



## **Recommendations and procedure to be followed regarding Joint Supervision Agreements**

### **between the University of Lausanne (UNIL)**

**and**

### **a foreign institution authorised to award doctoral degrees**

#### **Recommendations**

1. The joint supervision of a thesis is designed to ensure that doctoral students benefit from scientific cooperation and complementary knowledge between two institutions<sup>1</sup>.
2. The special feature of a joint supervision is that doctoral students carry on their research work under the joint responsibility of two thesis supervisors (one at UNIL and one at an institution abroad).
3. The joint supervision implies that the doctoral student must stay also at the partner university (minimum duration of six months<sup>2</sup> in one or more stays spread over the entire duration of thesis work).
4. The intention to set up a joint supervision arrangement is formalised in each case by the signing of an agreement between the two institutions concerned.
5. This agreement must be signed by the doctoral student, both thesis supervisors, both Deans/or equivalent and the legal representatives of both institutions (Rectors/Presidents/Chancellors - at UNIL by the Vice Rector in charge of Careers and Society). The doctoral student is in charge of ensuring that all documents and information are transferred to both institutions. He or she is responsible for the administrative aspects of the procedure, in close collaboration with the relevant persons of the Faculties, the International Relations office and the partner university.
6. The signing of a joint supervision agreement is possible with institutions with which UNIL has signed a cooperation agreement. For other universities, applications will be examined on a case by case basis by the relevant persons of the Faculties.
7. Through this agreement, each institution commits itself to confer the doctoral degree based on a favourable report of the committee of examiners. Thus, both institutions award each a doctoral diploma for the same thesis. The text of each of the two diplomas must specify the fact that the doctoral degree is delivered in the framework of a joint supervision between UNIL and the partner institution, to avoid any possible implication that two doctorates have been awarded.

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<sup>1</sup> Joint supervision must not be confused with co-supervision of a thesis, which does not require the signing of an agreement. A doctoral student under co-supervision is supervised by a thesis supervisor from UNIL, in collaboration with a Professor from another university. Only the university of origin may award the doctoral degree. See Directive of the Rectorate 3.11 Co-supervision of theses.

<sup>2</sup> For periods of less than six months, a thesis co-supervision is recommended.

8. For UNIL doctoral students, a joint supervision agreement may only be put in place during the first two years of registration as a doctoral student. The same time limit applies to doctoral students coming from a partner university.
9. The setting up of a joint supervision implies the doctoral student's registration and/or admission to both institutions concerned. The doctoral student must therefore meet the administrative requirements (admission criteria, regulations, courses, doctoral examinations, time limits) of both institutions. Registration fees for each semester are paid to one of the institutions throughout the duration of the thesis, or arrangements for alternate payments are made by the two universities. The doctoral student is exempted from fees at the other institution, under reservation of imposed fixed fees. Following approval by the Faculty, this distribution must be indicated in the agreement. The exemption of fees is possible only once the agreement is duly signed and returned before the admission deadline of the targeted semester.
10. In principle, one of the two institutions organises the oral examination of the thesis and pays the cost of travel, meals and accommodation incurred by jury members from the partner institution. The other institution organises the thesis colloquium which must precede the oral examination (if stipulated in the relevant regulations of the Faculty) pays the cost of travel, meals and accommodation incurred by jury members from the partner institution. These arrangements may vary according to the regulations in force in each institution and must be indicated in the joint supervision agreement. In any case, costs should be split between the two institutions as equally as possible.
11. On a competitive basis, "swissuniversities" provides financial support for joint supervision projects, provided they are specified in a cooperation agreement between a Swiss university and a partner University in Europe. Information concerning the competitive tendering of these grants is available on the website of "swissuniversities" ([www.swissuniversities.ch](http://www.swissuniversities.ch) > Topics > Promoting Young Talent > Cotutelles de thèses).

## Procedure to be followed by the doctoral student

1. Identify a thesis supervisor in each of the concerned institutions and obtain the agreement of both thesis supervisors for a joint supervision at UNIL and at the other university. **In the same time**, check the admission and registration conditions in both institutions. Be aware of deadlines (For UNIL: [www.unil.ch/immat/en/home.html](http://www.unil.ch/immat/en/home.html)).
2. Ensure that the thesis subject is accepted by the relevant Faculty in each of the two institutions in accordance with regulations in force (each thesis supervisor makes appropriate arrangements in the own Faculty after a proposal has been submitted by the doctoral student).
3. Obtain approval of the joint supervision project from the relevant Faculty by writing a **cover letter** explaining the reasons for establishing a joint supervision. This letter must be signed by the doctoral student and by both thesis supervisors (signature and transmission of the letter can be done electronically). Once the letter is approved, the decision is forwarded to the International Relations Office (IRO) in order to launch the establishment of the joint supervision agreement.

4. Complete the joint supervision agreement (a template agreement is available from the contact person of the relevant Faculty) and indicate the name and position of the different people required to sign the agreement.
5. Before signing, submit the draft agreement by e-mail to the contact person of the Faculty and to the one at the partner University, who will examine the agreement with the concerned departments. At UNIL, the doctoral student drafts the joint supervision agreement in close collaboration with the contact person of the Faculty; the International Relations office proceeds to a final proofreading before signature).
6. Modify the document where necessary.
7. Once the agreement is approved by the administrators of both institutions, obtain the signatures in hierarchical order, starting with the doctoral student, the thesis supervisors, the Deans or equivalent and the legal representatives of both institutions. Whenever possible, electronic signatures should be inserted – to be verified with the partner institution.
8. Once the agreement is duly signed, send back the requested number of originals to the administration of both institutions.
9. At UNIL, the International Relations office is in charge of receiving the agreements duly signed by all.
10. The doctoral student is responsible to pay attention to the dates of expiration of the joint supervision agreement as well as to the enrolment in both universities.
11. The doctoral student is responsible to have a sickness and accident insurance coverage in both countries for the entire stay in each of the countries.