



## **ACADEMIC POLICY OF PH.D PROGRAMS**

**2018-2019**

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## **Chapter 1**

### **Introduction**

#### **1.1 Mission of KAZGUU PhD education**

The PhD education of the KAZGUU Law School is designed to develop researcher's high level of field-specific professional knowledge, analytical and critical thinking, excellent research competences and the ability to effectively collaborate in the international context.

To achieve the stated mission, PhD education focuses primarily on the principle of learning through doing research. In this regard, research conducted by PhD students within their PhD dissertations serves as a tool of demonstrating PhD students' professional knowledge, research skills and attitudes developed in the course of the study under the PhD programme.

While working on their PhD dissertations, PhD students are expected to develop the following competences specific for Cycle 3 programmes:

- to formulate and solve tasks arising in the process of doing research;
- to choose the most appropriate research methods responding to the needs of a specific research;
- to interpret and analyze obtained results and formulate them in the form of a research paper (report, abstract, scholarly article, research proposal, doctoral dissertation, etc);
- to apply modern information technology in doing research;
- to conduct research in accordance with research ethics and academic integrity.

#### **1.2 Governing model of KAZGUU PhD programmes**

Law School PhD programmes include:

- theoretical training in the amount of 180 ECTS;
- teaching and research internships;
- final state examination on a field-specific subject;
- PhD dissertation public defence;
- GPA level not lower than 2.0

The following departments of the University take part in the process of delivering PhD programmes:

- (1) Dean's Office of the KAZGUU Law School in terms of determining the structure and terms of PhD training, as well as PhD milestones;
- (2) Heads of Programmes in the relevant specialty in terms of determining the content of PhD training and the choice of PhD research topics;
- (3) Department of International Relations in the organization of international internships for PhD students.
- (4) Academic Quality Committee of KAZGUU Law School (including Ph.D students)
- (5) Research Committee of KAZGUU Law School (including Ph.D students)

#### **1.3 KAZGUU Quality Policy**

This Policy establishes requirements for the procedure of working on the research projects of PhD students and is applied by the University departments responsible for delivering PhD programmes.

## Chapter 2

### PhD programme enrollment

#### 2.1 Admission requirements

The PhD programme accepts applicants who have mastered relevant or related professional post-graduate education curriculum of at least 120 ECTS.

Selection Committee is created at the University for the review of documents submitted by applicants. The members of the Selection Committee are approved by Rector's Order.

PhD applicants must submit the following documents to the Admission Office:

- application addressed to the Rector of M. Narikbayev KAZGUU University (the form is provided by the Admission Office);
- proposal of the research to be conducted within PhD programme approved by a prospective local supervisor or a foreign research consultant;
- A copy of ID;
- A copy of a document on postgraduate education (Master level);
- A copy of an international certificate confirming the knowledge of a foreign language (if available);
- a list of research papers and methodological works (if available);
- six photos (3 x 4 cm);
- 086-U medical certificate;
- personal sheet on personnel records and a document confirming work experience (for persons with seniority).

The provision of original documents for verification is required for all applicants to PhD programmes. The originals are returned after the reconciliation. Application to PhD programmes starts from 3 to 31 July annually.

Applicants who received educational documents in foreign educational institutions must go through the procedure of recognition or nostrification of their documents. In accordance with paragraph 9-1 of the "Model Rules for Admission to Educational Institutions that Implement Programmes for Postgraduate Education", PhD applicants must submit a certificate acknowledging their education to the Admission Committee. Education documents issued by foreign educational institutions are recognized on the territory of the Republic of Kazakhstan in accordance with international treaties (agreements).

#### 2.2 Entrance examination

Admission to PhD programmes is carried out on a competitive basis based on results of entrance examinations.

Entry examinations for citizens of the Republic of Kazakhstan include:

- (1) foreign language
- (2) subject examination relevant to the field of study.

The subject examination for PhD programmes "International Law" and "Jurisprudence" consists of two parts: (1) written - assumes the format of solving practical cases, and (2) verbal - an interview with members of the Examination Commission, where applicants must provide a rationale for their research proposal. The language of the examination can be Kazakh, Russian or English and depends on the PhD programme.

Education in PhD programmes can be free of charge for the citizens of the Republic of Kazakhstan (through the receipt of a State or Rector's scholarship) or on a fee basis (at the expense of citizens' own funds and other sources).

## 2.3 Selection procedure

During the period of receiving documents from applicants, technical secretaries find out such issues as: professional goals of the applicant, his/her motivation, logic of thinking, readiness for academic difficulties. The technical secretary assesses how much the applicant's choice of his/her future learning path is justified, talks about how the program is built, and what goals it sets for the student.

Entrance examinations for doctoral studies are held from 10 to 20 August. Examination Commissions are created at the University for the period of entrance examinations.

The Examination Commission includes the Chairman, from 3 to 9 members of the Commission and Secretary. Each member must be a holder of a research degree or academic degree (PhD) and have research experience in the relevant field of Law. Members of the Examination Commission are represented not only by full-time employees of the University, but also by invited independent experts, employees of other universities to ensure objective work and organization of entrance exams.

The entrance examination in a foreign language is conducted according to the requirements developed by the National Testing Centre of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan: examination duration is 180 minutes, examination form is a test.

The test includes three blocks: listening, writing, and reading. Examination answer sheets are processed with a special scanning device. According to the results of the foreign language exam, the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan issues a certificate indicating examination scores.

The applicant is allowed to take the second entrance exam after receiving a certificate of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan on a foreign language examination with scores not less than 50.

Citizens of the Republic of Kazakhstan who have international certificates confirming the knowledge of a foreign language are credited with the highest score on a 100-point grading scale, and they are exempt from taking the foreign language exam of the MES of RK.

The subject examination is held in a written form. Applicants have 120 minutes to prepare a written response to examination questions. The examination paper is the same for all applicants of the same PhD programme. It provides equal opportunities to all applicants and ensures the objectivity of the examination. It is not allowed to retake entrance examinations. All the requirements and the topics of exam can be found at the University's web site.

The exam task is prepared by the relevant Department. The faculty responsible for preparation are decided by the Head of the Programme. The form of the examination task is a case, which students must solve within the time of the exam. The new case is made each year and can not be repeated or used before. The case is finally approved by the Head of the programme and Dean.

Written exam papers are encrypted by a staff member of the Law School in order to ensure the objectivity and impartiality of the assessment of examination. The members of the Examination Commission receive a candidate's exam paper with no indication of applicant's name. After grading, the work of the candidate is decrypted.

The total admission score of the applicant is displayed as the sum of two entrance exams (foreign language examination and subject examination).

An Appeal Commission is created in order to ensure the resolution of controversial issues. The Appeal Commission review examination papers of PhD applicants who disagree with the results of entrance examinations. In case of getting a request to review more than 25% of exam papers the Appeal Commission can pass the question related to the quality of Examination Commission's work to the Academic Quality Committee.

The Appeal Commission can make a decision to put the higher or lower grade (scores) to the applicant's exam paper. Decisions of the Appeal Commission are made by a majority vote of the total number of the Commission members. In case of equality of votes, the vote of the Chairman of the Commission is decisive. The work of the Appeal Commission is documented by a protocol signed by the Chairman and all members of the Commission.

Enrollment to the number of doctoral students is carried out by the Admission Committee only if the applicant has scored at least 50 points for each examination.

Those who score the highest points in entrance examinations (at least 150 points for two exams) are awarded with the State funding (scholarship) to study in a PhD programme.

In the case of the same indicators of competitive points, the right of priority for enrolment is given to those who have the highest score in the subject examination. The scientific achievements corresponding to the profile of the chosen PhD programme are also taken into account: scientific publications, including papers in rating scientific journals; certificates of scientific research; certificates for the award of scientific scholarships, grants; certificates/diplomas for participation in scientific conferences and competitions, labour experience in the field relevant to the chosen PhD programme.

The work experience related to the field of the chosen programme is mandatory for PhD applicants who do not have a Bachelor or Master degree relevant to the chosen PhD programme, with the exception for those who choose interdisciplinary PhD programmes. For other applicants, the work experience is not a mandatory criterion. However, it is taken into account during the interview with the applicant.

## **2.4 Registration procedure**

Law school administer the procedure of assigning a supervisor and a foreign consultant to each doctoral student, as well as keep record of PhD research topics chosen by doctoral students with their supervisors.

The first week of the academic year is devoted to the selection of a research supervisor, corresponding to the requirements described in Chapter 5.1.

The second and third weeks of the academic year are devoted to meetings of PhD students with potential supervisors, discussions of the proposed research topics, study of bibliography/literature on the proposed research topics, and finalizing decisions regarding foreign consultants. The result of this stage is performed by the consent form of the supervisor to supervise a doctoral student that is submitted on paper or electronic media to a Manager of Graduate Education at the Law School. In the course of the fourth and fifth weeks, doctoral students together with their supervisors prepare a preliminary work plan, which reflects the goals and objectives of the proposed research and key stages of research. At the same time, the research topic chosen for a PhD dissertation should strictly correspond to the priority directions of the development of science at the University. In the fifth and sixth weeks, meetings of the Departments are held, where PhD students, under the guidance of their supervisors, publicly present their research topics, preliminary research plans and foreign consultants. The final formulation of the doctoral research topic is determined in the course of scientific discussions. This topic, name of the supervisor and the foreign consultant are indicated by the PhD student in a statement to the relevant Department, where the supervisor is assigned. The wording of the topic, the supervisor or a foreign consultant can be adjusted and changed during the period of study at the request of a PhD student by the Decision of the Academic Council (twice a year - in October and February). The Manager of Graduate Education forms the list of topics, research supervisors and foreign consultants for approval by the Committee on Science on the basis of statements of PhD students.

When enrolling in doctoral education, PhD students sign a consent form describing requirements of PhD programmes.

In the case of a change in the topic of the dissertation research during the studying process, PhD student is provided with no more than two years of study from the date of defence of the Research Proposal on the new research topic in accordance with the Milestones mentioned in Chapter 4.3.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Research and professional training**

#### **3.1 Course approval and review**

Most of the time should be devoted to the research of a PhD student. However, theoretical training is an important basis for preparing a high-quality research that meets the criterion of scientific significance. Theoretical training is delivered within first semester. The workload of each PhD course is 3 credits (30 hours of classroom instruction and 15 hours of extracurricular preparation).

PhD students undergo theoretical training in three areas:

1. Research Methodology;
2. Publishing;
3. English;
3. Subject Seminar.

Curriculum is approved by the School Director in consultation with the Academic Quality Committee.

A unique course is presented to doctoral students during the seminar “*Research Methodology*”, which examines aspects of scientific approaches to the preparation and conduct of research, features of structuring a thesis, research methods (including methods for processing theoretical and empirical data), features of formulating conclusions and provisions, as well as other knowledge of scientific and methodological work.

During the course “*Publishing*”, PhD students study how to prepare and publish the scientific paper within the scope of their PhD dissertation. This course was organized as the response to the state requirement for PhD candidates to have at least one paper in journals ranked by Scopus and Web of Science. The content of the course includes issues related to the choice and formulation of the topic of publication, the development of content and the structure of paper; special research methods used in preparing the paper; choice of a publisher (including work with journals with high impact factor); communication with the publisher; design of scientific publications, citations and other aspects necessary for the successful publication.

The scope of the course called “*Subject Seminar*” is determined by the Head of Programme in correlation with the research topics of PhD students. The Head of Programme has to be sure that this seminar will be useful for the student and will lead to the improvement of research skills of the candidate. Several seminars also can be organized if the students’ research topics are diametrically different. The Head of Programme is also responsible for recruiting and approval of the lecturer for the subject seminar.

The work within the *Subject Seminars* is conducted with each of the PhD students individually and is aimed to develop their knowledge in the field of dissertation research. At the same time Subject Seminar does not replace the research work of a PhD student with his supervisor. Lecturers for each seminar are approved by the Head of the Programme, taking into account their teaching and research experience.

#### **3.2 Course evaluation tools**

##### ***Teaching Quality Assurance***



There are several instruments and mechanisms for teaching quality assurance. They involve the Academic Quality Committee, Head of Programme and PhD students. These mechanisms are interconnected.

There are three steps for controlling the teaching quality. The first step is to evaluate the quality and relevance of the course programme (syllabus) before the start of the education.

The second step is attending classes during the educational process. Representatives of the Committee attend courses, check course materials (syllabus and additional materials). Based on the results of the monitoring, the Committee prepares an analysis and recommendations for teaching materials, as well as a report on attendance of classes. This assessment is taken into account for the rating certification of the faculty members in the chapter "Evaluation by the Academic Quality Committee".

The third step in quality assurance process is to assess the self-evaluation reports of the lecturers and to analyse the PhD students' assessment questionnaires after the course. At the end of each course, students fill out an evaluation feed-back form, where they evaluate key performance indicators of the course: relevance of the course content; possession and presentation of material by the teacher; consistency and transparency of evaluation. The questionnaire is filled anonymously, for each indicator points are set from 0 to 100%. This assessment is taken into account for the rating certification of the faculty members in the chapter "Evaluation by students".

Thus, quality is assessed consistently at all stages of the educational process: from course planning to its implementation.

Head of Programme and the Academic Quality Committee monitor two key components during the process of teaching quality control:

- teaching methodology
- content of the course

According to the teaching methodology, Head of Programme and Academic Quality Committee evaluate the possibility to achieve the learning outcomes using the methods chosen by the lecturer. Interactive techniques allowing the improvement of the scientific research skills are considered as the most appropriate for PhD courses. Individual approach of the lecturer to each PhD student is an important condition of the teaching process.

As for the second key component, the Head of Programme assesses the relevance and recency of the materials used by the lecturer during the course.

There is an interrelation between Head of Programme and Academic Quality Committee in process of teaching quality assurance. If the Head of Programme has some doubts on the teaching quality he firstly can make some recommendation to the lecturer. If the doubts are very serious the Head of Programme can initiate the consideration of this question in CAQ.

### ***Self-evaluation report***

According to the results of the course, lecturers prepare a self-evaluation report, based, inter alia, on the results of the evaluation by the Committee and the Students. Lecturers must indicate:

- assessment of the general level of preparation of PhD students for their course (0-100%);
- assessment of the overall academic performance of PhD students based on the results of the course (0-100%);
- identification of the most relevant and useful topics (list);
- determining the range of topics that can be adjusted, supplemented or replaced (list with a short justification);
- determining the forms and types of class activities that were most productive or can be adjusted;



- general recommendations on the preliminary assessment of the level of PhD candidates in the framework of enrolment (selection criteria, preliminary orientation, etc.);
- general recommendations for improving the theoretical training of doctoral students.

The self-evaluation report is sent to the Head of the relevant educational Programme, as well as to the Academic Quality Committee and may serve as a basis for further reforming and improving the PhD Programme.

### **3.3 Extra-curricular seminars, workshops and trainings**

In addition to theoretical training in the 1st semester, PhD students can be offered to attend additional courses, trainings or master classes. In particular, guest lectures and courses conducted by the KAZGUU Law School are open to doctoral students. Additional master classes for the preparation of a dissertation research, as well as writing and publishing scientific articles are organized for PhD students.

A separate type of consultations arranged in the format of PhD Talks are presented by meetings with PhD holders who have successfully received their degrees, including in foreign Universities. As part of such meetings, PhD students are given a unique opportunity to learn about the experience of preparing and defending a PhD thesis.

In general, extra-curricular training and seminars can be devoted to such areas as:

- development of research skills;
- development of skills to work with information databases and digital libraries;
- working with IT software assisting research (example, reference management software, data analysis tools);
- leadership skills;
- time management;
- communication skills.

## **Chapter 4**

### **PhD Milestones**

#### **4.1 Research proposal submission and defence**

Research Proposal is a document prepared by a PhD student during the first year of study. The Research Proposal is prepared by a doctoral student under the supervision of a supervisor and submitted to defence before the Research Committee of the Law School at the end of the first academic year. The preparation and defence of the Research Proposal is one of the key PhD milestone and mandatory for all doctoral students. Without successful PhD proposal defence, doctoral students are not allowed to proceed to further research activities on their dissertation.

There is no specific formatting requirements for a PhD Research Proposal, however it has to meet the following content and structure requirements:

1. justification of the dissertation topic / contextual background;
2. research purpose;
3. research questions;
4. literature review;
5. research methodology;
6. research ethics;
7. research work plan;
8. references

The Research Proposal is prepared in the form of a text document and submitted to the defence before the Research Committee of the Law School. Research Proposal is prepared and defended in the same language as the dissertation research. During the defence PhD candidate can be asked questions on the content of the submitted document, allowing Committee to analyze the level of knowledge, as well as the vision of the general structure and the expected research results. During the defense of the Research proposal, the Committee may advise editing the topic of the thesis in the framework of the direction of research chosen by the PhD student.

The Research Committee of the Law School gives a PhD student an assessment from 0 to 100% according to the results of the defense of the Research Proposal made during open discussion. In case if Research Proposal was not defended, the Research Committee may fix “fail” (grade 0%, F). In this case, fail is considered as an academic debt, and the PhD student cannot be transferred to the next year of study. Redefence of the Research Proposal can be arranged not earlier than 1 month after the date of the first defence. The responsibility for the unsuccessful defense of the Research Proposal lies with the PhD student and his/her supervisor. The responsibility degree of a supervisor is reviewed by the Academic Quality Committee.

After a successful defence of the Research Proposal, the PhD candidate signs a special agreement, under which he undertakes the obligation to achieve the objectives specified in his/her Research Proposal under the PhD dissertation.

## **4.2 Research ethics**

The PhD education of the KAZGUU Law School promotes high quality research meeting international standards. One of such standards is the compliance of academic research with ethical considerations. Prior to the data collection stage, all PhD research proposals undergo the review on research ethics. The research ethics review is understood as one of the key milestones of the PhD programme, because it helps to ensure that the proposed PhD research does not violate any rights of research participants or that PhD candidates are aware of possible risks for their research participants and as a result take actions to guarantee their anonymity or increase confidentiality of personal data.

The review on research ethics is performed by the members of the Research Ethics Committee comprised of three faculty members who are annually appointed to the membership of the Committee. The Committee is responsible for arranging research ethics application procedure for PhD candidates, involving faculty members to provide blind-review of applications of PhD candidates, and issuing Ethical Clearance Certificates.

All PhD candidates whose research projects involve human beings as participants of their research are obliged to obtain the Ethical Clearance Certificate before starting collecting empirical data. To undergo the review of their research proposals on ethical considerations, PhD candidates fill in the Research Ethics Review application form where they describe the scope of their research, its purpose and research questions, methodology, data collection tools and actions developed to minimize any risks for participants that can occur in the course of data collection.

The Research Ethics Review application form is then reviewed by two independent faculty members who evaluate applications according to some criteria that are: clearance of the research purpose and research questions, well designed and justified methodology, detailed description of data collection tools and process, and effectiveness of measures taken to minimize risks for research participants. In addition, PhD candidates have to submit their data collection tools (Interview protocols, questionnaires, observation plans, etc.) together with the Research Ethics Review application form.

The decision on the research ethics review of PhD research proposals is issued after two weeks from the date when the application form was submitted. Depending on the quality of the

research proposal and the application form, the Research Ethics Committee can make two decisions:

1. Full compliance with research ethics (PhD candidate can proceed with data collection);
2. Partial compliance or full incompliance with research ethics (Research Ethics Application should be revised according to the comments and recommendations of blind-reviewers and submitted to the Committee again).

### **4.3 Research Internship**

PhD students undergo an internship to foreign organizations of education and science within their PhD research projects twice during the entire study (for period lasting up to 30 days) to improve the scientific base for the dissertation research, to receive advice from foreign specialists and to work in the world's leading libraries.

Internship programmes are implemented in the framework of agreements between the University and foreign partner universities, as well as memorandums with foreign consultants. The Department of International Relations is responsible for organizing internships abroad. Documentation support of the internship (secondment orders, cost estimates) is carried out by the Law School. Before November 1, the Department of International Relations presents the internship programmes with an indication of the partner institution, the estimated cost of the internship, and a list of activities included in the internship for PhD students. Following the results of the presentations, PhD students fill out an application form for an internship. On the basis of the collected applications, the Department of International Relations forms lists of groups of PhD students and sends them to partner universities for approval.

During the internship the PhD student:

- complies with the organization's charter, internal regulations, requirements of other regulatory documents governing the process of internship and stay in the host partner institution;
- visits libraries, gets acquainted with the electronic resources of the partner university;
- attends lectures of leading scientists in relevant fields;
- performs all tasks stipulated by the internship programme;
- collects empirical and theoretical material on the research topic;
- keeps records of the work performed.

At the end of the internship, the PhD student should submit a written report on the results of the internship at a meeting of the Department. Members of the Department decide on its approval, revision or rejection, as well as provide recommendations on the use of internship results in PhD thesis.

### **4.4 Interim report on PhD project**

#### ***Year 1***

PhD students undergo an intermediate control during the writing of the dissertation annually. The first intermediate control takes place at the end of the first year of study in the form of a defense of Research Proposal. Details on the protection of the Research Proposal and its design requirements are reflected in Chapter 4.1.

#### ***Year 2***

At the end of the second year of study, PhD students undergo an intermediate control procedure in the form of defending a Report on a dissertation research at the Research Committee of the Law School. The Report is prepared by a PhD student in a free form, but must reflect certain aspects that are required for disclosure:

- the percentage of elaboration of each chapter set during Research proposal defence (including subsequent changes agreed with the supervisor);
- confirmation of the applicability of the chosen research methodology;
- confirmation of the specific results achieved during the two-year study;
- the presence of the main proposed scientific conclusions submitted for defence;
- the fact of approbation of research results within scientific publications;
- any other data confirming the successful progress of writing dissertation research.

Following the results of the Report defence, the PhD candidate is given recommendations on the improvement of scientific activities in the framework of the dissertation research.

In case of an unsuccessful defence of the report the Research Committee can fix “fail” (score 0%, F). In this case, fail is considered as an academic debt, and the PhD candidate cannot be transferred to the next year of study. Redefence of the Report can be assigned not earlier than 1 month after the first date of report defence. Responsibility for the unsuccessful defence of the Report lies on the PhD student and his/her supervisor. The responsibility degree of the supervisor is reviewed by the Academic quality Committee.

### ***Year 3***

At the end of the third year of study, PhD students undergo an intermediate control procedure in the form of defending a Report on a dissertation research at the Research Committee of the Law School. The Report is prepared by a doctoral student in a free form, but must reflect certain aspects that are required for disclosure:

- fully formulated and proven clauses to be defended;
- prepared text of the dissertation research;
- a significant degree of testing the results of research in scientific articles.

In case of an unsuccessful defence of the report the Research Committee can fix “fail” (score 0%, F). In this case, fail is considered as an academic debt, and the PhD candidate cannot graduate. Redefence of the Report can be assigned not earlier than 1 month after the first date of report defence. Responsibility for the unsuccessful defence of the Report lies on the PhD student and his/her supervisor. The responsibility degree of supervisor is reviewed by the Academic Quality Committee.

### ***General control***

In case of unsuccessful defence for the first time the Research Committee can provide Warning to the PhD student. In case of the second unsuccessful defence the Research Committee can set up the question of the student expulsion that is decided by the Committee itself.

During the work on the dissertation research, the PhD candidate may initiate meetings of the relevant Department (in a narrow or extended format). During the meeting, the PhD candidate can submit the whole work or its part of the dissertation research for preliminary discussion. Discussion at the Department is an inalienable right of a doctoral candidate and is intended to make a positive contribution to the quality of the dissertation.

## **4.5 PhD dissertation submission requirements**

The PhD dissertation is awarded approval to the defense at an extended meeting of the relevant Department during which the PhD candidate presents his/her research project. The meeting is appointed on the initiative of the PhD candidate. The meeting should be attended by at least 5 representatives of the Department which held a research degree (PhD, Doctor of Sciences), the Head of the Programme in the relevant field, as well as at least 3 (three) invited experts with sufficient scientific and/or practical experience, as well as able to contribute to the dissertation discussion, who can be invited by the Head of the Programme or the PhD student himself. Other members of the Department are also allowed to take part in the meeting.

The decision on providing an approval for submission a PhD dissertation to public defence, the Department is guided by the following criteria:

- the scientific novelty of the provisions to be defended;
- the degree of scientific validity of the defended clauses;
- sufficient theoretical base;
- the sufficient empirical data confirming the relevance of the defended provisions;
- compliance with the principles of academic integrity and research ethics;
- appropriate formatting, including compliance with required referencing style.

If the Department finds that the PhD dissertation does not meet one of the above-mentioned criteria, the PhD student can be advised to conduct additional work in order to achieve compliance with the criteria for submitting PhD dissertation to public defense. At the request of a PhD candidate, the Department can arrange an additional meeting to review changes and amendments incorporated to the PhD research by the candidate. This review of the dissertation progress is conducted in accordance with the same criteria as of the first one, as well as includes a comparative analysis of the work done according to the recommendations developed earlier.

The Dissertation can be submitted only in case of the positive review of the supervisor. The main aspects that must be presented in the review are:

- the scientific novelty of the provisions to be defended;
- the degree of scientific validity of the defended clauses;
- sufficient theoretical base;
- sufficient empirical data confirming the relevance of the defended provisions;
- compliance with the principles of academic integrity and research ethics;
- appropriate formatting, including compliance with required referencing style.

## **Chapter 5**

### **PhD Supervision**

#### **5.1 Requirements for PhD supervisors**

Manager of postgraduate education at the Law School carries out mailing the profiles of academic supervisors and foreign consultants to the PhD students at the first week of the academic year. PhD students have the right to propose their own candidates for supervision or foreign consultants who are not represented in the profiles, but meet the requirements of this policy.

Highly qualified faculty members of the University, as well as attracted specialists from other leading universities, research centres, the public sector, international and national companies holding a PhD degree, Doctors of Law, Doctors of Juridical Sciences and any other specialists actively engaged in research in the relevant branch of science can be involved into supervision of PhD dissertations.

Foreign consultants of the PhD dissertation can be researchers from foreign universities, possessing the research degree of Doctor or Candidate of Sciences, or Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), who are actively engaged in research in the relevant research area.

#### **5.2 Individual Supervision Agreement**

Control over the preparation of the PhD dissertation rests with the supervisor. Work on the thesis is carried out strictly in accordance with the plan of the PhD research. The work on the thesis is performed by the PhD student together with the supervisor through participation in individual consultations.

Apart from conducting PhD research and writing the dissertation, PhD students are also involved in additional research capacity building activities:

- participation in the organization of scientific and practical conferences, round tables, discussions;
- participation in research competitions;
- foreign research internships;
- research practice (collection of empirical qualitative and quantitative data through conduct of interviews, questionnaires, focus groups, observations, etc.);
- preparation of research papers on the topic of the PhD dissertation, publishing them in the proceedings of conferences and in scholarly journals.

In the process of preparing the PhD dissertation, the research supervisor performs the following work:

- sets a task for the PhD dissertation;
- assists in the development of the work schedule for the entire period of the research;
- approves the research training programme of the PhD student;
- helps PhD students with the necessary literature, archival materials, model projects and other sources on the PhD topic;
- establishes a schedule of consultations during which he/she monitors the progress of the PhD research;
- coordinates the work of a PhD student;
- provides assistance in writing research papers;
- helps in planning research internships (including foreign ones) to collect additional foreign literature;
- carries out verification of the dissertation and its parts for plagiarism.

Control over the work of research supervisors is assigned to the Head of the relevant PhD programme.

Individual consultation is a form of research work of a PhD student, involving the individual work of a student with his/her supervisor, which aim is to decide and approve the PhD research plan demonstrating timeframe required to accomplish the research and key reporting deadlines on the research progress. Adding to this, PhD student together with his/her supervisor work on the Individual Work Plan of the PhD student that reflects the topic of the PhD thesis, its rationale, structure, research plan, including key reporting deadlines and the planned date of thesis submission, the plan of research papers and internships. The Individual Work Plan of the PhD student (2 copies) is signed by both the PhD student and his/her supervisor and submitted to the Manager of the Postgraduate Education of the Law School by November 15.

The supervisor also takes part in:

- developing methodology of the research conducted by his/her PhD students;
- providing recommendations on literature and electronic resources;
- spreading information on upcoming research conferences and round tables;
- assisting PhD students to develop work plan for their foreign internships;
- assisting PhD students in resolving any issues arising in the course of the PhD programme.

### **5.3 Peer-review**

Each PhD student is assigned with a Consultant from the faculty members of the relevant Department who participates in the quality control of the dissertation research.

At the end of the 1st, 3rd and 5th semesters, the Consultant conducts a peer-review and assesses the content and quality of the research done by the PhD student. Upon each peer-review, the Consultant prepares a report including:



- the adequacy of the amount of research prepared by the PhD student regarding the requirements of this policy;
- the degree of the quality of the PhD research;
- the quality of the Research Proposal;
- the quality of the prepared part of the dissertation research.

Supervisor gives his review to the PhD thesis during interim reports mentioned in part 4.4. The criterias for the review are the same as for the Consultant.

The PhD student has to make changes and revisions pointed out by the Consultant prior to the presentation of his/her research progress before the Committee on Science at the end of each academic year. The degree of the revision of the comments and recommendations of the Consultant are taken into account when the PhD student's progress report is evaluated by the Committee on Science.

Within the process of preparing PhD dissertations students are required to comply with the principles of academic integrity and research ethics in accordance with the Academic Code of Conduct. Students are responsible for violation of the requirements of this Academic Policy, as well as the Academic Code of Conduct and the facts of plagiarism, if any identified in a PhD research. PhD dissertation is checked by the supervisor for plagiarism through the Turnitin program. After each verification of the thesis for plagiarism, the supervisor gives a comment in the Turnitin system and generates an official report in pdf format. PhD dissertation should not contain plagiarism, whether it is a paragraph, chapter or work as a whole. But the level of originality of the text and citation is determined by the dissertation supervisor. The facts of detection of plagiarism in the PhD dissertation and the further responsibility of the student and supervisor are regulated by the Academic Code of Conduct of M. Narikbayev KAZGUU University. The final verification of the PhD thesis for originality is carried out by JSC "National Centre for Scientific and Technical Information" with the issue of an official supporting document indicating the level of originality of the dissertation.

## **Chapter 6**

### **PhD Defence Committee and Defence procedure**

The PhD dissertation is defended at a meeting of a Defence Committee. The Defence Committee is formed for each PhD programme or a group of PhD programmes belonging to the same research area. The Defence Committee members are nominated and appointed by the Order of the Rector of the university with a prior approval of the Control Committee in Education and Science under the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

The Defence Committee consists of not less than six members, including the Chair, Deputy Chair, and Secretary. Defence Committee members have to be research or academic degree holders (Ph.D., Candidate or Doctor of Sciences) with at least five scholarly/research papers relevant to the research area of the Committee. The Defence Committee includes internal and external representatives: 1/3 of the Committee members should be from the home institution, 1/3 should be representatives of other higher education institutions, and 1/3 should be from other research institutions/centers or industry.

The quality of the PhD dissertation submitted to defence is assured by:

- (1) review of the PhD dissertation by two external examiners. One of the external examiners can be a member of the Defence Committee;
- (2) checking for plagiarism. All PhD dissertations submitted to defence are checked for plagiarism in Turnitin;
- (3) preliminary meeting of the Defence Committee; During the preliminary meeting, the Defence Committee members evaluate the quality of the dissertation and its readiness to be



defended in public. In particular, Committee members evaluate the scientific significance of the research findings and their contribution to both theoretical and practical knowledge. Furthermore, the Committee evaluate the quality of published papers claimed by the PhD candidate as a probation of received research findings, whether they were published in reliable and peer-reviewed journals.

The Head of the Program, the PhD supervisor, the faculty of the Higher School of Law take part in the preliminary defence of PhD dissertations. Representatives of employers can also be invited to the preliminary defence of PhD dissertations.

In the case of a negative decision regarding the review of the PhD dissertation on plagiarism, the PhD student is not allowed to present his/her research at the preliminary PhD dissertation defence meeting. The PhD dissertation is removed from the preliminary defence if the supervisor is absent.

In the process of the preliminary defence of the PhD dissertation, those who are present can ask questions, while the PhD student can give explanations, including using computer presentations, charts, tables, graphic images and statistical information. The decision on approval or disapproval of the PhD dissertation to be submitted to the final public defence (viva voce) is audio-recorded.

(4) public defence (viva voce). Anyone who is interested in the topic of the PhD dissertation can participate in the defence. In addition, the defence process is broad-casted online, so that anyone can ask questions regarding the dissertation.

(5) dissertation assessment criteria.

According to the Order of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan 'About the approval of the rules on awarding research degrees' № 127 dated to 31.03.2011 (with amendments dated to 13.10.2016), the Defence Committee must evaluate how a PhD dissertation meets five research principles, particularly whether a PhD dissertation demonstrates:

- **independent research** (a PhD student's contribution to the research area);
- **consistency** (a dissertation is logically structured, research findings respond to the research questions, suggested recommendations are supported by arguments and compared to results of previous research);
- **originality** (research findings, suggestions and recommendations presented as research outcomes are new and significant for both theory and practice);
- **reliability** (research findings are based on adoption of suitable research methodology and methods for interpreting data, including up-to-date information technologies);
- **significance** (research findings have theoretical, practical, and societal importance);
- **academic integrity** (a PhD student follows rules of the relevant referencing style in writing his/her dissertation).

The KAZGUU Defence Committee evaluate PhD dissertations against the following criteria:

- **Research problem and research questions**

The dissertation must clearly describe the research problem providing sufficient contextual information underscoring the importance of the chosen problem. Research questions must be well-defined and address the research problem.

- **Relevance of the research**

The dissertation must provide a detailed description of the scientific, societal and practical relevance of the undertaken research.

- **Theoretical basis**

The dissertation must demonstrate a sufficient evidence of a broad and in-depth investigation of the research problem by providing a critical review of the literature on previous research in the chosen field.

- ***Methodology and ethical considerations***

The dissertation must provide a sophisticated description of the chosen methodology and how adopted methods of inquiry were applied in the research process. In addition, justification of the suitability of the chosen methods as well as their limitations must be clearly stated. Finally, the dissertation must demonstrate the Candidate's understanding of ethical considerations and the ability to address issues of that kind in their own research.

- ***Research results and their discussion***

The dissertation must clearly describe gained research results and their consistency with data. Research results must bear significance and make contribution to the new knowledge in the research area the PhD Candidate is working in. Moreover, the dissertation must demonstrate the PhD Candidate's judgment ability in presenting research results, connecting them to previous research, drawing respective conclusions and implications, as well as in reflecting on directions of future research.

- ***Coherence, structure and style***

The dissertation must be logically structured demonstrating overall consistency and flow. The language of the dissertation must comply with stylistic and linguistic requirements of the language the dissertation is written in.

Detailed information on the work of the Defence Committee and the PhD defence procedure is described in the institutional policy called 'Regulations on the PhD Defence Committee at M. Narikbayev KAZGUU University' that was adopted in 2016.

## **Chapter 7**

### **Internal Quality Assurance Indicators**

To monitor the progress of the PhD education, the KAZGUU Law School has developed a database for storing statistical data on its PhD students, faculty members and supervisors. In respect to this, the School collects information on the following areas that serve as quantitative indicators of the quality of PhD programmes.

- PhD student enrollment, progression and completion rate
- PhD defence rate
- PhD students demographic data (gender, age, ethnicity, language)
- PhD employability rate (incl. Employability data such as field and position)
- Number of scholarly papers published by PhD faculty members and PhD students
- Number of projects done by PhD faculty members and PhD students

The database is updated twice a year by the Manager of the Postgraduate Education.