

**Masaryk University Faculty of Law Directive No. 4/2024**

**About studying in doctoral study programmes**

*(as amended with effect from 1 September 2024)*

*Pursuant to Section 28(1) of Act No. 111/1998 Coll., on Higher Education and on Amendments and Additions to Other Acts (the Higher Education Act), as amended (the Higher Education Act), the Dean of the Faculty of Law of Masaryk University (the Faculty) issues this Directive:*

Article 1

**Introductory provisions**

This Directive implements the provisions of Part Four of the Study and Examination Regulations of Masaryk University (hereinafter referred to as the "SED") and sets out certain conditions for the organisation of studies in doctoral study programmes at the Faculty of Law of Masaryk University (hereinafter referred to as the "Faculty").

Article 2

**Appointment and dismissal of the supervisor**

- (1) Supervisors are appointed by the dean on the proposal of the departmental board or by his/her own decision after consultation with the chair of the departmental board, especially from among professors and associate professors; in a justified case, the dean may appoint an academic employee or other expert who does not hold the title of professor or associate professor, but at least with the title of Ph.D., CSc. or Dr., or an equivalent title, as appropriate, as a supervisor for a specific student and a specific research focus of the dissertation.
- (2) The appointment of a supervisor does not require the approval of the Faculty's Scientific Council.
- (3) The student's supervisor shall be appointed by the departmental board (or the departmental committee, if one is established and the relevant authority is delegated to it), taking into account the information identified by the admissions committee about the applicant's preference for the study, if any, expressed during the admissions procedure.
- (4) In appointing supervisors and designating a supervisor for a student according to the preceding paragraphs, the Dean and the Departmental Board shall respect the limitation of a maximum of 5 active students concurrently supervised by one supervisor. The discipline board shall always assess the assignment of each new or additional doctoral student to an individual supervisor on an individual basis, taking into account in particular the supervisor's recent scientific, publication and grant performance, his/her work capacity and international professional experience, and shall take into account his/her previous experience in supervising doctoral students (e.g. the success rate of doctoral students, their professional achievements, the doctoral students' subsequent careers), not only the academic degrees obtained.

- (5) A supervisor is dismissed by the dean on the proposal of the departmental board or by his/her own decision after consultation with the chair of the departmental board. The removal of a supervisor does not require the approval of the Faculty's Scientific Council.
- (6) Further rules for the appointment, dismissal, change of supervisor and his/her duties are laid down in the Study and Examination Regulations of Masaryk University.

#### Article 3

##### **Consultant**

- (1) In justified cases, the vice-dean may, on the proposal of the departmental board (departmental committee), assign a consultant to a student if this is expedient for the successful course of his/her studies. The proposal for the assignment of a consultant shall include a detailed justification. The duties of the supervisor remain unaffected by the appointment of a consultant.
- (2) Unless otherwise specified in the appointment of the consultant, the consultant's responsibilities include, in particular, the long-term and planned provision of professional consultation and feedback to the student, as well as methodological guidance in cooperation with the supervisor. The student shall regularly inform the supervisor and, on request, the departmental board (departmental committee) of the progress and outcomes of the student's cooperation with the consultant.
- (3) A consultant may be dismissed by the vice-dean on the proposal of the departmental board (departmental committee).

#### Article 4

##### **Consultation Group**

- (1) During the first year of study, each student is assigned a three-member consultation group by the departmental board (departmental committee) on the proposal of the supervisor, of which the supervisor is always a member; at least one of the members of the consultation group is usually external. If the student is assigned a consultant, he/she is a member of the consultation group. If no consultant group is appointed and unless otherwise determined by the subject board (subject committee), the subject board (subject committee) shall act as the consultant group.
- (2) The Consultation Group is involved in providing ongoing feedback to the student, particularly in checking the achievement of milestones according to the individual study plan.

#### Article 5

##### **Individual study plans**

- (1) The individual study plan for the entire study and its modifications are created jointly by the student and the supervisor. After consultation with the supervisor, the student shall enter the draft individual study plan into the relevant application of the information system by 20 February of the first year of study. The supervisor confirms its version by 28 February of the first year of study. The departmental board (departmental committee) discusses and, if in agreement, approves the individual study plan by 30 April of the first year of study. The departmental board of a study programme conducted in a foreign language may set other deadlines for the fulfilment of the obligations under this paragraph.

- (2) When drawing up an individual study plan, the compulsory subjects of the study programme are respected, as well as other principles approved by the departmental board. Unless the subject board decides otherwise, the individual study plan contains at least one mandatory milestone related to the preparation of the dissertation, which is to be fulfilled by the end of the fourth semester of study at the latest, and whose fulfilment is linked to a supervised presentation of the progress of the dissertation preparation to date.

#### Article 6

##### **Research focus of the dissertation and title of the dissertation**

- (1) The title of the dissertation under which the dissertation is submitted to the thesis archive in the information system must not deviate thematically from the approved research focus of the dissertation, which is stated in the individual study plan.
- (2) No later than the end of the sixth semester of study, the student shall notify the relevant faculty department of the title of the dissertation under which the thesis archive will subsequently be established. If the title of the dissertation coincides with the research focus stated in the individual study plan, the dissertation archive is established without further action. If the title of the dissertation does not coincide with the research focus but does not deviate from it in terms of its content, the supervisor's approval is also required for the establishment of the archive. If the title of the dissertation deviates from the research focus in terms of its content, this is a change in research focus; in this case, the approval of the subject board is also required for the establishment of the archive.

#### Article 7

##### **Requirements of the dissertation, language of the state doctoral examination and dissertation defence**

- (1) A dissertation in a doctoral study programme conducted in the Czech language may also be submitted in Slovak or English. With the approval of the subject board, the dissertation may also be submitted in another language.
- (2) Even the dissertation defence, the state doctoral examination, consultations and other performance of study duties may be conducted in Slovak or English with the student's consent.
- (3) Unless otherwise stipulated by the disciplinary board, the content and formal requirements of the dissertation, the abstract of the dissertation, the thesis of the dissertation (if required), and the requirements for publication of the original results contained in the dissertation are governed by the arrangements set out in Annex 1 to this Directive.
- (4) Unless otherwise stipulated by the disciplinary board, a mere collection of already published or accepted for publication or other type of publication works on a given topic, which the student provides only a comprehensive introduction to the subject and a commentary, cannot be recognized as a dissertation.

#### Article 8

##### **Development of students' pedagogical competences**

- (1) As part of the development of their pedagogical competences, students engage in the performance of the faculty's pedagogical tasks in cooperation with a supervisor or other mentor from among the academic staff. Its content is determined by the supervisor or a person authorised by the supervisor in consultation with the

- student in accordance with the content of the relevant courses in which the student's duties are performed.
- (2) When determining the obligations within the framework of the development of pedagogical competences, the supervisor respects the limit of direct teaching in the range of 25 teaching blocks (100 min) for the entire period of study. Beyond this limit, the student participates in direct teaching only if mutually agreed with the supervisor and with the consent of the supervisor of the relevant course and the head of the department. Involvement in direct teaching beyond the limit of 50 teaching blocks is possible only within the framework of an employment relationship with the consent of the faculty management.
  - (3) The activities carried out in the performance of the faculty's teaching tasks are recorded by the student in the relevant electronic overview, if the student is enrolled in the study programme.

#### Article 9

##### **Conditions of use of means of distance communication**

Pursuant to Article 34(7) of the Regulations, the Chair of the State Doctoral Examination Committee and the Chair of the Dissertation Defence Committee are entitled to decide on the use of means of remote communication during the meetings of the Committee, including the State Doctoral Examination and the dissertation defence itself, especially if one of the external members is abroad at the time of the meeting. In this case, the meeting shall be held in a so-called hybrid form with the presence of those members of the committee who can attend in person (physically on site). The student and the Chairperson of the Board are always present in person.

#### Article 10

##### **Final and transitional provisions**

- (1) I hereby delegate the interpretation of the individual provisions of this Directive and the control of compliance with this Directive to the Vice-Dean for Doctoral Studies and Rigorosum Proceedings.
- (2) The Directive of the Faculty of Law of Masaryk University No. 2/2021 of 23 August 2021 is repealed.
- (3) This Directive shall enter into force on 1 September 2024.

Annex No. 1 - Essentials of the dissertation

In Brno, 12 August 2024

Martin Škop  
Dean  
signed electronically

### Essentials of a dissertation

- (1) The minimum **length of the** dissertation (hereinafter also referred to as "thesis") is **150 standard pages**, i.e. at least 270 thousand characters (including spaces and notes) of the text from the introduction to the conclusion inclusive. Other parts of the thesis are not included in the minimum length.
- (2) The thesis **contains a** title page, an affidavit, an annotation with a list of keywords, a table of contents, the text itself and a list of sources used, in the order in which they were cited. Optionally, it may also contain acknowledgements and other components.
- (3) **The title page** is placed on a separate sheet. At the top it says "Masaryk University Faculty of Law" and the programme studied. In the middle part it says "Dissertation", its title and the author's name. The academic year of submission is indicated in the lower part. If the thesis is submitted in a language other than Czech or Slovak, the prescribed information is given in English; if the thesis is submitted in a language other than Czech, Slovak or English, the title is also given in the language of the thesis.
- (4) **The affidavit** is on a separate sheet. It consists of the following text (accompanied by the type and title of the work). The text of the affidavit is as follows: 'I declare that I have prepared my dissertation on [title of dissertation] by myself. All the sources and sources of information that I have used to write this thesis have been cited in the footnotes and are listed in the list of sources and literature used.' If the thesis is submitted in a language other than Czech or Slovak, the affidavit shall be in English and read as follows: "I hereby declare that I have prepared my dissertation thesis on the topic [title of thesis] by myself. All sources that I have used to write this thesis have been cited in the footnotes and are listed in the list of sources and literature."
- (5) **An annotation** with a list of keywords is placed on a separate sheet. It consists of a Czech and English version of the annotation (the usual length of each is 500-600 characters including spaces) and a Czech and English version of the list of keywords (the usual length of the list is 5-10 words). The text of both language versions of the annotation and the keyword lists must be identical to those provided by the student in the thesis archive in IS MU.
- (6) **A description of the use of AI tools** is located after the annotation. It consists of a Czech and an English version. It indicates which AI tools were used in the writing of the thesis, how and to what extent, including the specification of the chapters.
- (7) **The content of** the work is placed on a separate sheet or sheets. It includes chapters and subchapters, and optionally other subdivisions. Individual items are numbered and marked with the page on which they begin.
- (8) **The text of** the thesis **itself** is usually divided into chapters, subchapters and sections. The numbering is done in Arabic numerals, with each level separated by a full stop (1 Chapter title, 1.1 Subchapter title, 1.1.1 Section title). The introduction and conclusion are not numbered. The chapter always starts on a new page.
- (9) **The list of sources used** is on a separate sheet or sheets. It must include an alphabetically ordered, ascending numbered list of bibliographical data of all literature used in the production of the thesis (the criteria for ordering are the surname of the author and, in the second sequence, the year of publication of the work). Optionally, a list of cited court decisions and other sources, as well as legal

regulations, may also be included. However, this must be visibly separated from the list of references.

- (10) Paper size is A4, text colour is black. Starting with the affidavit, the pages are numbered in ascending Arabic numerals. The first line of a paragraph (excluding the line immediately following the heading) shall be indented by a paragraph stop of appropriate length.
- (11) The thesis is submitted **electronically** via IS MU in a text format allowing easy editing in commonly used text editors such as .doc, .docx or .odt. Submission in **hard** copies is not required.

### **Requirements of the dissertation abstract**

- (1) The minimum **length of the** dissertation abstract (hereinafter also referred to as "abstract") is **10 standard pages** (i.e. 18 thousand characters including spaces and notes).
- (2) The abstract in a concise and concise form **contains**: (1) the characteristics of the topic, the aim of the thesis and the methods used in the treatment of the topic, (2) a summary of the content of the thesis (especially the main chapters), (3) the conclusions reached by the author. The abstract also includes the content (outline) of the thesis and a list of sources used. The table of contents and the list of sources used do not count towards the specified minimum length.
- (3) The abstract is produced in a **format** that is accepted by the thesis archive in IS MU. Paper size is A4, text colour is black. Individual pages are numbered in ascending order with Arabic numerals. The first line in a paragraph (except for the line immediately following the heading) is indented with a paragraph indent of appropriate length.
- (4) The abstract is submitted **electronically** via IS MU. Submission in **hard** copies is not required.

### **Requirements for publication of original results**

The dissertation must contain original results, either already published or accepted for publication. This condition is fulfilled in one of the following two ways:

- (1) **The entire dissertation**, or rather the predominant part of it, has been published or accepted for publication.
- (2) The dissertation contains original results that have been published or accepted for publication in at least **two peer-reviewed publications**, such as a journal article ( $J_{imp}$ ,  $J_{sc}$  and  $J_{ost}$ ), a monograph (B), a chapter in a monograph (C), or an article in a conference proceedings (D).

### **Thesis of the dissertation**

- (1) If the subject board so determines, the student shall submit a thesis of the dissertation (hereinafter also referred to as "thesis") no later than **with the application for the state doctoral examination**. The thesis debate is also part of the state doctoral examination.
- (2) The provisions of the preceding paragraph do not apply if the student submits an application for the defence of the dissertation at the same time as the application for the state doctoral examination and submits the dissertation.
- (3) Theses **contain a** title page with the title of the dissertation, the study programme, the name of the author, the name of the supervisor, and the text itself in the following structure (with possible more detailed structure):

1. Introduction (containing a brief definition of the problem to be solved)
  2. Overview of the current state of knowledge of the problem
  3. Intent of the dissertation (including the definition of directions for further investigation of the problem, definition of the dissertation objectives, definition of the research/expertise question or hypotheses and basic methods of solution)
  4. List of resources
- (4) The minimum **length of** the thesis is 30 standard pages (i.e. 54,000 characters) including spaces and notes.

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