

## **REGULATIONS REGARDING OFFICIAL POSTGRADUATE STUDIES AT THE UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DE MADRID**

**(Approved by the Governing Council on 10 July 2008)**

The Communiqué of the Conference of European Ministers responsible for higher education held in Berlin in September 2003 stressed the importance of European Postgraduate Studies as one of the main elements for strengthening the attractiveness of European higher education in an international context.

Moreover, Organic Law 4/2007, which amended the Organic Law on Universities 6/2001, and Royal Decree 1393/2007, which lays down the planning of official university education, adopted a series of measures that, in addition to being compatible with the European Higher Education Area, made the organisation of education more flexible by promoting diversity in the course of study and allowing universities to exploit their innovative capacity and their strengths.

The establishment of the new official Postgraduate Degrees is one of the most significant changes in the deep structural change of university education, and it represents a major challenge for Spanish universities that are faced with the challenge of promoting and organising top-quality Postgraduate Studies and of keeping the university aware of constant changes and of the demands of society.

The Universidad Autónoma de Madrid must be a point of reference in the programmes it offers for Postgraduate Studies. To this end, these regulations aim to establish the mechanisms that, in the realm of university autonomy and assuming the responsibility that the Ministry of Education and Science has delegated to the universities with regard to Postgraduate Studies, make it possible to have a quality, ambitious academic programme that is attractive for the best Postgraduate Students in Spain and around the world.

### **Article 1 - Structure of Official Postgraduate Studies**

1. Official Postgraduate Studies are designed to enable students to specialise academically, professionally or with regard to research. They are articulated in programmes that integrate education leading to the attainment of a Master's degree and/or Doctorate. They may contain, among other options, a single Master's degree, a set of subjects or modules leading to the attainment of various Master's degrees or Master's and Doctorate studies.

The Universidad Autónoma de Madrid will promote the designing of interdepartmental and interuniversity Postgraduate Programmes, which are intended to be a modular structure that integrates various blocks of subjects and the possibility for students to choose, with educational activities and itineraries with a different focus. This proposal is not incompatible with the existence of programmes that are highly specialised and aimed at specific areas of knowledge.

2. The reports on education leading to Official Postgraduate Studies will include a quality assurance system that includes aspects of the degree consistent with the quality assurance system of the Centre responsible for developing the studies and with the internal quality assurance system of the university. This quality assurance system will include procedures to evaluate and to

improve the quality of education, professors, external practices, mobility programmes, satisfaction with the education received and the job placement of graduates.

## **Article 2 - Official Master's Programmes**

### **Structure:**

1. Master's programmes are aimed at providing students with an advanced, specialised or multidisciplinary education that is focused on academic or professional specialisation or on promoting the beginning of a career in research.

2. The study programmes leading to the attainment of an Official Master's Degree shall have an extension of between 60 and 120 credits, which will contain all of the theoretical and practical knowledge that students need to acquire.

3. Students who pass the classes stipulated in this Article, will obtain the **University Master's Degree in ..... by the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid**, with the specific name that is recorded in the Register of Universities, Schools and Degrees. Interuniversity master's degree will be issued in accordance with the resolutions adopted by the agreement established for this purpose.

4. Master's degree studies at the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid can include compulsory subjects, electives, seminars, external internships, directed and supervised assignments... and will include the writing and public defence of a final project of between six and 30 credits.

### **Conditions for access:**

5. In order to be able to enter the official master's programmes, it is necessary to have a Spanish official university degree. Likewise, students with university degrees from universities outside of Spain may also enter the programme without needing to homologate their degrees, provided that they can prove a level of education that is similar to that corresponding to Spanish official university degrees and that the country issuing the degree authorises access to Postgraduate Studies.

### **Admission requirements:**

6. Students will be admitted to a specific official master's programme in accordance with the specific requirements and the criteria for the assessment of merit that are defined for each one of the official master's degree, which may include requirements regarding specific previous education in certain disciplines or complementary education. This complementary education may form part of the offer of credits of the master's degree and students may take these credits as part of their master's degree studies, provided that no more than 120 credits will be taken in all. With the authorisation of those in charge of the programme, this complementary education may include classes from other official studies programmes at UAM.

## **Article 3 - Doctorate Programmes**

### **Structure:**

1. Doctorate programmes are designed to provide students with advanced education in research techniques and include the development and presentation of the corresponding doctoral thesis.

2. If students pass the classes stipulated in this Article, they will obtain a **Doctorate by the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid**. Likewise, in accordance with that which is established in the regulations on issuing degrees, the degree will specify the discipline in which students developed their doctoral thesis.

3. To obtain a Doctorate, it is necessary to have passed a period of training and a period of research.

4. The period of training will consist of a minimum of 60 credits taken in courses leading to one or various official master's degrees.

**Conditions for access:**

5. The conditions to access and be admitted to the period of training will be the same as those for accessing and being admitted to the official master's degree programmes.

6. To gain access to the period of research, it is necessary to have a University Master's degree or another degree of the same level obtained in accordance with educational systems outside of Spain without the need to homologate the degrees, provided that students can prove a level of education that is similar to that corresponding to Spanish Official University Master's degrees and that the country issuing the degree authorises access to doctorate studies. In addition, students who meet one of the following requirements may also access the period of research:

- a) To have passed 60 credits included in one or various Official Master's Programmes in accordance with the programmes offered by the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid and other Spanish universities.
- b) To have a graduate degree that, pursuant to Communitarian regulations, encompasses at least 300 credits.
- c) To have a Diploma of Advanced Studies obtained in accordance with that which is set forth in Royal Decree 778/98 of 30 April, or to have attained Researcher Sufficiency pursuant to that which is provided for in Royal Decree 185/85 of 23 January.

**Admission requirements:**

7. Students will be admitted to a period of research of a specific doctorate in accordance with the specific requirements and the criteria for the assessment of merit that are defined for each one of them, which may include requirements regarding specific previous education in certain disciplines.

8. Students admitted to the doctoral period of research must present a thesis project to the relevant department along with the favourable report written by the thesis advisor. After approval by the department, the thesis project will be presented to the postgraduate secretary's office of the relevant centre so that it may be registered. At this centre, students will formalise the relevant enrolment for each academic year, which will give them the right to academic supervision, to the utilisation of the resources of the university to develop their thesis and to all of the rights that correspond to them as doctorate students.

**Article 4 - Organisation and Development of Official Postgraduate Studies**

1. The initiative for the proposal of studies leading to Official Postgraduate Degrees shall correspond to the School Boards, Councils of Departments and University Institutes, Research Groups that develop joint research programmes, Academic Office of the Centre for Postgraduate Studies and the Board of Directors of the University, so that there is an offer of Postgraduate Studies that fall within the strategic lines of the University. These proposals will be presented at the Centre for Postgraduate Studies endorsed by those to whom the initiative corresponds. The different Centres of the University should establish their own action strategy with regard to the organisation and offers of Official Postgraduate Studies.

In any event, all Official Postgraduate Studies proposals should be assumed by the Committee on Postgraduate Studies and approved by the Governing Council and by the Social Council in the terms established in Section 5 of this Article.

2. The management and collegiate coordination of the programme shall be carried out by doctoral researchers or professors associated with the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid who are part of the body responsible for the programme. In addition, such coordination may also include a representative from each one of the Departments, Institutions or Centres of Spanish or foreign Universities that are part of the organisation and development of these studies.

3. The duties entrusted to the body responsible for an Official Postgraduate Programme are as follows:

- a) Create the programme and propose it for approval by the responsible bodies of the University.
- b) Specify the nature of the Master's degree, stipulating if it is for academic or professional specialisation or for initiation in research.
- c) Propose the type of programme: departmental, interdepartmental, interfaculty or interuniversity, as well as the participation, where relevant, of other institutions, companies or public or private organisations.
- d) Specify the scientific field: Arts and Humanities, Sciences, Health Sciences, Social Sciences and Law, Engineering and Architecture.
- e) Propose the allocation of credits to subjects and educational activities and the maximum number of students that may be admitted.
- f) Establish the criteria for the assessment of merit and selection for admitting students.
- g) Propose the system of coordination and supervision of the master's degrees.
- h) Provide the necessary information to students for their pre-registration and enrolment in the master's degree programme.
- i) Decide on the admission of students and determine the minimum number of credits and subjects that each admitted student must study, based on his/her prior education and according to stipulated admission and selection criteria.
- j) Propose to the Committee on Postgraduate Studies the professionals or researchers who are not university professors and that, under the supervision of one or more professors of the programme, will collaborate on the educational activities of the Postgraduate Programme.
- k) Propose the resolution of the recognition and adaptation of credits for those students who request it.
- l) Communicate to the Committee on Postgraduate Studies, where appropriate, the need to establish agreements and partnerships with other institutions, public and private organisations, companies or industries.
- m) Propose the content of the specific sections to issue the Diploma Supplement in question, in Spanish and English.
- n) Propose the system for monitoring and improving the quality of the master's degree.

4. In addition to the above duties, the duties entrusted to the body responsible for an Official Postgraduate Programme for studies leading to a doctorate also include the following:

- a) Propose the articulation of activities aimed at training in research, as well as the objectives and research lines of the programme.

- b) In the period of training, assign a tutor to every student who begins doctoral studies.
- c) In the period of research, assign a thesis advisor, who will be a doctor with proven research experience and, where applicable, co-advisors.
- d) Exercise the powers established by the University for the procedure to defend doctoral theses.

5. The steps to be followed by proposals on studies leading to official Postgraduate Degrees are:

- Approval by the Department(s) responsible for the studies.
- Presentation of the proposal, after the approval above, at the Centre for Postgraduate Studies.
- Approval by the School Board(s) involved.
- Study and report of each proposal by the Committee on Postgraduate Studies of the UAM. If necessary, present the proposal to the Governing Council and the Social Council.
- After its approval by the Governing Council and the Social Council and before its implementation, it should be verified by the Council of Universities and approved by the Community of Madrid.

6. The presentation of the Official Postgraduate Course of study by the body responsible for its approval at the University should be carried out well enough in advance of the academic year that it is to be implemented. The Committee on Postgraduate Studies will propose a schedule every year for such purpose, and the latest evaluation and verification deadlines shall be those stipulated in Royal Decree 1393/2007.

7. Changes to already-authorized courses of study must be approved by the centres responsible for the studies and by the Committee on Postgraduate Studies before being notified to the Council of Universities. If they are authorised by the latter, assuming that they do not entail a change in the nature and objectives of the degree, the University will introduce the accepted changes in the course of study. Otherwise, such changes will be deemed as a new course of study and, hence, the authorisation process must be begun again as if it were a new proposal altogether, as is stipulated in Article 4.5 of these Regulations.

#### **Article 5 - Committee on Postgraduate Studies**

1. The Committee on Postgraduate Studies of the University, as the Delegate Committee of the Board of Governors, shall be composed as determined by the latter.

2. The duties of the Committee on Postgraduate Studies shall be as follows:

- a) Carry out a study of the proposals of the Postgraduate Studies, which should include an analysis of the viability and strategic opportunity of the proposal and its compliance with current laws.
- b) Analyse the academic quality of the programme; an analysis that should consider the suitability of the teaching and research or professional background of the group teaching the course, the cohesiveness of the programme and the students' possibility to choose. Furthermore, it will evaluate the background of the course of study and the interdisciplinarity with which it is proposed. Likewise, it will evaluate the systems of coordination and mentoring of the master's degree as well as the procedures for monitoring and improving quality.
- c) Determine the minimum number of students to authorise teaching a master's degree programme at the University.
- d) Consider, when relevant, the interdepartmental, interfaculty or interuniversity nature of the proposal.

- e) Request from the Centre for Postgraduate Studies the publication of the necessary information to students for their pre-registration and enrolment.
- f) Propose general guidelines for the recognition of credits and validations in master's degrees.
- g) Grant authorisation, at the proposal of those responsible for the programme, for the collaboration of professionals and researchers that are not university professors.
- h) Report on collaboration agreements with other institutions, public or private organisations, companies or industries.
- i) Designate a team of experts to provide support and advice when studying the proposals of the Official Postgraduate Studies and for the monitoring of the quality of the programmes and actions for improvement.
- j) Authorise changes to already-implemented courses of study that do not entail a change in the nature or objectives of the degree, changes that are conditioned on the acceptance as such by the Council of Universities.

#### **Article 6 - Authorisation and defence of doctoral theses**

1. The doctoral thesis will consist of an original research project written by the candidate in any discipline.

2. The University will establish the procedures that assure the quality of the doctoral thesis, both while being developed and while being defended. In addition, these procedures ensure the public display of the research project carried out so that other doctors can give observations on the content.

3. The doctoral thesis will be evaluated in an event that will take place in a public session. This event will consist of the presentation and defence of the thesis by the doctoral candidate before the members of a jury in charge of evaluating it.

#### **Additional provision**

The Centre for Postgraduate Studies and Continuing Education, created by Agreement of the Governing Council on 5 November 2004, is established as the body responsible for coordinating the administrative management of the Official Postgraduate Studies to enable the effective internal management and the optimisation of resources and to facilitate organisation of such Programmes.

#### **Transitional provision**

Students that, on the date when Royal Decree 1393/2007 of 29 October, which lays down the planning of official university education, came into force had began or begin their official university studies in accordance with the previous regulations before beginning the process to cancel such regulations, shall study pursuant to the regulations by which they would have begun their studies; on 30 September 2015, these regulations shall become definitively cancelled. In any event, the rules regarding the development, jury, defence and evaluation of the doctoral thesis shall be applicable to doctoral theses that are to be authorised for reading by the Doctoral Committee after 1 November 2008.

**Repealing provision**

The Regulations on Official Postgraduate Studies of the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid approved by the Governing Council on 22 April 2005 is repealed.

**First final provision**

These regulations shall enter into force the day after they are approved by the Governing Council of the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, and they should be published on the University's website.

**Second final provision**

The procedures relating to the development, jury, defence and evaluation of doctoral theses, the recognition of studies and any other procedure created in connection with Official Postgraduate Studies shall be included as appendixes once approved.