



UNIVERZITA  
KOMENSKÉHO  
V BRATISLAVE

# **Internal Regulations of Comenius University Bratislava**

Internal Regulation No. 22/2023

approved by the Academic Senate  
of Comenius University Bratislava

**Full text of Internal Regulation No. 20/2019  
Study Regulations  
of Comenius University Bratislava  
as amended by Amendment No. 1 and Amendment No. 2**

**2023 Edition**

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The rector of Comenius University Bratislava (hereinafter referred to as “CU”) hereby

issues, in accordance with Article 65 (2) of Internal Regulation No. 5/2023, Statute of Comenius University, the full text of Internal Regulation No. 20/2019, Study Regulations of Comenius University, as amended by Internal Regulation No. 5/2021, Amendment No. 1, and Internal Regulation No. 21/2023, Amendment No. 2.

The Study Regulations of Comenius University are classified pursuant to Section 15 (1)(c) of Act No. 131/2002 Coll. on Higher Education and on Amendments and Supplements to Certain Acts, as amended (hereinafter referred to as "the Higher Education Act") as an internal regulation of Comenius University and were approved by the Academic Senate of Comenius University on 16 October 2019.

Internal Regulation No. 5/2021, Amendment No. 1, was approved by the Academic Senate of Comenius University on 10 March 2021. Internal Regulation No. 21/2023, Amendment No. 2, was approved by the Academic Senate of Comenius University on 31 May 2023.

## **PART ONE PREAMBLE**

### **Article 1 Subject of regulation**

- (1) These Study Regulations shall regulate
  - a) the rules governing higher education studies at Comenius University,<sup>1</sup>
  - b) matters related to academic rights and obligations of Comenius University students.
- (2) These Study Regulations shall govern the study of Comenius University students (hereinafter referred to as "the student") at all levels of study in study programmes accredited under the Higher Education Act.
- (3) These Study Regulations shall also govern
  - a) studies of students in joint study programmes to the extent provided for in the agreement between Comenius University and a higher education institution in cooperation with which the Comenius University faculty (hereinafter referred to as "the faculty") provides the joint study programme,<sup>2</sup>
  - b) studies of students of other higher education institutions based outside the territory of the Slovak Republic admitted for part of their studies in the context of academic mobility, taking into account the terms and conditions of the exchange programme or the agreement between Comenius University and the sending higher education institution.<sup>3</sup>

### **Article 2 Academic rights and obligations of students**

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<sup>1</sup> Article 44 (1) of the Statute of Comenius University.

<sup>2</sup> Section 54a (2) of the Higher Education Act.

<sup>3</sup> Section 58a (2) of the Higher Education Act.

- (1) Academic freedoms and academic rights are guaranteed at Comenius University.<sup>4</sup>
- (2) Students' rights are regulated by the Higher Education Act.<sup>5</sup> A more detailed definition of the academic rights of students shall be regulated by the Statute of Comenius University.
- (3) Students' obligations are regulated by the Higher Education Act.<sup>6</sup> The Statute of Comenius University provides a more detailed definition of the academic obligations of students.
- (4) Students are obliged to only use the email address assigned to them by Comenius University or a Comenius University faculty when communicating electronically with the teachers of subjects (hereinafter referred to as "teachers") and other employees of the faculty, the study department of the faculty or other organisational unit of the faculty responsible for managing the study agenda (hereinafter referred to as "the Study Department"), the organisational unit of the faculty responsible for managing the doctoral studies agenda (hereinafter referred to as "the Doctoral Studies Section") and employees of other units of Comenius University or the Rector's Office of Comenius University.
- (5) Students are obliged to observe academic ethics; always achieve their study results in an honest way, not to cheat and use dishonest practices during any form of verification of their study knowledge, not to commit plagiarism, not to pass off someone else's work as their own, not to abuse published or yet unpublished work results of university teachers, researchers and artists, doctoral students, or others students.
- (6) Violation of paragraph (5) above shall result in the annulment of the points obtained in the relevant item of the continuous assessment, assessment of an examination / state examination / FX defence or the initiation of disciplinary action.

## **PART TWO BACHELOR'S, MASTER'S AND DOCTORAL STUDIES**

### **Article 3 Study programme, recommended study plan and standard period of studies**

- (1) The study programme, recommended study plan and standard period of studies are regulated in the Higher Education Act.<sup>7</sup>
- (2) The study programme is a set of subjects consisting of educational activities, which are mainly lecture, seminar, exercise, course, final thesis, project work, laboratory work, internship, excursion, professional practice, state examination, and combinations thereof, and a set of rules designed in such a way that the successful completion of

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<sup>4</sup> Section 4 (1) of the Higher Education Act.

<sup>5</sup> Section 70 of the Higher Education Act.

<sup>6</sup> Section 71 of the Higher Education Act.

<sup>7</sup> Section 51 et seq. of the Higher Education Act.

these educational activities, while observing the aforementioned rules, enables the student to obtain a higher education degree. A study programme shall be structured in such a way that it is possible to undertake academic mobility or to gain experience equivalent to academic mobility.<sup>8</sup>

- (3) The first-level study programme is a bachelor's degree programme. The second-level degree programme and study programmes combining the first two levels of higher education according to Section 53 (3) of the Higher Education Act are a master's degree programme and a doctoral degree programme<sup>9</sup>.
- (4) Bachelor's degree programmes, master's degree programmes and doctoral degree programmes of Comenius University are carried out at the faculties.<sup>10</sup>
- (5) The study programme may be carried out in the full-time form of study or in the part-time form of study.<sup>11</sup>
- (6) The faculty shall determine a recommended study plan for each study programme. The recommended study plan is designed in such a way that by completing it the student meets the requirements for successful completion of studies during the standard period of studies corresponding to the study programme.<sup>12</sup>
- (7) Study advisors work at Comenius University to provide counselling services to students related to studies, effective learning, career counselling, and social care.<sup>12a</sup> A study advisor is appointed from among the university teachers and dismissed by the dean at the proposal of the study programme guarantor or the head of the department or institute.<sup>13</sup> The dean may appoint several study advisors, where necessary.
- (8) The standard period of studies is the period of studies specified by the study programme expressed in academic years.<sup>14</sup> The standard period of studies is determined in the accreditation file of the study programme.

#### **Article 4** **Study programme subjects and educational activities**

- (1) Study programme subjects are regulated by the Decree on the Credit System of Study.<sup>15</sup> Basic details as to the nature of the subject are given in the subject information sheet.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Section 51 (2) of the Higher Education Act.

<sup>9</sup> Doctoral degree programmes are second-level study programmes or study programmes in accordance with Section 53 (3) of the Higher Education Act which are focused on studies in the area of human medicine and veterinary medicine.

<sup>10</sup> Section 2 (7) of the Higher Education Act.

<sup>11</sup> Section 60 (1) of the Higher Education Act.

<sup>12</sup> Section 5 (6) of the Decree No. 614/2002 Coll. of the Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic on the Credit System of Study, as amended (hereinafter referred to as "the Decree on the Credit System of Study").

<sup>12a</sup> Article 39 (1) of Internal Regulation No. 23/2021 Internal Higher Education Quality Assurance System of Comenius University Bratislava (hereinafter referred to as "the internal quality system").

<sup>13</sup> Article 39 (6) of the internal quality system.

<sup>14</sup> Section 51(4)(h) of the Higher Education Act.

- (2) Each subject is uniquely identified within Comenius University by its internal code and name and is usually designed as a one-semester subject.
- (3) Subjects included in the study programme are divided into the following categories according to the obligatory nature of their completion:
  - a) compulsory,
  - b) compulsory elective,
  - c) optional.<sup>17</sup>
- (4) The student enrolls in optional subjects from the offer of optional subjects of his/her study programme, from the offer of subjects of other study programmes carried out at the faculty or from the offer of study programmes of other faculties or other higher education institutions, in compliance with the rules contained in the study programme. Enrolment in a subject from the offer of a study programme of another higher education institution is subject to the prior written consent of the dean of the faculty in which the student is enrolled for studies.
- (5) Each subject is carried out in the form of one or several educational activities.<sup>18</sup>
- (6) educational activities are characterised as follows:
  - a) lectures mainly have the nature of a professional interpretation of the basic principles, methodology of the discipline, problems and their sample solutions,
  - b) seminars, exercises, project work and laboratory work mainly support the practical mastery of the subject matter covered in lectures or which students have had to study independently; an important part of them is the independent work of students, the presentation of the results of this work and critical discussion,
  - c) a course joins the content of educational activities under (a) and (b).
- (7) The educational activities referred to in paragraph 6 may be supplemented by individual consultations with the teacher(s).
- (8) The student is obliged to ask the teacher for an apology for his/her non-attendance at an educational activity; the teacher may excuse non-attendance at an educational activity due to examination or treatment in a medical facility, or due to other personal obstacles on the student's part. In proving the reasons for non-attendance, the provisions on the personal data protection and the provisions on the personality protection under specific regulations must not be infringed. The teacher may ask the student to perform an alternative task to compensate for the absence from an educational activity.

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<sup>15</sup> Section 3 of the Decree No. 614/2002 Coll. of the Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic on the Credit System of Study, as amended.

<sup>16</sup> A specimen of the subject information sheet is given in the Decree on the Credit System of Study.

<sup>17</sup> Section 3 (2) of the Decree on the Credit System of Study.

<sup>18</sup> Pursuant to Section 60(4) of the Higher Education Act, educational activities may be carried out by the face-to-face method, the distance method or the combined method.

- (9) The teacher is obliged to excuse a student from non-attendance at an educational activity if
- a) he/she attended a session of the Academic Senate of Comenius University, a board of the Academic Senate of Comenius University, the faculty academic senate, or a board of the faculty academic senate if he/she is a member thereof, or
  - b) he/she attended a session of a representative university body if he/she is a member thereof,
  - c) his/her absence is excused by the rector, a vice-rector, a dean of a faculty or a vice-dean of a faculty.

#### **Article 5** **Credit system of study**

- (1) The organisation of all levels and forms of higher education is based on the credit system.<sup>19</sup> The credit system of study<sup>20</sup> supports the openness of Comenius University from the inside, promotes student mobility, and provides the student with the opportunity to participate in the creation of his/her study plan.
- (2) The student earns credits upon successful completion of the subject. If a student has earned credits in the previous course of study for a successfully completed subject which is part of the study programme of his/her current study as a compulsory subject or a compulsory elective subject, the procedure according to Article 18 shall be followed.
- (3) One of the conditions required for a student to progress to the next part of studies is earning the necessary number of credits in the relevant control stage of studies.
- (4) The number of credits, the achievement of which is a condition for the proper completion of studies, is specified in the accreditation file of the study programme.<sup>21</sup>

#### **Article 6** **Study-related documents**

- (1) Study-related documents are regulated by the Higher Education Act.<sup>22</sup> Study-related documents include:
  - a) student ID card,
  - b) statement of study results,
  - c) clinical practice record.
- (2) The student ID card is issued to a student when he/she first enrolls in a bachelor's degree programme, a master's degree programme, a doctor's degree programme or a

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<sup>19</sup> Section 62 of the Higher Education Act and Section 4 of the Decree on the Credit System of Study.

<sup>20</sup> Section 62(1) of the Higher Education Act.

<sup>21</sup> Section 51 (4)(k) of the Higher Education Act.

<sup>22</sup> Section 67 of the Higher Education Act.



doctoral degree programme. Student ID cards are issued by Comenius University. The details of the issuance of student ID cards are regulated by a separate internal regulation of Comenius University.<sup>23</sup>

- (3) The faculty shall issue a confirmation to the student of the sending higher education institution that he/she is a student of Comenius University, and shall indicate the period of time during which his/her studies at Comenius University are to last. Comenius University shall issue the student with a student ID card if it cannot be replaced by a similar proof of study issued by the sending higher education institution.<sup>24</sup>

## **Article 7** **Study schedule**

- (1) The academic year starts on 1 September of the current calendar year and finishes on 31 August of the following calendar year.<sup>25</sup>
- (2) The academic year is divided into a winter semester and a summer semester.<sup>26</sup>
- (3) Each semester is composed of the teaching part and the examination period. The teaching part takes from 13 to 15 weeks. The examination period takes at least four weeks.
- (4) All study programmes shall begin at the beginning of the winter semester of the academic year.<sup>27</sup>
- (5) After discussion in the College of the Rector of Comenius University, the rector shall issue, by 31 January at the latest, the study schedule at Comenius University (hereinafter referred to as "the university study schedule") for the following academic year; the university study schedule shall include in particular:
- a) the beginning and end of the teaching part of the individual semesters,
  - b) the beginning and end of the examination periods of the individual semesters,
  - c) retake and alternate dates for the holding of state examinations,
  - d) the date and venue of the opening ceremony of the academic year at CU.
- (6) Once the university study schedule is issued, the dean shall issue, by 31 March at the latest, the study schedule at the faculty (hereinafter referred to as "the faculty study schedule") for the following academic year, in which he/she shall supplement the university study schedule in particular with the period in which enrolment, state examinations and other academic activities specific to a relevant faculty take place.

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<sup>23</sup> Regulation of the Rector of Comenius University No. 1/2003 Organisational and Operational Regulations of the Automatic Person Identification System of Comenius University.

<sup>24</sup> Section 58a (3) of the Higher Education Act.

<sup>25</sup> Section 61 (1) of the Higher Education Act.

<sup>26</sup> Section 61 (2) of the Higher Education Act.

<sup>27</sup> Section 61 (3) first sentence of the Higher Education Act.

- (7) The faculty study schedule may, with the prior written approval of the rector, in deviation from the university study schedule regulate the dates under paragraph 5 (a) through (c)
- a) in the case of study programmes referred to in Section 53 (3) of the Higher Education Act,
  - b) if the recommended semester of the subject specified in the subject information sheet is the last semester of study, or
  - c) in the case of circumstances worth special attention, related to study programmes conducted at the faculty.
- (8) If the faculty carries out study programmes in cooperation with other faculties, the rector's consent to the deviating regulation of dates in the faculty study schedule pursuant to paragraph 7 is conditional on the mutual consent of the faculties concerned.

### **Article 8**

#### **Initial enrolment and enrolment for the next part of studies**

- (1) Enrolment for studies shall be regulated by the Higher Education Act.<sup>28</sup> An applicant admitted to study becomes a Comenius University student from the date of enrolment for studies.<sup>29</sup>
- (2) There are three types of enrolments:
- a) initial enrolment;<sup>30</sup> on the initial enrolment date the admitted applicants shall become Comenius University students,
  - b) enrolment for the next part of the study programme<sup>31</sup> (hereinafter referred to as "enrolment for the next part of studies"); students shall have the right to enrol for the next part of studies if they have met the requirements determined by the study programme or these Study Regulations,
  - c) enrolment for part of the study in the context of academic mobility, taking into account the conditions of the exchange programme or the contract between Comenius University and the sending higher education institution.
- (3) The dates of initial enrolment and enrolment for the next part of studies shall be determined by the dean in accordance with the faculty study schedule.
- (4) Before enrolling for the next part of studies, the student may express his/her interest in the subjects he/she wants to take in the next academic year (next semester) and discuss their composition with the study advisor.

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<sup>28</sup> Section 59, Section 69 and Section 55 (9) of the Higher Education Act.

<sup>29</sup> Section 69 (1) of the Higher Education Act.

<sup>30</sup> Section 59 of the Higher Education Act.

<sup>31</sup> Section 70 (1)(c) of the Higher Education Act.

- (5) The details of the relations between the faculty and the student which arise on initial enrolment and enrolment in the next part of studies are set out in Article 1 of Annex No. 2.
- (6) If a subject has limited capacity due to spatial, staffing, time or other reasons, students are authorised to enrol for the subject in the following order:
  - a) students of the faculty for whom the subject is compulsory, and students of other higher education institutions who enrol for the subject based on a study contract,
  - b) students of the faculty for whom the subject is compulsory elective,
  - c) students of other faculties for whom the subject is compulsory elective,
  - d) students of the faculty for whom the subject is optional,
  - e) students of other faculties who enrol for a subject as an optional subject,
  - f) students of other higher education institutions who enrol for a subject as an optional subject.
- (7) Within the categories referred to in paragraph 6, preference shall be given to students with the better weighted grade point average. Enrolment in the subject by students of other higher education institutions is subject to the prior written consent of the teacher and the dean.

### **Art. 9 Study plan**

- (1) The student's study plan (hereinafter referred to as "the study plan") shall determine the time and content sequence of subjects and the forms of assessment of study results, including considerations for potential academic mobility. With the exception of the form of assessment of study results, the study plan shall be designed by the student himself/herself in accordance with the rules determined by the study programme and with these Study Regulations.<sup>32</sup>
- (2) By enrolling, the student determines his/her study plan for the next period of studies (academic year or semester).
- (3) The student enrolls for subjects of such credit value and in such a composition (compulsory subjects, compulsory elective subjects and optional subjects) in order to meet the requirements for enrolment for the next part of studies in the control stage of studies. In the academic year in which the student plans to graduate, he/she shall enrol for subjects of such credit value and in such a composition that by successfully completing them he/she meets the requirements for graduation.
- (4) A student of a study programme of a given degree of study may enrol for a subject of a study programme of a higher or lower degree of study only with the prior consent of

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<sup>32</sup> Section 51 (8) of the Higher Education Act.

the teacher and the guarantor of the study programme for which the student is enrolled.

- (5) A student may enrol for a maximum of 90 credits in a single academic year. For reasons of special consideration and on the basis of a written request, the dean may allow a student to enrol for subjects for more than one and a half times the standard subject load in the given academic year. The dean's decision to authorise or not to authorise enrolment for subjects for more than one and a half times the standard subject load is final and cannot be appealed.
- (6) On the basis of a written request, the dean may allow a student to study according to an individual study schedule in the given academic year if
  - a) the student is exceptionally talented, with excellent academic results,
  - b) the student has specific needs, taking into account the type and extent of his/her specific needs,
  - c) the student has long-term health problems,
  - d) the student fulfils expert, artistic or sports representation duties,
  - e) the student is permanently caring for his/her own or an adopted child aged up to six years, or
  - f) the student has been sent by the faculty in the context of academic mobility.
- (7) The extent of exceptions and exemptions from the faculty study schedule is determined by the dean when a student is studying according to an individual study schedule. Before the beginning of the teaching part of the semester or during the semester, if the conditions for permitting an individual study schedule pursuant to paragraph 6 occurs during such teaching part, the student is obliged to personally agree with the teachers of the particular subjects on the conditions of the individual fulfilment of study obligations and the method of checking the study results. The extent of exceptions and exemptions shall correspond to the reasons why the student is requesting the permission to study according to an individual study schedule.
- (8) There is no legal entitlement to be authorised to study according to an individual study schedule in the relevant academic year. The dean's decision to authorise or not to authorise studies according to the individual study schedule is final and cannot be appealed.

#### **Art. 10** **Conditions for subject re-enrolment**

- (1) Re-enrolment for compulsory, compulsory elective and optional subjects shall be regulated by the Decree on the Credit System of Study<sup>33</sup>.
- (2) During his/her studies, the student may re-enrol for a compulsory elective subject in which he/she has failed, or he/she may enrol for another compulsory elective subject

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<sup>33</sup> Section 5 of the Decree on the Credit System of Study.

instead from among the compulsory elective subjects of the relevant study programme. After a second unsuccessful attempt to pass the selected compulsory elective subject, the student shall be expelled from studies pursuant to Section 66 (1)(c) of the Higher Education Act.<sup>34</sup> If a student has earned a sufficient number of credits for the proper completion of his/her studies and has fulfilled the requirements of the subject structure of the relevant study programme, he/she does not have to re-enrol for a compulsory elective subject according to the first sentence.

- (3) When enrolling for the next part of studies, the student shall determine the compulsory elective subject to enrol for instead of the failed compulsory elective subject. If a student chooses another compulsory elective subject instead of a failed compulsory elective subject, the compulsory elective subject so specified shall be treated as a re-enrolled compulsory elective subject.

### **Article 11** **Assessment of study results**

- (1) In matters of assessment of study results in the framework of study of a subject shall be decided by the teacher, in disputable issues the study programme guarantor decides; if the teacher is also the study programme guarantor, the head of the workplace providing the teaching of the subject shall decide.
- (2) Assessment of the study results shall be regulated by the Decree on the Credit System of Study.<sup>35</sup> The assessment of the student's study results as part of studies of the subject is carried out in particular by<sup>36</sup>
  - a) continuous assessment of study results during the teaching part of the particular period of studies (check questions, written tests, tasks for independent work, semester papers, presentation during a seminar, etc.) (hereinafter referred to as "the continuous assessment"),
  - b) an examination for a given period of studies (hereinafter referred to as "the examination").
- (3) The conditions for completing a subject are specified in the subject information sheet.
- (4) At the beginning of the teaching part of a semester, the teacher shall disclose in writing the following information on the faculty's website or in other forms considered customary at the faculty:
  - a) the extent of compulsory attendance at the educational activities of which the subject is made up,
  - b) specification of the method of assessment of study results,
  - c) continuous assessment dates,
  - d) information whether or not the student is eligible for retake or alternative options to meet the requirements of the continuous assessment,

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<sup>34</sup> Section 5 (4) of the Decree on the Credit System of Study.

<sup>35</sup> Section 6 of the Decree on the Credit System of Study.

<sup>36</sup> Section 6 (1) of the Decree on the Credit System of Study.

- e) information as to whether the achievement of the prescribed level of continuous assessment or the prescribed extent of compulsory attendance at educational activities is a condition for passing the examination.
- (5) If more than one teacher is involved in the teaching of a subject or if the teaching of a subject is carried out in more than one study programme, the conditions under paragraph 4 shall be published by the teachers by mutual agreement; the published conditions must be identical in content.
  - (6) The subjects that the student has enrolled for and not completed are evaluated with the marking grade FX at the end of the relevant examination period.
  - (7) The details of the relationships that arise in the assessment of study results are set out in Article 2 of Annex No. 2.
  - (8) The weighted grade point average<sup>37</sup> shall be used to assess the student's overall study results over a defined period of time<sup>38</sup>.
  - (9) The weighted grade point average shall be used in particular for the overall result of properly completed studies, for other study admission conditions, for priority enrolment of subjects due to capacity constraints, for deciding on the award of incentive scholarships financed from the state budget and scholarships financed from the Comenius University's own resources, for selecting students for academic mobility and for allocating accommodation in the Comenius University accommodation facilities.

## **Article 12 Examination**

- (1) The examination shall be held in the examination period of the semester in which the student has completed the studying of the subject.
- (2) The examination shall be taken in written form, oral form, practical form, or a combination thereof.
- (3) The achievement of the prescribed level of continuous assessment or the prescribed extent of compulsory attendance at educational activities may be a prerequisite for passing the examination. In the event that a student fails to meet the prescribed level of continuous assessment or the prescribed extent of compulsory attendance at educational activities, he/she is assessed with the marking grade FX in the subject without the option to take the examination.
- (4) The dates, places and forms of examination, as well as the method of registering for and de-registering from the examination, shall be published well in advance of the beginning of the examination period of the semester, in a manner deemed customary

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<sup>37</sup> Section 6 (7) of the Decree on the Credit System of Study.

<sup>38</sup> The defined period of time is usually a semester, an academic year or the entire period of studies of a given study programme.

at the faculty. The teacher is obliged to offer at least three examination dates and to spread them evenly during the examination period of the semester.

- (5) The teacher may determine that the examination dates are divided into regular dates and retake dates. The cumulative capacity of regular examination dates is at least 125% of the number of students enrolled for the subject. Unless the teacher decides otherwise, the student shall not be entitled to be offered by any additional examination dates beyond those offered in accordance with paragraph 4.
- (6) The result of the examination, which includes the results of the continuous assessment, is evaluated with the marking grade pursuant to Section 6 (3) of the Decree on the Credit System of Study. The rate of counting of continuous assessment results shall be determined in the manner provided for in Article 11 (3), (4) and (5).
- (7) If a student has registered for an examination date, has not de-registered and has failed to attend, he/she is obliged to apologize via university email to the relevant teacher no later than three working days after the examination date. If the student fails to do so or the teacher does not accept the student's excuse, he/she shall be assessed with the marking grade FX for that examination date.
- (8) If a student has been given the marking grade FX on a regular examination date or has failed to register on time for one of the regular examination dates, he/she has the right to one retake date.
- (9) The student shall have the right not to accept the assessment on the examination date and to retake the examination. Details of the method and consequences of non-acceptance of assessment on the regular examination date are set out in Article 2 of Annex No. 2.
- (10) If a student has been given the marking grade FX on the retake examination date or has failed to register on time for the retake examination date, the subject shall be considered to have been unsuccessfully completed.
- (11) A student has the right to request that the last retake examination date be conducted in the form of the Official Examining Board test; this shall also apply to the written form of assessment. When re-enrolling for a subject, the student can apply for the examination in the form of the Official Examining Board test on the regular date.<sup>39</sup> A written request for the examination in the form of the Official Examining Board test, stating the reasons, shall be submitted by the student to the dean; the request must be submitted no later than five days before the last day of the relevant examination period. Based on a proposal of the study programme guarantor, the dean shall appoint an examining board composed of at least of three members; the teacher of the particular subject is usually the chair of the examining board. The examination in the form of the Official Examining Board test may also take place without the student's request. The dean's decision to authorise or not to authorise the examination in the form of the Official Examining Board test is final and cannot be appealed.

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<sup>39</sup> The examination in the form of the Official Examining Board test is only a change in the form of examination, not in the number of retake dates.

- (12) Every student has the right to be informed about the assessment of his/her examination, about mistakes made and correct solutions.

**Article 13**  
**Control stages of studies**

- (1) The control of study within framework of the study programme (the "control stage of studies") is carried out by checking the number of credits earned for the completed subjects.<sup>40</sup>
- (2) In order to continue his/her studies, a student must demonstrate earning of a minimum number of credits in the control stages of studies in accordance with Annex No. 1. The control stages of the study are
- a) the end of the first semester of studies,
  - b) the end of every year of studies.
- (3) Complete semesters in which a student's studies have been interrupted are not counted towards the period of studies for the purposes of the control stage of studies.
- (4) The number of credits earned for the purposes of the control stages of studies shall also include credits for subjects the completion of which has been recognised in accordance with Article 18.

**Art. 14**  
**Bachelor thesis and master thesis**

- (1) Studies according to each study programme shall also include a final thesis, which, together with its defence, constitutes one subject; the defence of the final thesis is one of the state examinations.<sup>41</sup>
- (2) The final thesis is a bachelor thesis when studying according to a first-degree programme, and a master thesis when studying according to a second-degree programme or a study programme pursuant to Section 53 (3) of the Higher Education Act.
- (3) The bachelor thesis should demonstrate the student's ability to independently acquire theoretical and practical knowledge and use it. The master thesis should demonstrate the student's ability to independently acquire theoretical and practical knowledge based on the current state of science or art and to creatively apply, use and develop it.
- (4) The final thesis shall be elaborated in Slovak. With the consent of the faculty, the final thesis may be written and defended in a language other than the official language. In philological study programmes, the final thesis may also be written and defended in the language in which the study programme is carried out, also without the consent of

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<sup>40</sup> Section 51 (4)(j) of the Higher Education Act.

<sup>41</sup> Section 51 (3) first sentence of the Higher Education Act.



the faculty. Final theses written in a language other than the official language shall contain an abstract in the official language.<sup>42</sup>

- (5) The basic requirements that must be fulfilled by the final thesis, the method of its submission, originality control, archiving and making them accessible are regulated by a separate internal regulation of Comenius University.<sup>43</sup>
- (6) The final thesis shall be elaborated by the student under the guidance of the final thesis supervisor. The final thesis supervisor shall draw up a written expert opinion on the final thesis and propose its assessment.
- (7) The final thesis shall be assessed by an external examiner. The external examiner shall elaborate a written expert opinion on the final thesis and propose its assessment.
- (8) The student who has written the final thesis has the right to get acquainted with the expert opinions on the final thesis (with the expert opinion of the final thesis supervisor and the external examiner) no later than three working days before its defence.
- (9) If the final thesis supervisor or external examiner is not a member of the examining board to perform state examinations, he/she shall be invited to the final thesis defence and have the right to express his/her opinion during its assessment.

#### **Article 15** **State examination**

- (1) Generally, state examination details are laid down in the Higher Education Act.<sup>44</sup>
- (2) The state examination shall be considered as a subject of the study programme.<sup>45</sup>
- (3) The state examination may consist of components; the components of the state examination shall not be considered as subjects of the study programme and are not assigned credits.
- (4) Unless a study programme stipulates otherwise, the last state examination may be taken by students
  - a) after they have earned at least such a number of credits so that with the credits for successful completing the last state examination they will have earned the necessary number of credits for regular completion of studies, and
  - b) after successful completion of compulsory subjects, compulsory elective subjects and optional subjects in the composition determined by the study programme, except for the last state examination; and

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<sup>42</sup> Section 51 (3) second and third sentences and Section 51 (4)(p) of the Higher Education Act.

<sup>43</sup> Internal Regulation No. 12/2013 Directive of the Rector of Comenius University on the basic requirements of final theses, rigorous theses and habilitation theses, control of their originality, archiving and making them accessible at Comenius University, as amended.

<sup>44</sup> Section 63 of the Higher Education Act.

<sup>45</sup> Section 3 (4) of the Decree on the Credit System of Study.

- c) if they are not the subject of any disciplinary proceedings.
- (5) State examination dates shall be determined by the dean in accordance with the faculty study schedule.
- (6) The examining board for the state examinations shall have at least four members.<sup>46</sup> The chair of the examining board is a university teacher serving as a professor or associate professor. The examining board shall be quorate if its chair and at least two other members are present.
- (7) The examining board shall decide on the assessment of the state examination or its part by consensus. If the examining board has not reached a consensus, the assessment of the state examination or a part thereof shall be determined by voting. The details of the form of voting of the examining board shall be specified in an internal regulation of the faculty issued by the dean.
- (8) If, for serious reasons, a student is unable to appear for the date of the state examination or part thereof for which he/she has registered, he/she is obliged to apologize in writing to the chair of the examining board in advance or, at the latest, within three working days after the date of the state examination or part thereof, if there were serious obstacles that prevented him/her from excusing himself/herself in advance. If a student fails to appear for the state examination or part thereof on the specified date without an excuse, or if the chair of the examining board does not excuse his/her absence, the student is assessed with the marking grade FX for the given state examination date.
- (9) If a student was assessed with the marking grade FX on the regular date of the state examination, he/she is entitled to two retake dates. Students may retake the state examinations
  - a) on state examination retake dates in the particular academic year, or
  - b) on the state examination dates in any of the following academic years, in which case the student shall re-enrol for the state examination as a study programme subject in accordance with the provisions of Article 10.

**Art. 16**  
**Overall study result**

- (1) The overall result of duly completed bachelor's, master's or doctoral studies shall be assessed with two marking grades:
  - a) pass with honours,
  - b) pass.
- (2) The overall result of duly completed studies shall be assessed with the marking grade "pass with honours" if the student:

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<sup>46</sup> Section 63 (6) of the Higher Education Act.

- a) has achieved a study average of less than or equal to 1.30 for the entire course of studies, including state examinations; the study average shall be considered to be the weighted grade point average, the calculation of which shall include all subjects enrolled by the student<sup>47</sup>, and
  - b) has passed state examinations on regular dates with only A or B marking grades, while the number of A marking grades cannot be lower than the number of B marking grades.
- (3) If the conditions of paragraph 2 are not fulfilled, the overall result of duly completed studies shall be graded as "pass".
  - (4) Comenius University issues a university diploma with honours to a graduate who has duly completed his/her studies with an overall result "pass with honours".

### **Article 17**

#### **Changing a study programme within Comenius University**

- (1) A student has the right to apply for a change in a study programme within the same field of study; a change in the study programme within the same field of study is not made through the admissions procedure.
- (2) A student's request to change the form of studies is a request to change the study programme.
- (3) A student may ask for a study programme change after the end of the winter semester of the first year of studies or always as at the beginning of the academic year. Any student requesting a study programme change shall prove that:
  - a) he/she has met the conditions of the control stage of studies in the original study programme, and
  - b) he/she has met the other admissions requirements in the event of transfer that are in force for the relevant academic year.
- (4) The dean shall decide on the student's request for a study programme change after the opinion of the guarantor of the relevant study programme. If the original study programme and the new study programme are studied at different faculties, the study programme change is conditioned by the consent of both relevant deans.
- (5) Article 18 shall apply to the recognition of completion of subjects in the case of a study programme change within Comenius University.
- (6) To be able to regularly complete his/her studies, a student shall meet the conditions set out in the study programme which the student studies after the change.

### **Article 18**

#### **Recognition of completion of subjects**

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<sup>47</sup> Section 6 (7) of the Decree on the Credit System of Study.

- (1) Recognition of completion of a subject is the award of a subject assessment and the subsequent earning of the appropriate number of credits, which are assigned to the subject, based on the part of studies completed in the past.
- (2) A student who has studied at a higher education institution in the past and his/her studies were not regularly completed, a student requesting to be transferred or a student requesting a study programme change within Comenius University may request recognition of completion of subjects, if
  - a) since the assessment date
    1. no more than four years have elapsed in the case of subjects in bachelor's degree programmes or master's degree programmes, except for study programmes pursuant to Section 53 (3) of the Higher Education Act, or
    2. no more than five years have elapsed in the case of subjects in master's degree programmes pursuant to Section 53 (3) of the Higher Education Act or doctoral degree programmes,
  - b) they have been assessed with the marking grades A through C or equivalent, and
  - c) they are part of studies according to the current study programme as compulsory subjects or compulsory elective subjects or are equivalent in content to compulsory subjects or compulsory elective subjects in studies according to the current study programme.
- (3) Taking state examinations cannot be recognised, except for a dissertation examination.
- (4) A student may request recognition of completion of subjects prior to the beginning of the teaching part of the semester of the academic year or, at the latest, by the end of the 2nd week of the teaching part of the semester. Upon request, the student shall attach to his/her request the information sheets of the subjects he/she has successfully completed.
- (5) In one academic year, a student may be credited with the completion of subjects for which the total sum of the credits assigned to him/her in the study according to the current study programme is no more than 50; this shall not apply if the student is admitted to studies in the event of transfer from another higher education institution<sup>47a</sup> or if there has been a change in the study programme according to Article 17.
- (6) The dean shall decide on the recognition of completion of subjects after the opinion of the teachers of the subjects for which the student requests recognition of completion. The dean's decision on whether or not to recognise the completion of subjects is final and cannot be appealed.

**Article 19**  
**Transfer of credits in the case of academic mobility**

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<sup>47a</sup> Article 10 of Internal Regulation No. 4/2021 Rules of the Admissions Procedure at Comenius University Bratislava.

- (1) The transfer of credits is the process of counting credits earned as part of studies at another higher education institution in the Slovak Republic or at a higher education institution abroad (hereinafter referred to as "academic mobility") towards the number of credits to be counted by the student pursuant to Section 4 (3) of the Decree on the Credit System of Study. Basic details of the credit transfer are regulated by the Decree on the Credit System of Study.<sup>48</sup>
- (2) The rules and conditions for sending students on academic mobility are regulated by specific internal regulations of Comenius University<sup>49</sup> and the terms and conditions of the academic mobility programmes.
- (3) Academic mobility is formally conditional on a study contract.<sup>50</sup> The study contract<sup>51</sup> contains in particular the proposed study plan at the receiving higher education institution and the recognition of the corresponding part of studies at the sending faculty. The study contract and its changes shall be signed by the dean or the vice-dean charged by the dean with the prior written consent of the study programme guarantor. The subjects to be taken by the student at the receiving higher education institution on the basis of the study contract shall become part of the student's study plan.
- (4) If a subject completed at the receiving higher education institution has a number of credits which is not an integral number, the number of earned credits shall be rounded mathematically to a natural number in the case of credit transfer.
- (5) The subject completed at the receiving higher education institution which is comparable in content and extent to a subject at the sending faculty and which the student has taken as part of an approved academic mobility:
  - a) is automatically recognised as having been taken instead of the relevant compulsory subject, compulsory elective subject or optional subject from the study programme to which the student has been admitted, if it has been specified in the study contract in the section governing recognition of the corresponding part of studies at the sending faculty,
  - b) may be recognised by the dean upon written request from the student and after the opinion of the study programme guarantor, as having been taken instead of the relevant compulsory subject or compulsory elective subject from the study programme to which the student has been admitted, if the conditions under point (a) are not fulfilled.
- (6) A subject the completion of which has been recognised under paragraph 5 shall be indicated in the Diploma Supplement with zero number of credits and a note indicating that its completion has been replaced by the completion of the subject at the receiving higher education institution in the context of academic mobility. The number of credits

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<sup>48</sup> Section 7 of the Decree on the Credit System of Study.

<sup>49</sup> For example, Internal Regulation No. 3/2016 Directive of the Rector of Comenius University on the scope of authority of Comenius University and its faculties in the framework of the European Community Erasmus+ programme.

<sup>50</sup> Section 7 (1) and (2) of the Decree on the Credit System of Study.

<sup>51</sup> A specimen of the study contract is provided in Annex No. 3 to the Decree on the Credit System of Study.

earned for a subject taken at the receiving higher education institution is determined by the number of credits indicated in the statement of study results; the assessment of the subject taken at the receiving higher education institution shall be converted into the grading scale used by Comenius University in accordance with Section 6 (3) of the Decree on the Credit System of Study.

- (7) Unless otherwise provided in the terms and conditions of the relevant academic mobility programme, the study contract or paragraph 5, the faculty shall recognise the student's subjects completed at the receiving higher education institution in the context of academic mobility as optional subjects.
- (8) The provisions of this Article shall also apply *mutatis mutandis* to a student who takes only some subjects at a higher education institution abroad in the relevant part of the academic year on the basis of an internship, summer school or other similar educational activity approved by the sending faculty.

#### **Art. 20**

#### **Study interruption and re-enrolment**

- (1) The student's studying of a study programme may be interrupted on the basis of a written request from the student, usually for a complete part of his/her studies (semester, academic year).<sup>52</sup>
- (2) The student's studies may be interrupted for a maximum period of one year without stating a reason.
- (3) If the reasons for the interruption include serious health reasons, maternity leave or parental leave, studies may be interrupted for a maximum of three years.
- (4) If the student's studies have been interrupted several times, the total accumulated period of interruption may not exceed three years.
- (5) The dean shall authorise the study interruption.<sup>53</sup> The decision to authorise or not to authorise the study interruption shall contain the particulars referred to in Article 37 (2), including the precise duration of the study interruption; the instruction shall specify the date or dates on which re-enrolment for studies (hereinafter referred to as "re-enrolment") may be effected. The dean's decision to authorise or not to authorise the study interruption is final and cannot be appealed.
- (6) A student who applies for the study interruption and has not fulfilled the conditions of the control stage of studies cannot be granted study interruption.

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<sup>52</sup> Section 64 (1) of the Higher Education Act.

<sup>53</sup> Section 64 (2) of the Higher Education Act.

- (7) If a student discontinues his/her studies during the winter semester, the registration of subjects for the summer semester shall be cancelled. In the case of study interruption for serious health reasons, serious personal reasons or other reasons worthy of special consideration, the dean may authorise, based on a request, the cancellation of the enrolment for subjects not taken also for the semester during which the studies were interrupted; the cancellation of the enrolment for subjects shall be stated in the decision on the authorisation to interrupt studies.
- (8) If a student interrupts his/her studies outside the teaching part of the semester, all his/her study result assessments within the study of the subject obtained by the date of filing the request for study interruption shall be registered. The subjects for which the student has been given the marking grade FX or no grade by the date of filing the request for study interruption shall be considered re-registered subjects upon re-enrolment. For the re-enrolment for subjects, the procedure shall be as set out in Article 10.
- (9) A student who has interrupted his/her studies shall cease to be a student on the date stated in the study interruption authorisation decision.
- (10) A student whose studies have been interrupted becomes a student from the re-enrolment date.<sup>54</sup> Re-enrolment is at the same time enrolment for the next part of studies. The study interruption period shall be extended until the date preceding the re-enrolment date.
- (11) If a student fails to appear for re-enrolment, the faculty shall invite him/her in writing to appear for enrolment within the time-limit of ten working days from the receipt of this invitation.<sup>55</sup> The provisions of Article 37(3) and (4) shall apply to the service of the invitation.
- (12) If a student fails to re-enrol within the specified time-limit after receiving an invitation to re-enrol and does not request an extension of that time-limit for health reasons preventing him/her from appearing for re-enrolment, the day on which he/she should have re-enrolled shall be deemed to be the day on which the student abandoned his/her studies.<sup>56</sup>
- (13) If a student delivers a written declaration of abandonment of studies after the written invitation pursuant to paragraph 10, the period of study interruption shall be extended until the date on which the faculty receives the student's written declaration of abandonment of studies.

**Art. 21**  
**Regular study termination**

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<sup>54</sup> Section 69 (1) of the Higher Education Act.

<sup>55</sup> Section 66 (3) of the Higher Education Act.

<sup>56</sup> Section 66 (4) of the Higher Education Act. The day on which the student abandoned his/her studies is the last day of the 10-day time-limit referred to in paragraph 10.

Regular study termination shall be regulated by the Higher Education Act.<sup>57</sup>

### **Article 22 Other study termination**

- (1) In addition to the regular study termination, the Higher Education Act also regulates other study termination.<sup>58</sup>
- (2) Any student may abandon his/her studies at his/her own discretion by a written documentary declaration addressed to the dean.
- (3) The following shall also be deemed to be abandonment of studies
  - a) failure to appear for enrolment for the next part of studies pursuant to Section 66 (3) and (4) of the Higher Education Act,
  - b) failure to appear for re-enrolment pursuant to Article 20 (10); or
  - c) transfer of a Comenius University student to a different higher education institution.<sup>59</sup>
- (4) The faculty shall issue the statement of study results to a person who has completed studying of a study programme pursuant to Section 66(1) of the Higher Education Act.<sup>60</sup>
- (5) The content requirements of the decision on the study termination pursuant to Section 66 (1)(c) and (d) of the Higher Education Act can be found in Annex No. 3 hereto. A specimen of the decision on the study termination pursuant to Section 66 (1)(c) and (d) of the Higher Education Act can be found in Annex No. 4 hereto.

## **PART THREE SPECIAL PROVISIONS ON DOCTORAL STUDIES**

### **Article 23 Basic provisions**

- (1) A third-level study programme is a doctoral degree programme.<sup>61</sup>
- (2) Study programmes of doctoral studies at Comenius University shall be provided at its faculties.<sup>62</sup> An external educational institution with which the faculty has concluded an individual agreement on the doctoral studies for a doctoral student under a valid

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<sup>57</sup> Section 65 of the Higher Education Act.

<sup>58</sup> Section 66 of the Higher Education Act.

<sup>59</sup> Section 59 (6) of the Higher Education Act.

<sup>60</sup> Section 67 (5)(a) of the Higher Education Act.

<sup>61</sup> Section 2 (5) of the Higher Education Act.

<sup>62</sup> Section 2 (7) of the Higher Education Act.



framework cooperation agreement with the external educational institution when participating in the implementation of doctoral degree programmes.<sup>63</sup>

- (3) The rules governing the organisation of doctoral studies are generally regulated by the Higher Education Act.<sup>64</sup>
- (4) The organisation of doctoral studies shall be subject to
  - a) the provisions of Articles 2, 3, 4, 6, 17, 21 and 22 equally,
  - b) the provisions of Articles 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 18 and 19 shall apply *mutatis mutandis*.

#### **Article 24 Discipline Committee**

- (1) The faculty shall establish a discipline committee for each field of study/study programme. Based on an agreement with other higher education institutions, Comenius University may establish joint discipline committees in individual fields of study. If doctoral studies are provided in cooperation with an external educational institution, the external educational institution shall be represented accordingly in the relevant discipline committee.<sup>65</sup>
- (2) The discipline committee shall consist of its chair and at least four other members. At least one of the members of the discipline committee must have the scientific-pedagogical title of professor, the scientific rank of doctor of sciences or must be awarded the scientific qualification degree I. Other members of the discipline committee may be:
  - a) university teachers and researchers with the scientific-pedagogical title of associate professor,
  - b) university teachers and researchers with the academic degree PhD., ArtD., the scientific rank CSc., in Catholic Theology with the academic degree ThDr.,
  - c) university teachers and researchers with the scientific qualification degree II, or
  - d) qualified practitioners in the field holding any of the academic titles, scientific-pedagogical titles or scientific degrees specified above.
- (3) The rules governing the establishment of discipline committees shall be governed by an internal regulation of the faculty issued by the dean after it has been approved by the faculty's scientific board.
- (4) The discipline committee shall mainly:
  - a) monitor and assess doctoral studies in the particular field of study,<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> Directive of the Rector of Comenius University No. 4/2004 Agreements with an external educational institution in the provision of doctoral studies (model regulations).

<sup>64</sup> Section 54 of the Higher Education Act.

<sup>65</sup> Section 54 (17) of the Higher Education Act.

<sup>66</sup> Section 54 (17) first sentence of the Higher Education Act.

- b) approve topics of dissertation theses,
  - c) approve the doctoral student's individual study plan,<sup>67</sup>
  - d) propose to the dean the chair and members of the examining board for dissertation examinations,
  - e) propose to the dean an external examiner of a written thesis for dissertation examinations,
  - f) propose to the dean external examiners of dissertation theses,
  - g) propose to the dean the composition of the examining board for the dissertation thesis defence.
- (5) Proposals pursuant to paragraph 4(d) to (g) shall be submitted to the dean by the chair of the discipline committee without undue delay after the decision of the discipline committee has been taken.
- (6) The chair of the discipline committee shall in particular:
- a) propose to the dean the chair and members of the admissions board for the entrance examination for doctoral studies,
  - b) express his/her opinion on the application for the dissertation examination and confirm the fulfilment of all conditions necessary for conducting the dissertation examination and for submitting the written thesis for the dissertation examination,
  - c) comment on a doctoral student's request for permission to defend the dissertation thesis and examine the fulfilment of the content and formal requirements imposed on the dissertation thesis,
  - d) ask a doctoral student to remedy any shortcomings in the prescribed particulars of a dissertation thesis or a request for a permission to defend his/her dissertation thesis,
  - e) comment on the transfer of credits in the context of academic mobility of a doctoral student,
  - f) express his/her opinion on the recognition of completion of subjects in the case of a doctoral degree programme change and in the case of a change in the form of the doctoral studies,
  - g) comment on a proposal for expelling a doctoral student from doctoral studies.

### **Article 25 Supervisor**

- (1) The rules governing the approval of supervisors are regulated by a separate internal regulation of Comenius University.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Section 54 (8) of the Higher Education Act.

- (2) The supervisor shall mainly:
- a) provide expert guidance to a doctoral student during his/her doctoral studies,
  - b) cooperate with the doctoral student to determine the individual study plan of the doctoral student and submit it to the discipline committee for approval,
  - c) manage and professionally guarantee the fulfilment of the doctoral student's individual study plan and control the fulfilment of the doctoral student's pedagogical activities,
  - d) determine the focus of the dissertation thesis project and refine the dissertation thesis topic together with the doctoral student,
  - e) award the determined number of credits to the doctoral student for any completed stages of his/her individual studying of scientific literature and a scientific part of the individual study plan, if defined in the individual study plan,
  - f) submit an annual assessment of the doctoral student to the dean with a statement either recommending he/she continues his/her studies or not,
  - g) submit to the dean a proposal to expel a doctoral student from doctoral studies,
  - h) express his/her opinion on the doctoral student's request for study interruption and on the doctoral student's request for a doctoral degree programme change or a change in the form of his/her doctoral studies,
  - i) recommend the doctoral student if he/she is interested in a study stay in other national or foreign scientific, research, technology, education or artistic institutions,
  - j) arrange consultations with other experts for the doctoral student as necessary,
  - k) participate in the doctoral student's dissertation examination and have the right to express his/her opinion during its assessment,
  - l) prepare an expert opinion on the dissertation thesis and work characteristics of the assigned doctoral student,
  - m) participate in the defence of his/her dissertation thesis and have the right to express his/her opinion during its assessment.
- (3) In addition to the activities under paragraph 2, the supervisor of a full-time doctoral student shall:
- a) in cooperation with the head of the training workplace and the guarantor of the relevant study programme be responsible for integrating the doctoral student into educational activities,
  - b) check on the doctoral student's attendance at the training workplace in accordance with Article 27a (1),
  - c) grant approval to allow a doctoral student to fulfil his/her study or scientific tasks at home ("home office"),

- d) together with the doctoral student define periods when study breaks are to be taken.

## **Article 26**

### **Schedule of doctoral studies**

- (1) Doctoral studies
  - a) shall start at the beginning of the winter semester of the academic year,
  - b) may start<sup>69</sup> at the beginning of the summer semester of the academic year.
- (2) Doctoral studies shall follow the individual study plan under the guidance of a supervisor. A condition for the proper completion of doctoral studies is passing the dissertation examination, which is one of the state examinations, and the dissertation thesis defence. The dissertation thesis is the final thesis.<sup>70</sup> The dissertation thesis together with its defence forms a single subject; the dissertation thesis defence is one of the state examinations.<sup>71</sup>
- (3) Doctoral studies shall consist of a study part and a scientific part.<sup>72</sup>
- (4) The study part of the doctoral studies consists mainly of lectures, seminars and individual studying of professional literature necessary in terms of the focus of the dissertation thesis.<sup>73</sup> The study part shall end with the passing of the dissertation examination; in the field of Catholic theology, the dissertation examination is the licentiate examination.
- (5) The scientific part of the doctoral studies consists of an individual or team scientific work of the doctoral student, which is related to the doctoral thesis topic; the scientific part of the doctoral studies is professionally guaranteed by the supervisor.<sup>74</sup>
- (6) Part of the full-time doctoral studies is the performance of educational activities or other professional activities related to the educational activities lasting for a maximum of four hours per week on average per academic year in which the teaching takes place.<sup>75</sup>
- (7) If a doctoral student has applied for a dissertation thesis topic offered by an external education institution, he/she conducts the scientific part of the doctoral studies and the obligations of the study part of the doctoral studies agreed with the faculty at this external education institution. The faculty concludes an individual doctoral studies agreement for a doctoral student with an external educational institution under a valid framework cooperation agreement with the external educational institution when participating in the implementation of doctoral degree programmes. It shall address

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<sup>69</sup> Section 61 (3) second sentence of the Higher Education Act.

<sup>70</sup> Section 54 (3) of the Higher Education Act.

<sup>71</sup> Section 51 (3) first sentence of the Higher Education Act.

<sup>72</sup> Section 54(8) first sentence of the Higher Education Act.

<sup>73</sup> Section 54 (9) of the Higher Education Act.

<sup>74</sup> Section 54 (10) of the Higher Education Act.

<sup>75</sup> Section 54 (11) of the Higher Education Act.

issues related to the doctoral student's work in the external education institution, including the reimbursement of any costs of the external education institution<sup>76</sup> and the conditions for the performance of educational activities or other professional activities related to educational activities pursuant to paragraph 6.

- (8) The standard period of doctoral studies and the number of credits which need to be achieved for regular completion of studies are specified in the accreditation file of the doctoral degree programme.
- (9) The credit system of studies shall apply to doctoral degree programmes *mutatis mutandis*.<sup>77</sup>

### **Article 27**

#### **Individual study plan and assessment of study results**

- (1) The individual study plan consists of a study part and a scientific part and also includes the deadlines for the doctoral student to complete the individual subjects and pass the dissertation examination. The individual study plan may be amended with amendments in justified cases.
- (2) The individual study plan and its amendments are drawn up by the supervisor and submitted by the supervisor to the discipline committee for approval;<sup>78</sup> the supervisor draws up the individual study plan and its amendments in cooperation with the doctoral student. The approved individual study plan and its amendments are part of the doctoral student's study documentation.
- (3) During his/her studies, the doctoral student shall earn credits for the following areas of activities:
  - a) subjects of the study part of doctoral studies,
  - b) successfully passed dissertation examination,
  - c) independent creative activity in the field of science, research or art (publishing, completion of the stage of research work defined in the individual study plan, etc.), which is related to the dissertation thesis topic,
  - d) educational activity at the Comenius University or the faculty (conducting exercises, seminars, etc.) and therapeutic-preventive activity at the workplaces of the faculties of medicine, or other practical activity carried out at the faculty or at a related institution, if required by the nature of studies,
  - e) dissertation thesis and its defence.
- (4) Doctoral students must earn credits in the composition determined by the study programme.

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<sup>76</sup> Section 54 (12) of the Higher Education Act.

<sup>77</sup> Section 9 of the Decree on the Credit System of Study.

<sup>78</sup> Section 54 (8) of the Higher Education Act.

- (5) Subjects of doctoral degree programmes and supplementary subjects of the study part of the doctoral studies, in which the doctoral student has enrolled, are assessed with the marking grade “pass” or “fail”.

#### **Art. 27a**

#### **Additional obligations of full-time doctoral students**

- (1) Full-time doctoral students shall record their physical presence at the training workplace in the manner customary at the given workplace for recording employees' attendance. A doctoral student shall be considered to be present at the training workplace when performing his/her study or scientific tasks from home (“home office”) when performed with the approval of the supervisor and the head of the workplace.
- (2) Repeated absence of a full-time doctoral student from the training workplace without the prior approval of the supervisor or the head of the training workplace or without providing a justifiable reason shall be considered a culpable violation hereof. The supervisor may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a doctoral student due to his/her repeated absence from the training workplace, especially when the doctoral student is not performing the tasks defined by the supervisor. Justifiable reasons for a doctoral student's absence from the training workplace includes reasons that
- a) are considered in the case of employees as obstacles to work on the employee's side under the Labour Code, or
  - b) are the fulfilment of obligations under the internal regulation of Comenius University or the internal regulations of the faculty.
- (3) Paid and unpaid study stays during doctoral studies are implemented based on a written request approved by the dean and with a consenting statement from the supervisor and a consenting statement from the head of the training workplace.
- (4) The faculty may send a full-time doctoral student on a business trip<sup>78a</sup> away from the training workplace or the doctoral student's permanent residence for the necessary period but only with his/her approval. On a business trip, a doctoral student shall perform his/her tasks according to the instructions from the supervisor, the head of the training workplace, or other member of the faculty management who has sent him/her on the business trip. Before a business trip begins, the faculty and doctoral student shall conclude an agreement on travel reimbursement.<sup>78b</sup>
- (5) A full-time doctoral student is entitled to study breaks. The scope of a doctoral student's study breaks during the academic year is the same as the basic holiday allowance for a researcher at a public higher education institution as defined under the Labour Code. A doctoral student takes study breaks upon agreement with his/her supervisor and with written approval from the head of the training workplace. Any unused study breaks are not carried forward into the following academic year.
- (6) Rector-ordered and dean-ordered study breaks shall also apply to full-time doctoral

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<sup>78a</sup> Section 2 (1) of Act No. 283/2002 Coll. on Travel Reimbursement.

<sup>78b</sup> Section 1 (2)(c) of Act No. 283/2002 Coll. on Travel Reimbursement.

students, unless otherwise ordered.

- (7) The obligations for full-time doctoral students for whom the training workplace is an external educational institution are regulated by the doctoral student's doctoral studies agreement under Article 26 (7).

### **Article 28 Annual assessment of the doctoral student**

- (1) The control stage of doctoral studies is the end of each year of studies.
- (2) To be able to continue his/her doctoral studies:
  - a) a full-time doctoral student must earn at least 40 credits during every year of studies,
  - b) a part-time doctoral student must earn at least 30 credits during every year of studies.
- (3) At the end of each year of studies, the supervisor shall submit to the dean the annual assessment of the doctoral student's fulfilment of the individual study plan (hereinafter referred to as "the doctoral student's annual assessment") with a statement as to whether or not the supervisor recommends the doctoral student's continuation of his/her studies. When doing so, the supervisor evaluates the status and level of fulfilment of the doctoral student's individual study plan, compliance with deadlines, and, if necessary, submits a proposal for modification of his/her individual study plan. The dean decides on the basis of the doctoral student's annual assessment whether the doctoral student may continue his/her studies, as well as on any changes in his/her individual study plan.
- (4) A full-time student may enrol for a maximum of 90 credits in a single academic year. For reasons worthy of special consideration and on the basis of a written request, the dean may allow a student to enrol for subjects for more than one and a half times the standard subject load in the given academic year. The dean's decision to allow or not to allow enrolment in subjects for more than one and a half times the standard subject load is final and cannot be appealed.
- (5) Failure to comply with the conditions of the control stage of doctoral studies referred to in paragraphs 2 and 3 or failure to comply with the conditions of the individual study plan shall be grounds for the supervisor to submit a proposal to the dean in the doctoral student's annual assessment for the expulsion of the doctoral student from studies pursuant to Section 66 (1)(c) of the Higher Education Act.

### **Article 29 Dissertation examination**

- (1) Full-time doctoral students shall register for a dissertation examination no later than 18 months after the study start date. Part-time doctoral students shall register for a dissertation examination no later than 24 months after the study start date. The period

of interruption of the doctoral student's studies is not included in the time-limit for registration for the dissertation examination.

- (2) Doctoral students are obliged to submit a written thesis for the dissertation examination (hereinafter referred to as "the written thesis") together with the application for the dissertation examination. It is possible to grant an approval to the doctoral student with taking a dissertation examination if the doctoral student has earned at least 60 credits and completion of subjects in the study part of the doctoral studies in the composition determined in the study programme and the individual study plan.
- (3) The application for the dissertation examination and the written thesis shall be submitted in written form to the dean through the Doctoral Studies Section. The faculty shall publish the details of the requirements for the application for the dissertation examination and the method of its submission on the faculty's website and in other ways deemed customary at the faculty.
- (4) The written thesis shall be composed of the propositions (project) of the dissertation thesis which shall contain
  - a) the goals of the dissertation thesis,
  - b) the theoretical foundations of the future dissertation thesis solution,
  - c) the current state of knowledge on the dissertation thesis topic,
  - d) the analysis of the methodological approach to solving the dissertation thesis issues, and
  - e) the degree of elaboration of the dissertation thesis.

In the area of Catholic theology, the content of the written thesis for the licentiate examination is the current state of knowledge on the given topic and the new results achieved by the doctoral student.

- (5) The written thesis shall be assessed by an external examiner. The external examiner shall draw up a written expert opinion on the written thesis and propose its assessment with the marking grade "pass" or "fail". The doctoral student shall have the right to become familiar with the expert opinion on the written thesis no later than three days before the dissertation examination date.
- (6) The dean shall determine the external examiner of the written thesis based on a proposal of the discipline committee. The external examiner shall be chosen from among experts in the field of study of the doctoral studies. An external examiner may be:
  - a) a professional with a third-degree university education not working at the training workplace,
  - b) a professional with a third-degree university education working at the training workplace, if he/she does not have a joint publication with the doctoral student, or
  - c) other persons as stipulated by the faculty study regulations.



- (7) The dissertation examination consists of:
- a) a discussion on the written thesis and
  - b) a part where the doctoral student is supposed to demonstrate theoretical knowledge in the group of topics according to the focus of the dissertation thesis.
- (8) The dissertation examination shall take place in front of a state examining board. University teachers who are professors and associate professors and other experts approved by the faculty scientific board shall have the right to sit for the dissertation examination.<sup>79</sup> The chair and members of the examining board are appointed by the dean based on a proposal of the discipline committee. At least one member of the examining board shall not be from the training workplace. The examining board shall have at least four members.
- (9) If the doctoral student has applied for a dissertation thesis topic offered by an external educational institution, the dissertation examination shall take place before an examining board, which shall include a parity of members from the higher education institution designated pursuant to paragraph 8 and members designated by the external educational institution.<sup>80</sup>
- (10) The external examiner of the written thesis may be a member of the examining board if he/she is authorised to sit for the state examination and has been appointed as a member of the examining board by the dean on the proposal of the discipline committee. If the external examiner is not a member of the examining board, he/she shall be invited to the dissertation examination and have the right to express his/her opinion during its assessment.
- (11) The supervisor may not be a member of the examining board. The supervisor shall be invited to the dissertation examination and have the right to express his/her opinion during its assessment.
- (12) A quorum of the examining board is present if an absolute majority of the members of the examining board, including the chair of the examining board and a member of the examining board who is not from the doctoral student's training workplace, is present.
- (13) The dissertation examination process and the presentation of its results are public. The examining board shall decide about the result of the dissertation examination in a non-public session of the examining board.
- (14) The dissertation examination shall be assessed as a whole with the marking grade "pass" or "fail". Individual parts of the dissertation examination are not assessed separately.
- (15) Minutes shall be taken from the dissertation examination. The minutes shall be signed by the chair and the members of the examining board present during the dissertation examination.

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<sup>79</sup> Section 63 (3) of the Higher Education Act.

<sup>80</sup> Section 54 (13) of the Higher Education Act.

- (16) The faculty shall issue a written confirmation of taking the dissertation examination with its result.
- (17) If a doctoral student has been assessed with the marking grade "fail" in the dissertation thesis examination, he/she has the right to one retake date.
- (18) The assessment with the marking grade "fail" on the retake date of the dissertation examination is a reason for the expulsion of the doctoral student from studies pursuant to Section 66 (1)(c) of the Higher Education Act.

### **Article 30**

#### **Request for permission to defend a dissertation thesis**

- (1) A doctoral student may file a request for permission to defend his/her dissertation thesis, if the doctoral student:
  - a) has earned at least 150 credits (in a study programme for the proper completion of which the earning of 180 credits is a prerequisite) or at least 210 credits (in a study programme for the proper completion of which the earning of 240 credits is a prerequisite), and
  - b) fulfils the conditions for the proper completion of studies as defined in the description of the study programme.
- (2) An application for permission to defend the dissertation thesis is submitted in written form to the dean through the Doctoral Studies Section. The application shall be submitted sufficiently in advance so that the dissertation thesis defence can take place no later than on the date of completion of the standard period of studies. The faculty shall publish the detailed requirements of the application and the method of its submission on its website and in other ways deemed customary at the faculty.
- (3) The following shall be attached by the doctoral student to his/her application:
  - a) the dissertation thesis in the specified number of copies,
  - b) a summary of the main results of the dissertation thesis, usually having two standard pages,
  - c) copies of all publications and other elaborations in one copy, unless they are part of the dissertation thesis; if the doctoral student attaches the output from the Comenius University's publication activity database, he/she does not have to submit copies of publications,
  - d) a list of published works with full bibliographic data and unpublished scientific works or public and non-public exhibitions of the doctoral student's artistic works and performances, as well as responses to them and, where appropriate, expert opinions on them,
  - e) justification of the differences between the original and the submitted dissertation thesis if the doctoral student is submitting, after an unsuccessful defence, a new dissertation thesis in the same the field of study of the doctoral studies, and
  - f) any other documents, if specified in an internal regulation of the faculty.

### **Article 31**

#### **Requirements of a dissertation thesis**

- (1) The basic requirements that must be fulfilled by the dissertation thesis, the method of its submission, originality control, archiving and making them accessible are regulated by a separate internal regulation of Comenius University.<sup>81</sup>
- (2) A doctoral student may also submit as a dissertation thesis his/her own published work or a set of his/her own published scientific works, which in their content elaborate on the issues of the dissertation thesis topic. If the doctoral student submits a set of his/her own publications, he/she shall supplement it with a detailed introduction in which he/she explains the current state of the issues, the objectives of the dissertation thesis, his/her own contribution to the topics addressed, and the conclusions that have been drawn from the dissertation thesis topic. If the enclosed publications are the work of more than one author, the doctoral student shall also enclose a declaration by the co-authors of his/her share of authorship.
- (3) If the dissertation thesis is part of a collective work, the doctoral student shall present his/her own results and put them in the discussion in context with the results of the other members of the team.

### **Article 32**

#### **Preparing a dissertation thesis defence**

- (1) Upon receipt of the request for permission to defend the dissertation thesis, the dean immediately forwards the doctoral student's request together with the dissertation thesis to the chair of the discipline committee. Within 15 days, the chair of the discipline committee shall state whether the dissertation thesis corresponds in its level and form to the requirements set for a dissertation and whether he/she recommends it for defence. If the opinion of the chair of the discipline committee is positive, the discipline committee shall propose to the dean a composition of the examining board for the dissertation thesis defence and three external examiners of the dissertation thesis. If the opinion of the chair of the discipline committee is negative, compliance with the requirements for the dissertation thesis level and form shall be reviewed by the discipline committee.
- (2) If the chair of the discipline committee or the discipline committee finds that the doctoral student's request for permission to defend the dissertation thesis or the dissertation thesis does not meet the prescribed content and formal requirements, he/she shall invite the doctoral student to remedy the shortcomings within a specified time-limit.
- (3) The doctoral student may withdraw the submitted dissertation thesis and the request for permission to defend it no later than at the time of publication of the announcement of the dissertation thesis defence pursuant to paragraph 11. The dean

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<sup>81</sup> Internal Regulation No. 12/2013 Directive of the Rector of Comenius University on the basic requirements of final theses, rigorous theses and habilitation theses, control of their originality, archiving and making them accessible at Comenius University, as amended.

shall decide on the further course of action as well as on the resolution of any disputed issues on the proposal of the discipline committee.

- (4) The dissertation thesis defence shall take place in front of a state examining board. University teachers who are professors and associate professors and other experts approved by the faculty scientific board shall have the right to sit for the dissertation thesis defence.<sup>82</sup> The chair and members of the examining board are appointed by the dean based on a proposal of the discipline committee.
- (5) If a doctoral student has applied for a dissertation thesis topic offered by an external educational institution, the dissertation thesis defence shall take place before an examining board, which shall include a parity of members from the higher education institution designated pursuant to paragraph 4 and members designated by the external educational institution. At least one member of the examining board shall not be from the training workplace. The examining board shall have at least four members.<sup>83</sup>
- (6) The external examiner of the dissertation thesis may be a member of the examining board if he/she is authorised to sit for the state examination and has been appointed as a member of the examining board by the dean on the proposal of the discipline committee. If the external examiner is not a member of the examining board, he/she shall be invited to the dissertation thesis defence and have the right to express his/her opinion during its assessment.
- (7) The supervisor may not be a member of the examining board. The supervisor shall be invited to the dissertation thesis defence and has the right to express his/her opinion during its assessment.
- (8) Upon receipt of all expert opinions from the external examiners of the dissertation thesis, the dean immediately forwards the doctoral student's request for the dissertation thesis defence together with all the requisites, including the opinions of the external examiners, to the chair of the examining board.
- (9) Within 15 days after receiving the materials referred to in the preceding paragraph, the chair of the examining board shall propose to the dean the time and place of the dissertation thesis defence. The place and time of the dissertation thesis defence is determined by the dean.
- (10) The dean shall invite the members of the examining board, the external examiners, the supervisor and the doctoral student to the dissertation thesis defence in writing.
- (11) The faculty shall publish a notice on the faculty's website and on the faculty's official bulletin board no later than 14 days before the date set for the dissertation thesis defence, containing information on where and how interested parties can get acquainted with the dissertation thesis.

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<sup>82</sup> Section 63 (3) of the Higher Education Act.

<sup>83</sup> Section 54 (13) of the Higher Education Act.

- (12) Anyone may submit suggestions, comments or statement on the dissertation thesis to the chair of the examining board before the dissertation thesis defence date. During the dissertation thesis defence the doctoral student shall take a stand on the submitted suggestions, comments or statements.

### **Art. 33**

#### **External examiners of the dissertation thesis and their expert opinions**

- (1) The dean shall appoint dissertation thesis external examiners based on a proposal of the discipline committee. External examiners shall be chosen from among experts in the field of study of the doctoral studies. There may be no more than one external examiner from the faculty or external educational institution at which the training workplace is located; the provision of paragraph 3 shall not be affected hereby.
- (2) Dissertation thesis shall be reviewed by three external examiners. At least one external examiner must have the scientific and pedagogical title of professor, the scientific rank of doctor of sciences or have been awarded a 1st level scientific qualification degree. Other external examiners may be persons who meet the qualification requirements for a member of the discipline committee pursuant to Article 24 (2).
- (3) Any person who is related<sup>84</sup> to the doctoral student cannot be an external examiner of the dissertation thesis. There may be no more than one external examiner from the training workplace or the supervisor's workplace.
- (4) The dean shall send the dissertation thesis to the external examiners together with a request for drawing up an expert opinion.
- (5) The external examiner shall submit his/her written expert opinion to the dean and return the dissertation thesis not later than 30 days after receiving it. If an external examiner cannot draw up his/her expert opinion, he/she shall notify the dean thereof without undue delay. If the external examiner does not submit his/her opinion within the time-limit according to the first sentence, the dean shall appoint a new external examiner.
- (6) The external examiner's expert opinion contains an objective and critical analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the submitted dissertation thesis, it is brief and does not repeat its content. In his/her opinion, the external examiner shall mainly comment on the following:
  - a) topicality of the selected topic,
  - b) selected methods of elaboration,
  - c) results achieved, indicating what new knowledge the dissertation thesis brings,
  - d) contribution to the further development of science, technology or art,
  - e) whether the dissertation thesis fulfilled its objective.

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<sup>84</sup> Section 116 of Act No. 40/1964 Coll., the Civil Code, as amended.

- (7) The external examiner shall assess the dissertation thesis according to the state of development of the scientific or artistic field of the doctoral studies at the time when the doctoral student filed the application to permit its defence. At the end of his/her written expert opinion, the external examiner shall comment on whether he/she recommends the dissertation thesis for defence and shall propose the marking grade "pass" or "fail".
- (8) Compliance with the requirements of the external examiner's expert opinion pursuant to paragraphs 6 and 7 shall be reviewed by the chair of the examining board. If the external examiner's expert opinion does not meet the above requirements, the dean shall return it, on the proposal of the chair of the examining board, to the external examiner for completion or reworking. At the same time, he/she shall set a time-limit for him/her to resubmit it, which shall not exceed 15 days. If the external examiner fails to submit his/her expert opinion by the determined time-limit and within five days after receiving a repeated request to do so, the dean shall appoint a new external examiner.

#### **Article 34** **Dissertation thesis defence**

- (1) The successful defence of the dissertation thesis is the end of the doctoral studies. In defending his/her dissertation thesis, the student demonstrates the ability and readiness for independent scientific and creative activity in the field of research or development, or for independent theoretical and creative artistic activity.<sup>85</sup>
- (2) The dissertation thesis defence may also take place at a foreign higher education institution with which Comenius University has concluded an agreement on joint dissertation thesis defences, while the dissertation thesis defence board is normally composed of members from the Slovak side and members appointed by the foreign higher education institution in parity<sup>86</sup>.
- (3) The dissertation thesis defence can only take place in the presence of at least two thirds of all members of the examining board and at least two external examiners of the dissertation thesis. If one of the three external examiners cannot attend the dissertation thesis defence for serious reasons and proposes the marking grade "pass" in his/her expert opinion, the defence can be held without his/her presence. The expert opinion of the absent external examiner shall be read during the dissertation thesis defence in its full wording.
- (4) During a crisis situation, the dissertation thesis defence may be conducted using video conferencing or by other means of information and communication technology without the attendees physically being present.<sup>86a</sup>
- (5) The process of the dissertation thesis defence and the presentation of its results are public.

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<sup>85</sup> Section 54 (14) of the Higher Education Act.

<sup>86</sup> Section 54 (19) and (20) of the Higher Education Act.

<sup>86a</sup> Section 108e (5) of the Higher Education Act.

- (6) If it is unavoidable for the course of the dissertation thesis defence to inform the supervisor, the external examiner or the examining board of the data, the disclosure of which is excluded in the dissertation thesis, in particular because it is a trade secret of a third party, a classified fact or personal data, the doctoral student may, subject to compliance with the conditions laid down in special regulations, disclose these data in special non-public documentation, which does not form part of the dissertation thesis and which is intended exclusively for the supervisor, the external examiner and the examining board.<sup>87</sup>
- (7) The dissertation thesis defence takes place in the form of a scientific debate between the doctoral student, dissertation thesis external examiners, members of the examining board and the other participants on the acquired knowledge and contribution of the dissertation thesis, or as an artistic debate on the created work of art or the presented artistic performance covered in the dissertation thesis. During the dissertation thesis defence the justification and truthfulness of its conclusions and proposals which the dissertation thesis contains are examined as well.
- (8) The process of the dissertation thesis defence:
- a) the chair of the examining board gives a brief curriculum vitae of the doctoral student, announces the dissertation thesis topic, essential information from the supervisor's expert opinion, an overview of the doctoral student's scientific or artistic works and the responses to them,
  - b) the doctoral student briefly introduces the most important content of his/her dissertation thesis, its concept, results and contribution,
  - c) the external examiners of the dissertation thesis present the most important content of their expert opinions; if any external examiner is absent, his/her full expert opinion is read by the chair of the examining board or a member of the examining board appointed by the chair,
  - d) the doctoral student expresses his/her statement on the expert opinions of the external examiners of the dissertation thesis, in particular, he/she comments on all suggestions and comments and answers their questions,
  - e) the chair of the examining board makes the participants of the defence familiar within any other suggestions, comments or statements and opens the discussion which all the defence participants may participate in; the discussion verifies the correctness, justification, scientific or artistic originality and importance of the knowledge contained in the dissertation thesis,
  - f) during the discussion, the doctoral student answers all questions and takes a stand on all suggestions and comments of the participants of the dissertation thesis defence.
- (9) The examining board shall decide on the result of the dissertation thesis defence at a non-public session of the examining board with the external examiners of the dissertation thesis and the supervisor present. The non-public session shall evaluate

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<sup>87</sup> Section 62a (2) of the Higher Education Act.

the course of the defence and the possibility of using the results of the dissertation thesis in practice.

- (10) A quorum of the examining board shall be present if at least two-thirds of all members of the examining board, including the chair of the examining board, are present.
- (11) The dissertation thesis defence is assessed by the marking grade "pass" or "fail". The overall result of the duly completed doctoral studies is assessed by the marking grade "pass".
- (12) Minutes shall be taken from the dissertation thesis defence. The minutes shall be signed by the chair and the members of the examining board present at the dissertation thesis defence.
- (13) If a doctoral student has been assessed by the marking grade "fail" in the dissertation thesis defence, he/she has the right to one retake date.
- (14) The assessment with the marking grade "fail" on the retake date of the dissertation thesis defence is a reason for the expulsion of the doctoral student from studies pursuant to Section 66 (1)(c) of the Higher Education Act.
- (15) If, for serious reasons, a doctoral student is unable to appear for dissertation thesis defence, he/she is obliged to excuse himself/herself in writing to the chair of the examining board via the Doctoral Studies Section in advance or, at the latest, within three working days after the dissertation examination date, if there were serious obstacles that prevented him/her from excusing himself/herself in advance. If the doctoral student fails to appear for the dissertation thesis defence without an excuse, or if the chair of the examining board does not accept his/her excuse, he/she shall be assessed with the marking grade "fail" for the given date of the dissertation thesis defence.
- (16) If the doctoral student did not attend the dissertation thesis defence without an excuse, or if the doctoral student has been assessed by the marking grade "fail" at the dissertation thesis defence, he/she has the right to one retake date. The provisions of Articles 30 to 34 shall apply equally to the retake date of the dissertation thesis defence. The examining board or the external examiners of the dissertation thesis may not have the same composition on the retake date of the dissertation thesis defence as on the regular date of the dissertation thesis defence.

### **Article 35** **Doctoral study interruption**

- (1) Article 20 shall apply to the interruption of doctoral studies.
- (2) The supervisor and the head of the training workplace shall comment on the request for interruption of the doctoral student's studies.



- (3) Interruption of the study of a doctoral student who has registered for a topic of the dissertation thesis offered by an external educational institution shall be permitted by the dean after a positive statement of the director (statutory representative) of the external educational education.<sup>88</sup>
- (4) During the interruption of the doctoral student's studies, the performance of the function of his/her supervisor is also interrupted.

**PART FOUR**  
**PROCEEDINGS IN MATTERS OF ACADEMIC RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS**

**Article 36**  
**Commencement of proceedings in matters of the students' academic rights and obligations**

- (1) In accordance with the Higher Education Act, academic self-administration bodies of the faculty have the right to decide on behalf of Comenius University in matters concerning the academic rights and obligations of students enrolled for studies in accordance with the study programmes provided at the faculty.<sup>89</sup>
- (2) Proceedings in matters of the academic rights and obligations of students are administrative proceedings. Act No. 71/1967 Coll. on Administrative Proceedings, as amended, shall not apply to proceedings and making decisions on students' academic rights and obligations.<sup>90</sup>
- (3) Proceedings concerning expulsion from studies due to failure to meet the requirements arising from the study programme and the Study Regulations shall commence on the date of the issuance of the expulsion decision.
- (4) Proceedings concerning a study programme change within Comenius University, proceedings concerning the recognition of completion of subjects, proceedings concerning the transfer of credits, proceedings concerning study interruption permission and proceedings concerning a change in the form of doctoral studies shall start on the date when the student filed a written request for the issuance of the relevant decision. The request must include basic identifying information about the student, the merits of the case to be decided, and the reasons for the request.
- (5) If the request does not contain the necessary information for making a decision, the dean shall ask the student to complete his/her request or provide the necessary explanation within a reasonable time-limit, but not less than eight days. If the student has not completed his/her request within the specified time-limit, the dean shall reject it.

**Art. 37**

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<sup>88</sup> Section 64 (3) of the Higher Education Act.

<sup>89</sup> Article 19 (2)(c) of the Statute of Comenius University and Section 55 (9) of the Higher Education Act.

<sup>90</sup> Section 108 (1) of the Higher Education Act.

### **Decision particulars and delivery**

- (1) A decision in proceedings under Article 36 (4) shall be issued by the dean within the time-limit of 30 days from the date of receipt of the complete request. This time-limit shall not include the period during which the student should complete the request or provide the necessary explanation pursuant to Article 36 (5). If the dean has not decided within the time-limit of 30 days, the student may ask the rector to oblige the dean to act and to decide in the matter.
- (2) Decisions in proceedings concerning matters of students' academic rights and obligations must be made in writing, must contain a statement with reference to the relevant provision of a generally binding legal regulation, an internal regulation of Comenius University or an internal regulation of the faculty, justification on the basis of the established facts, and the advice of the remedy.
- (3) The decision in proceedings concerning the students' academic rights and obligations shall be delivered in documentary form to the student in his/her own hands at the faculty or at any other place where he/she can be reached, with an acknowledgement of receipt; this shall be without prejudice to the faculty's obligation to deliver the decision to an electronic mailbox pursuant to a special regulation on the electronic form of the exercise of public authority. If such delivery is impossible,
  - a) the decision in the proceedings under Article 36 (3) shall be served through the postal undertaking at the address used for service of documents notified by the student to the faculty,<sup>91</sup> by registered mail in the student's own hands with an acknowledgement of receipt,
  - b) the decision in proceedings under Article 36 (4) shall be served by registered mail with an acknowledgement of receipt.
- (4) The service of a decision in proceedings concerning students' academic rights and obligations under paragraph 3 shall take effect on the date:
  - a) of receipt of the decision by the student or a person authorised by the student to receive consignments,
  - b) on which an undelivered consignment is returned to the faculty, even if the student has not become aware of it,
  - c) when the student refused to accept a consignment.

### **Art. 38**

#### **Request for reviewing the expulsion decision**

- (1) The student may submit the request for reviewing the expulsion decision. The request shall be submitted to the dean who has issued the decision within the time-limit of eight days from the date of receipt of the decision. A timely request shall have suspensive effect.

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<sup>91</sup> Section 71 (3)(c) of the Higher Education Act.

- (2) The request for reviewing the expulsion decision must include the name of the student filing the request, the identification of the decision sought to be reviewed, a proposal as to how the matter is to be decided, and the reasons for the decision. The student is obliged to attach to the request the documents and information that prove his/her claims and that are in his/her possession. The request cannot be directed solely against the justification without challenging the statement of the decision.
- (3) Upon receipt of the request for reviewing the expulsion decision, the dean shall examine the fulfilment of the requirements pursuant to paragraph 2. If the request does not comply with the prescribed requirements, the dean shall invite the student to complete the request and shall give the student a reasonable time-limit, but not less than eight days, to complete the request. If the request is submitted after the expiry of the time-limit under paragraph 1 or if the student fails to complete the request within the specified time-limit, the dean shall reject it.
- (4) The dean may grant the request himself/herself if he/she finds that the decision has been issued in violation of a generally binding legal regulation, an internal regulation of Comenius University or an internal regulation of the faculty. Otherwise, the dean shall forward the request to the rector within 15 days from the date of its receipt, together with the attached file material and a written statement on the applicant's comments and objections.
- (5) The dean's written expert opinion shall contain comprehensive results of the proceedings to date, in particular details of all actions taken, a statement on the timeliness of the submission of the request and on compliance with the prescribed essentials of the request. In the report, the dean shall state his/her opinion on all of the applicant's objections, together with the relevant evidence, as well as his/her opinion as to the completeness and correctness of the facts of the case established and the legal opinion on which the contested decision is based.
- (6) The rector shall amend or annul the decision if it was issued in violation of a generally binding legal regulation, an internal regulation of Comenius University or an internal regulation of the faculty. Otherwise, the rector shall reject the request and confirm the original decision.
- (7) If the rector annuls the decision on the grounds that the facts of the case have not been sufficiently established, he/she may, according to the circumstances of the case, return the case to the dean for further action and decision; the dean is bound by the rector's legal opinion.
- (8) The rector shall issue his/her decision no later than 30 days after the request for reviewing the expulsion decision was delivered to the faculty. In more complicated cases, the rector shall decide within 60 days. The rector shall send a written notice of the extension of the time-limit both to the student and the dean.
- (9) The requirements of the rector's decision on the request for review of an expulsion decision are contained in Annex No. 3 hereto. A specimen of the rector's decision on the request for review of an expulsion decision is contained in Annex No. 5 hereto.

- (10) The provisions of Article 37 (3) and (4) shall apply to the service of the rector's decisions.
- (11) The rector's decision cannot be challenged by the request for reviewing the decision. The rector shall notify the dean of his/her decision without undue delay and shall return to the dean the student's complete file material together with an acknowledgement of receipt of the decision to the student.
- (12) If the dean grants the request under paragraph 2 or if the rector amends or annuls the decision under paragraph 4, bodies of the academic self-administration of the faculty or Comenius University shall, if necessary, take such measures to ensure that the student's academic rights are restored and the consequences caused by the erroneous decision are eliminated or mitigated.

**Article 39**  
**Decision validity**

- (1) A decision in proceedings in matters of students' academic rights and obligations which cannot be appealed shall become final on the date of service pursuant to Article 37 (3) and (4).
- (2) An expulsion decision against which the student has not filed the request for reviewing the decision shall become final on the date of the expiry of the eight-day period without any action taken, as referred to in Article 38 (1).
- (3) An expulsion decision against which the student has filed the request for reviewing the decision and the rector has confirmed the original decision shall become final on the date of delivery of the rector's decision in accordance with the provisions of Article 37 (3) and (4).
- (4) The rector's decision on the request for reviewing the expulsion decision shall become final on the date of its delivery to the student in accordance with the provisions of Article 37 (3) and (4).

**PART FIVE**  
**COMMON, TRANSITIONAL AND FINAL PROVISIONS**

**Article 40**  
**Common provisions**

- (1) The provisions of Article 2 (1), Article 6 and Article 22 shall apply to the faculties of theology *mutatis mutandis*.<sup>92</sup>
- (2) A student participating in practical instruction and internship shall be subject to general occupational health and safety regulations and regulations concerning the working conditions of women.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> Section 34 (2) of the Higher Education Act.

- (3) Unless otherwise stipulated herein, documents shall be delivered to the student in documentary form to the student's address listed in the Comenius University's Central Database of Persons or in electronic form to the student's e-mail address assigned to the student by Comenius University or a Comenius University faculty.

#### **Article 41**

#### **Mitigation of the rigorousness of the Study Regulations**

In cases worthy of special consideration on the basis of a student's written request, the dean may

- a) grant an exception to the dates of the faculty study schedule,
- b) grant an exception to the control stages of studies,
- c) grant an exception to the maximum length of the study interruption,
- d) authorise the study interruption if the student has not fulfilled the requirements of the control stage of studies, or
- e) excuse missed deadlines hereunder.

#### **Article 42**

#### **Faculty study regulations**

- (1) If a faculty decides to modify these Study Regulations to its own conditions in greater detail, the faculty shall issue the faculty study regulations accordance with it.<sup>94</sup>
- (2) The faculty study regulations, with respect to the specific conditions of the relevant faculty and the fact that studies at Comenius University are conducted at the faculties, may in deviation from the provisions of Part Two hereof:
  - a) establish the conditions under which an exception may be granted from enrolling for a subject which is conditional on the successful completion of the conditional subject (Section 3 (3) of the Decree on the Credit System of Study),
  - b) establish the characteristics of educational activities or define the scope in which educational activities are open to public attendance (Article 4 (6), (7) and (8)),
  - c) establish the scope of compulsory attendance of students at educational activities and reasons excusing absences from educational activities (Article 4 (8)),
  - d) establish the possibility to recognise attendance at educational activities without replacement in the event of re-enrolment of a subject based on the student's request (Article 4 (9)),
  - e) establish that the faculty issues the statement of studies (Article 6 (1)),
  - f) establish the manner in which students express his/her interest in specific subjects prior to enrolment (Article 8 (4)),
  - g) establish the rules for enrolling for a specific subject when capacity is limited (Article 8 (6) and (7)),

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<sup>93</sup> Act No. 311/2001 Coll., the Labour Code, as amended.

<sup>94</sup> Article 66 (3) of the Statute of Comenius University.

- h) establish the rules for enrolling for subjects from the study programme at a different level of study than the study programme for which the student is enrolled (Article 9 (4)),
- i) establish the conditions for permitting studies under an individual study schedule or the extent of exceptions and exemptions from the faculty study schedule (Article 9 (6) and (7)),
- j) establish the group of persons responsible for making decisions regarding the assessment of study results within a given subject (Article 11 (1)),
- k) establish the student's right to retake or alternative options for fulfilling the conditions of continuous assessment (Article 11 (4)(d)),
- l) establish that an examination may be taken (Article 12 (1))
  - 1. in the examination period of a semester other than that in which the student has completed the studying of the subject,
  - 2. in the last teaching week of the teaching part of the semester (the so-called pre-scheduled date), or
  - 3. outside of the examination period for other serious reasons as specified in the faculty study regulations,
- m) establish that the student has the right to take an examination even if he/she has not achieved the prescribed level of continuous assessment or the prescribed attendance at educational activities (Article 12 (3)),
- n) establish the manner in which the date, place and form of examination or the manner in which one registers for or de-registers from examination (Article 12 (4)) are published,
- o) establish that the examination dates are not divided into regular and retake dates and a student may register for any examination date (Article 12 (5)),
- p) establish the group of reasons excusing not taking an examination or the manner in which such absence is excused (Article 12 (7)),
- q) establish that a student has the right to two retake dates for examination upon initial enrolment in a subject or re-enrolment in a subject (Article 12 (8)),
- r) establish the conditions under which a student has the right to the examination in the form of the Official Examining Board test (Article 12 (11)),
- s) establish the control stages for both full-time and part-time studies (Article 13, Annex No. 1),
- t) establish a longer time-limit for acquainting a student with the expert opinions on the final thesis (Article 14 (8)),
- u) establish the conditions that must be met to take the final state examination (Article 15 (4)) and the conditions that must be met to take the state examination, or the conditions that must be met to take the state examination in the form of the final thesis defence,

- v) establish a higher minimum number of members of the examining board to hold state examinations or a higher quorum for the examining board (Article 15 (6)),
  - w) establish the group of reasons excusing not taking state examination or the manner in which such absence is excused (Article 15 (8)),
  - x) the study regulations of the faculties conducting conversion study programmes may adjust the dates and conditions for a change in the study programme for which a conversion version exists with a standard length of four years (Article 17 (3)),
  - y) establish the extent of conditions the meeting of which must be demonstrated by a student requesting a study programme change in or the circumstances for which it is impossible to grant a request to change a study programme (Article 17 (3) and (4)),
  - z) establish those persons who are to comment on a request to change a study programme (Article 17 (4)),
  - aa) establish the criteria to recognise the completion of subjects or the deadline for the submission of requests to recognise the completion of subjects or establish the maximum total sum of credits allocated from subjects that may be recognised as completed (Article 18 (2)(a) to (c), (3) to (6)); the study regulations of faculties of theology may determine conditions a student must meet to request recognition of completion of subjects based on duly completed studies,
  - bb) establish those persons who are to respond to a request to recognise a subject completed in the context of academic mobility (Article 19 (5)(b)),
  - cc) establish additional reasons for which studies may be interrupted for up to three years (Article 20 (3)).
- (3) The faculty study regulations, with respect to the specific conditions of the relevant faculty and the fact that doctoral studies at Comenius University are conducted at the faculties, may in deviation from the provisions of Part Three hereof:
- a) establish the scope of authority of the discipline committee or the chair of the discipline committee (Article 24 (4) to (6)),
  - b) establish the scope of authority of the supervisor (Article 25 (2)),
  - c) establish the conditions for checking on the attendance of full-time doctoral students at the training workplace (Article 27a (1)),
  - d) establish the control phases of doctoral studies (Article 28 (2) and (3)),
  - e) establish the dates, conditions or method of registering for the dissertation examination; establish a higher number of credits as a condition for granting consent to taking the dissertation examination (Article 29 (1) to (3)),
  - f) establish higher qualification requirements for members of the examining board or the external examiner, a higher minimum number of members of the examining board or a higher quorum for the examining board (Article 29 (5), (6), (8), (9) and (12)),

- g) establish the dates, conditions, or method for filing a request to permit the dissertation thesis defence (Article 30 (1) and (2)),
  - h) establish any attachments to the request to permit the dissertation thesis defence, including the fact that, instead of the summary of the main results of the dissertation thesis, the doctoral student shall attach the self-presentation of his/her dissertation thesis to the request, and simultaneously establish its content and formal requirements (Article 30 (3)),
  - i) establish the dates, conditions, or method of preparation of the dissertation thesis defence (Article 32 (1) to (3), and (8) to (12), Article 33 (5) and (8)),
  - j) establish higher qualification requirements for members of the examining board or the external examiners for the dissertation thesis, a higher minimum number of members of the examining board or a higher quorum for the examining board (Article 32 (4) to (6), Article 33 (1) to (3), Article 34 (3) and (9)),
  - k) establish that not a single external examiner of a dissertation thesis may be from the training workplace or from the supervisor's workplace (Article 33 (3)),
  - l) establish the conditions under which external examiners who are not members of the examining board may participate in the dissertation thesis defence using teleconferencing equipment (Article 34 (3)),
  - m) establish the dissertation thesis defence process (Article 34 (6) and (7)).
- (4) The faculty study regulations, with respect to the specific conditions at the relevant faculty and the fact that studies at Comenius University are conducted at the faculties, may in deviation from the provisions of Part Four hereof establish that decisions in proceedings concerning the academic rights and obligations of students, with the exception of expulsion decisions, decisions on the study interruption, decisions on change in a study programme and decisions on change in the form of doctoral studies, may be made in electronic form and sent to the student at the electronic mail address assigned to him/her by Comenius University (Article 37 (2) to (4)); this is without prejudice to the faculty's obligation to deliver the decision to the electronic mailbox pursuant to the special regulation on the electronic form of the exercise of public authority.
- (5) The faculty study regulations, with respect to the specific conditions of the relevant faculty and the fact that studies at Comenius University are conducted at the faculties, may in deviation from the provision of Part Five hereof regulate the provisions on easing the harshness of the Study Regulations (Article 41).
- (6) The faculty study regulations, with respect to the specific conditions of the relevant faculty and the fact that studies at Comenius University are conducted at the faculties, may in deviation regulate the general rules for enrolment for studies, assessment and the recording of study results at the relevant faculty pursuant to Annex No. 2.
- (7) More detailed provisions of the faculty study regulations pursuant to paragraph 1 and deviating provisions of the faculty study regulations pursuant to paragraphs 2 to 6 must conform



- a) to generally binding legislation,
- b) other provisions hereof from which the faculty study regulations may not deviate, and
- c) other internal regulations of Comenius University.

**Article 43**  
**Conflicts-of-laws rules**

- (1) The rules governing studies of inter-faculty study programmes shall be regulated by the study regulations of the faculty at which the student is enrolled for studies according to the study programme, with the exception of the rules governing the assessment of study results (Article 11) and the rules governing examinations (Article 12), which shall be regulated by the provisions of the study regulations of the faculty providing the teaching of the particular subject. If the faculty does not have its own study regulations in place, the rules governing the assessment of study results and the rules governing the examinations shall be regulated by these Study Regulations.
- (2) If a student from a different faculty has enrolled for a subject at the faculty which has its own study regulations in place, the rules of assessment of study results (Article 11) and the rules of examinations (Article 12) shall be governed by provisions of the study regulations of the faculty providing the teaching of the particular subject. If the faculty does not have its own study regulations in place, the rules governing the assessment of study results and the rules governing the examinations shall be regulated by these Study Regulations.
- (3) If a student from a different faculty has enrolled for a subject at the faculty, the teaching of the subject and the assessment of study results within the studies of the subject shall be governed by the faculty study schedule of the faculty providing the teaching of the particular subject.

**Article 43a**  
**Special provisions**

- (1) In special cases arising as a result of an emergency situation, state of emergency or state of exception, the dean may, with the prior written consent of the rector, modify the study schedule pursuant to Article 7 (6) and (7) even after the expiry of the time-limit pursuant to Article 7 (6).
- (2) In special cases arising as a result of an emergency situation, state of emergency or state of exception, the dean may grant a student an exception under Article 41 (a) to (e) even without a written request from the student.

**Article 44**  
**Transitional and final provisions**

- (1) The conditions of the control stages of studies, the conditions for the state examinations and the subjects of the state examinations, the method of assessment of the dissertation examination and the dissertation thesis defence of students enrolled

for studies before the entry into effect of these Study Regulations shall remain unchanged in accordance with the Study Regulations of Comenius University and the faculty study regulations effective until 31 August 2020.

- (2) The study admission conditions determined in accordance with Section 57 (5) of the Higher Education Act for the academic year 2020/2021 shall remain unchanged in accordance with the Study Regulations of Comenius University and the faculty study regulations effective until 31 August 2020.
- (3) The rules for the admissions procedure, including the admissions procedure for the transfer of a student from another higher education institution, are regulated by a specific internal regulation of Comenius University.
- (4) The Annexes to these Study Regulations are as follows:
  - Annex No. 1 Minimum numbers of credits in the control stages of studies
  - Annex No. 2 General rules governing enrolment for studies, assessment and keeping records of study results at the Comenius University faculties
  - Annex No. 3 Decision content details
  - Annex No. 4 Specimen of the expulsion decision
  - Annex No. 5 Specimen of the rector's decision on a request for reviewing the expulsion decision.
- (5) The faculties are obliged to annul their study regulations or bring them into conformity herewith so that these changes take effect on 1 September 2020.
- (6) On the date these Study Regulations take effect, the following will be annulled:
  1. Internal Regulation No. 8/2013, the Study Regulations of Comenius University Bratislava, as amended by Internal Regulation No. 20/2013, Amendment No. 1; Internal Regulation No. 3/2015, Amendment No. 2; Internal Regulation No. 19/2016, Amendment No. 3; and Internal Regulation 7/2019, Amendment No. 4.
  2. Internal Regulation No. 8/2007, Directive of the Rector of Comenius University, the Principles for Using External Applications Collaborating with Comenius University's ŠTUDENT I System.
  3. Order from the Rector of Comenius University No. 10/2009 on the recording of study results by means of the AiS 2 academic information system.
- (7) These Study Regulations entered into force on 16 October 2019 and took effect on 1 September 2020; except for the provisions of Article 44 (5), which took effect on 16 October 2019.
- (8) Amendment No. 1 to the Study Regulations of Comenius University entered into force and took effect on 10 March 2021.
- (9) Amendment No. 2 to the Study Regulations of Comenius University entered into force and took effect on 31 May 2023.

In Bratislava, on 1 June 2023

Prof. (professor) JUDr. Marek Števček,  
DrSc.  
Rector of Comenius University