair of the main committee and the other members of the evaluation committee via the electronic platform or, if that is not possible for technical reasons, directly by the members of the evaluation committee no later than 15 business days after the issuance of the evaluation committee appointment decision.

(2) The specific vote of each evaluation committee member is confidential information under professional secrecy and can only be disclosed to individuals specified in paragraph (1), inspection committees established by the NCAUDDC General Council, and authorized inspection bodies. The evaluators' identity is public information.

(3) Defaulting parties at fault for violation of paragraph (2) are liable according to law.

After the upload to the platform, the chair of the specialist committee will notify the members of the committee of the evaluation committees' proposals; if none of the specialist committee members request additional clarifications or an additional analysis within five (5) business days, the evaluation committees' proposals are deemed validated.

**Article 27.**

(1) From time to time or at the request of the chair or secretary-general, the Technical Secretariat will provide the General Council with the list of evaluated doctoral theses, the evaluation committees' proposals validated by the specialist committees, and links to the documents available on the platform.

(2) The validation/invalidation proposals submitted by the committees are subject to approval by the General Council. At least a quarter of the members of the NCAUDDC General Council may request that the thesis be reanalyzed by the specialist committee.

**Article 28.**

(1) If the General Council requests the reevaluation of a doctoral thesis that was validated by the evaluation committee:

a) The procedure to establish the members of the evaluation committee according to these Regulations is restarted so that no members of the initial evaluation committee are part of the new evaluation committee;

- b) The file is reevaluated by the new evaluation committee according to these Regulations.
- (2) The procedure to reevaluate a doctoral thesis that was validated by the evaluation committee is also automatically triggered at the request of the Minister of National Education and Scientific Research.
- (3) If the new evaluation committee decides to validate the doctoral thesis, the chair of the NCAUDDC will issue the validation decision.

**Article 29.**

- (1) Based on the validation decision, the chair of the NCAUDDC proposes that the Minister of National Education and Scientific Research award the doctoral degree. The Minister of National Education and Scientific Research awards the doctoral degree by an order which specifies the grade granted.
- (2) The specialist MNESR department delivers the approval order together with the summary thesis evaluation report to the IODS/IODP no later than 15 business days after the issuance of the order.

**Article 30.**

- (1) If the evaluation committee decides to invalidate the doctoral thesis, the chair of the NCAUDDC will issue the invalidation decision. The invalidation decision together with the summary evaluation report will be delivered to the MNESR for notification to the IODS/IODP pursuant to Article 168(8) of Law no. 1/2011, as subsequently amended and supplemented.
- (1) If the NCAUDDC issues an invalidation decision after evaluating a thesis resubmitted to the NCAUDDC pursuant to Article 168(8) of Law no. 1/2011, as subsequently amended and supplemented, the NCAUDDC proposes that the Minister of National Education and Scientific Research not award the doctoral degree, in which case the Minister of National Education and Scientific Research will issue an order to this effect.

**Article 31.**

- (1) The doctoral degree award/non-award order as well as the thesis invalidation decision may be appealed no later than 15 business days after their notice to the IODS/IODP. The appeal must be officially registered at the MNESR and forwarded to the EAHERDIF for the completion of the appeals procedure laid down herein.

- (2) The appeal analysis committee is composed of three (3) members selected from the NCAUDDC members and appointed by the chair of the NCAUDDC; the nominees must not be the same as the thesis evaluation committee members, in compliance with the procedure in Article 10.
- (3) The appeal analysis committee will prepare no later than 14 business days after its appointment an appeal analysis report that it will forward to the NCAUDDC General Council. No later than 5 business days after the receipt of the appeal analysis report, the NCAUDDC General Council will decide:
  - a) If the report of the appeal analysis committee proves that the procedure was not complied with, at the proposal of the appeal analysis committee, the NCAUDDC General Council will order the procedure to be restarted from the point of the proven procedure violation, according to these Regulations.
  - b) If the report of the appeal analysis committee proves that the appeal is unfounded, the NCAUDDC will uphold the initial decision.
- (4) The report of the appeal analysis committee and the decision of the NCAUDDC will be delivered to the MNESR for notification to the appellant no later than 45 days after the official registration of the appeal.

**Article 32.**

At the beginning of each year, the EAHERDIF will publish on the NCAUDDC website the names of the NCAUDDC members who evaluated doctoral files during the previous year, specifying the number of evaluated files for each member but not the identity of the individuals who evaluated a particular file.

**ANNEX 2**  
**to the Regulations**  
**RESOLUTION OF COMPLAINTS REGARDING THE VIOLATION OF QUALITY**  
**OR PROFESSIONAL ETHICS STANDARDS, INCLUDING PLAGIARISM, IN A**  
**DOCTORAL THESIS**

**Chapter I. General provisions.**

**Article 1.**

Any natural or legal person, including members of the National Council for Attestation of University Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates (NCAUDDC) and of the Institutions Organizing Doctoral Studies (IODS), may complain in writing to the NCAUDDC General Council with regard to the violation of quality or professional ethics standards, including plagiarism, in a doctoral thesis, regardless of its defense date and regardless of the date the doctoral degree was awarded, via the Executive Agency for Higher Education, Research, Development and Innovation Funding (EAHERDIF).

**Chapter II. Submission and registration of complaints.**

**Article 2.**

The complaint must cumulatively meet the following requirements:

- a) Must contain identification data of the natural or legal person making the complaint, i.e., last name and first name, personal identification number (*CNP*), domicile (permanent address), e-mail address (for natural persons) and identification data and official addresses of the institution, association, organization, etc. (for legal persons);
- b) Must contain the identification data of the doctoral thesis subject to the complaint: author, thesis title, and the institution that awarded the doctoral degree based on such thesis;
- c) Must enclose copies of the consulted documents which represent the basis of the complaint, including the sources of information and the identification data thereof (e.g., libraries, journals, published books, etc.);
- d) Must contain the reasoning of the complaint, with concrete examples of violation of quality or professional ethics standards or plagiarism in the doctoral thesis in question.

**Article 3.**

The complaint and its annexes must be submitted and officially registered at the EAHERDIF.

**Article 4.**

- (1) The EAHERDIF will check within three (3) days whether the complaint meets the requirements specified in Article 3.
- (2) If the check reveals that Article 2 was violated, the EAHERDIF will notify within 30 days the person who submitted the complaint of the elements that must be supplemented and will close the initial complaint.

**Article 5.**

- (1) If the complaint is accepted, it is then anonymized to protect the identity of the natural or legal person who submitted the complaint. The EAHERDIF will immediately notify the MNESR and the chair of the NCAUDDC General Council in order to start the complaint analysis and resolution process.
- (2) The decision to close the complaint or to accept it for analysis will be published on the website [www.cnatdcu.ro](http://www.cnatdcu.ro).

**Chapter III. Compilation of the analysis file.**

**Article 6.**

- (1) After receiving the notice from the EAHERDIF regarding the officially registered complaint, the MNESR will compile the analysis file.
- (2) The MNESR will ask the National Library of Romania electronically to deliver, within five (5) business days, a true copy of the doctoral thesis and will make an electronic copy of the doctoral file kept in its own archive.
- (3) If the documents specified in paragraph (2) cannot be retrieved from the aforementioned sources for objective reasons, true copies thereof will be requested from the IODS.

**Article 7.**

- (1) The MNESR will upload the documents below to a section of the national platform that is not public but is still accessible by the working committee members:



- a) The anonymized complaint and its annexes;
- b) The true copy of the doctoral thesis;
- c) The true copy of the documents in the doctoral file kept in its own archive;
- d) The applicable legal regulations and other documents relevant to the complaint analysis;
- e) The opinion of the institution that awarded the doctoral degree.

#### **Chapter IV. Establishment of the NCAUDDC working committee.**

##### **Article 8.**

- (1) After receiving from the EAHERDIF the notice regarding the officially registered complaint, the chair of the NCAUDDC General Council will ask the chair of the specialist NCAUDDC committee with duties in the field of the doctoral thesis to appoint, within five (5) business days, a working committee composed of three (3) experts who can be members of the NCAUDDC and/or external experts, in compliance with the laws on incompatibilities or conflicts of interest.
- (2) The chair of the specialist committee will electronically request that the members of such committee nominate the NCAUDDC members and/or external experts to be appointed as evaluators.
- (3) The list of nominations is subject to electronic confirmation by the members of the specialist committee.
- (4) All evaluators who received several favorable votes are deemed confirmed.
- (5) After gaining access to the file information, confirmed evaluators will notify their acceptance to participate in the working committee, declaring at their own risk that they are not in a situation of incompatibility or conflict of interest with regard to the evaluation of such thesis.
- (6) The chair of the specialist committee will issue the decision to appoint the committee composed of three (3) confirmed evaluators, as well as an annex containing the evaluators' acceptance to participate in the complaint evaluation and the statutory statements specified in paragraph (5).

##### **Article 9.**

If the chair of the specialist committee is in a situation of conflict of interest and incompatibility with the stakeholders, his/her duties will be taken over by the vice-chair of the specialist committee.

**Article 10.**

From the establishment date of the working committee, its members will analyze the documents comprising the analysis file uploaded by the MNESR to the national platform.

**Chapter V. The opinion of the higher education institution/Romanian Academy.**

**Article 11.**

The MNESR will send the anonymized complaint to the higher education institution or to the Romanian Academy, as applicable, and will request an opinion that must be prepared and delivered no later than 30 days after the complaint registration.

**Article 12.**

In relation to the complaint and according to its internal procedures, the IOSD will analyze the doctoral thesis which is found in the library of the institution and which represented the basis of the doctoral degree award.

**Article 13.**

IODS will officially notify the holder of the doctoral degree of the existence of a complaint regarding the doctoral thesis prepared by him/her.

**Article 14.**

- (1) No later than 30 days after the complaint registration date, the IOSD will deliver to the NCAUDDC—via notice officially registered at the MNESR—the opinion concerning the complaint resolution.
- (2) The opinion of the IOSD will include the following:
  - a) The proposal to uphold/revoke the doctoral degree, signed by the rector or by the president of the Romanian Academy, as applicable;
  - b) Internal documents and regulations that were in force on the date of the author's enrollment in doctoral studies and applicable on the public defense date and that

substantiated this proposal—mainly, the legally endorsed decision of the University Ethics Committee;

c) A notice regarding other internal measures that were established in the event of an ascertained violation of university ethics.

(3) Together with this opinion, the IODS will electronically submit the following:

- a) A true copy of the doctoral thesis in question, as filed in the library of the institution;
- b) Information on the author of the doctoral thesis (personal identification number/*CNP*, date of enrollment in doctoral studies, public defense date of the doctoral thesis, series and number of the doctoral degree and its issuance date and number, and the last name and first name of the doctoral advisor);
- c) Copies of the documents pertaining to the public defense of the doctoral thesis, namely: committee appointment decision/rector's order, reports prepared by committee members, public defense report.

#### **Article 15.**

If the opinion does not include all elements specified in Article 15, the IODS will be requested to redraft and resubmit it within two (2) business days.

#### **Article 16.**

If possible, the IODS will also notify the MNESR of the thesis author's mailing addresses.

### **Chapter VI. Complaint analysis by the NCAUDDC.**

#### **Article 17.**

- (1) Starting with the working committee's establishment date, the members of such committee will independently analyze the complaint and the documents uploaded to the national platform, will prepare a written opinion concerning the complaint and then will agree on a joint report during a working meeting, which may also be held by electronic means.
- (2) The report must also include a reasoned proposal to uphold or revoke the doctoral degree, as applicable.
- (3) If the revocation of the doctoral degree is proposed in the joint report, the joint report may also include other penalty proposals pursuant to Article 170 of the National Education Law no. 1/2011, as subsequently amended and supplemented.

- (4) The electronically signed joint report enclosing each member's written opinion will be forwarded to the chair of the specialist NCAUDDC committee no later than 30 days after the registration of the complaint.
- (5) The working committee report will be notified to the members of the specialist NCAUDDC committee for consultation purposes.
- (6) If within three (3) days of the notification the members of the specialist NCAUDDC committee do not raise any objections or request a formal vote, the working committee report will be deemed endorsed by the specialist NCAUDDC committee.
- (7) The endorsed committee report will be forwarded to the chair of the NCAUDDC General Council by the chair of the specialist committee.

**Article 18.**

The chair of the NCAUDDC decides to convene the NCAUDDC General Council for approval/rejection of the working committee proposal, specifying the date, time and place of the meeting. The General Council convocation decision will also include the list of relevant documents that can be consulted on the national platform.

**Article 19.**

By voting on the working committee report, the NCAUDDC General Council will adopt one of the following proposals:

- a) Upholding the doctoral degree;
- b) Revoking the doctoral degree and proposing measures that are required concerning the doctoral advisor and the members of the doctoral thesis defense committee, pursuant to the laws in force.

**Article 20.**

The decision of the NCAUDDC General Council will be recorded in a report prepared and signed by the chair of the NCAUDDC at the end of the meeting.

**Article 21.**

The report of the NCAUDDC General Council meeting will be officially registered at the MNESR.

**Article 22.**

The decision of the NCAUDDC General Council will be officially delivered to the complainant by the EAHERDIF and to the IODS and the thesis author by the MNESR.

**Article 23.**

The decision of the NCAUDDC General Council will be published on the website [www.cnatdcu.ro](http://www.cnatdcu.ro) together with the report prepared by the working committee.

**Article 24.**

Any of the stakeholders may request access to the documents that substantiated the decision of the NCAUDDC General Council and may appeal the complaint analysis process no later than 10 days after the notification and publication of the NCAUDDC General Council decision.

**Article 25.**

If no appeals are officially registered by the set deadline, the decision of the NCAUDDC General Council is final, and any subsequent appeal is deemed unfounded and closed.

**Article 26.**

Appeals will be addressed to the NCAUDDC General Council and officially registered at the EAHERDIF only within the prescribed period.

**Article 27.**

The EAHERDIF will provide the MNESR and the chair of the NCAUDDC General Council with a written notice on the registration of the appeal.

**Article 28.**

The NCAUDDC General Council will appoint an appeal analysis committee composed of three (3) NCAUDDC members that were not involved in the complaint analysis and that are not in a situation of conflict of interest with any of the stakeholders.

**Article 29.**

If during the complaint analysis the person in question admits—by an original signed notice—that they have violated professional ethics standards and agrees to the revocation of the doctoral degree, the chair of NCAUDDC may propose the revocation of the doctoral degree without including the analyses and documents specified in Articles 6–17.

**Article 30.**

The joint report of the members of the appeal analysis committee will be notified to the members of the NCAUDDC General Council for consultation purposes no later than seven (7) days after the registration of the appeal.

**Article 31.**

Based on the report of the appeal analysis committee, the NCAUDDC General Council will confirm or reverse the initial decision proposing the upholding or revocation of the doctoral degree, as applicable, or will decide to restart the analysis procedure.

**Chapter VII. Complaint resolution and adoption of required legal measures.**

**Article 32.**

If the final decision of the NCAUDDC General Council fails to confirm the suspicion expressed in the analyzed complaint, then the complaint will be closed and the EAHERDIF will notify the complainant thereof.

**Article 33.**

If the final decision of the NCAUDDC General Council confirms the violation of quality or professional ethics standards, the NCAUDDC General Council will propose that the Minister of National Education and Scientific Research take the following measures either alternatively or simultaneously:

- a) Removal from the position of doctoral advisor/revocation of the habilitation certificate;
- b) Revocation of the doctoral degree;
- c) Revocation of the doctoral school's accreditation, which entails the revocation of the doctoral school's right to hold an admission competition to select new doctoral students.

**Article 34.**

The final decision of the NCAUDDC will be officially notified to the MNESR and legally endorsed.

**Article 35.**

Based on the legally endorsed decision of the NCAUDDC, the Minister of National Education and Scientific Research must take the measures laid down in Article 170 of Law no. 1/2011, as subsequently amended and supplemented.

**Article 36.**

The MNESR will inform all parties regarding the issued orders.

**Article 37.**

All relevant documents pertaining to complaint resolution are part of the doctoral file and will be uploaded to the national platform.

**Article 38.**

All issued decisions and orders will be published on the official websites of the NCAUDDC, the MNESR, and the IODS.