



Resolution of the Rector of the University of Almería establishing the protocol for depositing and defending doctoral theses.

The Resolution of the Rector of the University of Almería, dated April 15, 2020, on an exceptional protocol for depositing and defending doctoral theses in a non-presential way, regulated the deposition and defense of doctoral theses during the state of alarm decreed by the Spanish Government to manage the health crisis situation caused by COVID-19.

Given that the state of alarm has come to an end, and given the experience acquired during this period, they advise adapting said protocol and establishing it beyond exceptional situations. Therefore, **this Rectorate**

RESOLVES:

FIRST.- To approve the protocol for depositing and defending doctoral theses that appears in Annex I.

SECOND.- To revoke the Resolution of the Rector of the University of Almería, dated April 15, 2020, on the exceptional protocol for depositing and defending doctoral theses in a non-presential way.

THIRD.- The present Resolution shall enter into force upon signing.

Almería, on the date indicated in the electronic signature

THE RECTOR

Carmelo Rodríguez Torreblanca



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ANNEX I

DOCTORAL THESIS DEPOSITION AND DEFENSE PROTOCOL

DEFINITIONS:

Defending the thesis **in presential format** is when the doctoral student and all the members of the tribunal are present in the same room, located at UAL.

Defending the thesis **in telematic format** is when at least one of the participants (the PhD student and/or members of the acting tribunal) is not present in the same room, located at UAL.

PROCEDURES PRIOR TO THE DOCTORAL THESIS DEFENSE:

- 1) **Deposition:** The deposition of doctoral theses will be carried out electronically via the CAU (Users' Support Centre) ticket system set up by the University of Almería. The deposition ticket will go to the Service or Unit responsible for thesis management and will include all the required documentation.

- 2) **Deposition announcement:** Once the deposition requirements have been reviewed and the presented documentation found to be correct, the University of Almería will make the thesis deposition public via the dedicated section of the International PhD School website, at which time the thesis will be considered deposited and the period of public exposition will have begun.

- 3) **Public exposition:** During the period of public exposition of the doctoral thesis, doctors who are interested in examining it should make an email request via the tesis@ual.es address.
Once a request to examine a doctoral thesis has been received, the applicant's possession of a doctorate degree will be verified; in which case, access to the UAL Institutional Repository will be enabled, allowing him/her to consult the thesis without being able to download it.



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4) **Approval of the thesis defense:** Once the period of public exposition has passed and any possible claims that may be submitted have been resolved, the doctoral student, thesis director, PhD programme coordinator and the Secretary of the tribunal, will be notified that the thesis defense has been approved, if applicable.

5) **Communication of the date, time and place of the thesis defense:**

a) The Secretary of the Tribunal will inform UAL as to whether the thesis defense is to be carried out presentially (in person) or electronically. To do this, the Thesis Defense Communication form will be used, addressed to the Service or Unit responsible for the thesis management. It will also indicate the date and time proposed for the defense.

b) By means of said request, and in the case of a telematic defense, the University of Almería assumes that the Secretary is guarantor of the following; i) that the doctoral student and all the members of the tribunal agree to carry out the defense in this format, and ii) that the doctoral student and all the members of the tribunal have the technical means necessary to participate in the telematic defense of the thesis.

6) **Announcement of public thesis defense:** Upon receipt of the Thesis Defense Communication form sent by the Tribunal Secretary to the service or unit responsible for thesis management, the University of Almería will make public the act of doctoral thesis defense via the dedicated section on the International PhD School website.

PROCEDURES RELATING TO THE DOCTORAL THESIS DEFENSE:

The defense will be carried out according to the following conditions and phases:

a) The Secretary of the Tribunal is responsible for documenting the act and ensuring that it is carried out in accordance with the law and this protocol. The Secretary will be the person who signs the thesis qualification certificate, including a record indicating the people (PhD student and/or members of the tribunal) who have participated in the videoconference, if applicable.



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- b) The University of Almería will ensure the public nature of the thesis defense proceedings, allowing, in the case of a telematic defense, access via videoconferencing, through a link that will be published on the EIDUAL website. People with a doctorate degree who attend the public exposition telematically may ask questions and make comments at the time and through the mechanism established by the tribunal presidency.
- c) Participants and attendees will follow the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulation - Regulation (EU) 2016/679, of April 27; Organic Law 3/2018, of December 5, on the Protection of Personal Data and the guaranteeing of digital rights, and any other regulations that may apply.
- d) In the case of unresolvable technical problems (whether presential or telematic), which prevent the thesis defense from starting or developing, lasting for a period of at least 30 minutes, the tribunal presidency will suspend the defense, postponing it until a new date, at which time the interrupted proceedings must restart from the beginning.

7) Convening the Tribunal:

- a) Prior to the act of defending the thesis, a non-public session will be opened to establish the Tribunal. For this, the Secretary shall proceed to identify the members of the Tribunal, showing their ID or equivalent supporting document. In the case of telematic proceedings, the document will be shown to the camera so that it can be clearly identified.
- b) Once the members of the tribunal have been identified, the Secretary will read aloud their names and surnames and will ask them one by one if they agree with the convening of the Tribunal and if they have been informed that only the Tribunal Secretary will sign the minutes convening the Tribunal and the thesis qualification certificate.



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- c) The Tribunal Secretary will inform the members that, in the event of the thesis obtaining a unanimous outstanding grade, there will be a subsequent secret vote to decide whether to grant the “Cum Laude Mention”. The non-casting of a vote by a Tribunal member will mean that said mention will not be awarded.
 - d) The absence of any of these requirements will impede the valid formation of the Tribunal.
- 8) **Identification of the doctoral student:** Before opening the Public Session of the thesis defense, the doctoral student will identify him/herself by showing his/her ID or equivalent accreditation document to the Secretary. In the case of a telematic format, the document will be shown to the camera **before opening the public session**, so that the Secretary can clearly check the identity of the PhD student.
- 9) **The public defense session:** Once the doctoral student has been identified, the Tribunal Secretary will give access to the public and will state that the Tribunal has been previously convened, indicating the name and surnames of the doctoral student and of the members of the tribunal thus beginning the act of public defense, which shall be developed in accordance with the times and forms established by the tribunal presidency.
- 10) **Deliberation of the court:** After the public defence, the tribunal members, without the presence of the doctoral student or the others attending, will proceed to deliberate on the thesis qualification to award. The individual reports from each tribunal member will be received directly by the Secretary via email in real time in the case of a telematic format.
- 11) **Public presentation of the qualification:** After the qualification has been granted and still in the presence of the doctoral student, the entire tribunal, and the others attending, the Tribunal President will verbally make public the qualification awarded and the thesis defense session will be considered closed.

The Tribunal Secretary will send an email to the tesis@ual.es address indicating the qualification obtained, so that the Service or Unit



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responsible for the thesis management can proceed to prepare the thesis qualification certificate, once the secret vote for the "cum laude" mention is concluded.

12) **Declaring the secret vote of the "cum laude" mention.** In the event that the qualification obtained by the doctoral student is outstanding, each tribunal member may vote on whether to grant the "Cum Laude Mention". This vote is secret and will be carried out using informatic means that guarantee anonymity, allowing voting for a period of 24 hours beginning 1 hour after the scheduled start time of the thesis defense. If during this period any of the tribunal members contact the tesis@ual.es address, stating that there has been a technical problem with casting the vote, this vote will be repeated within the following 72 hours.

13) **Preparation of the report (acta):** Once the period for casting votes for the "Cum Laude Mention" has ended, the service or the unit responsible for managing the thesis will proceed to prepare the thesis qualification report, in which they will indicate the mentions that might have been awarded. In the case of a telematic defense, a record will be made on the back of the report, indicating the people (the PhD student and members of the tribunal) who have participated via videoconference. The said act will be digitally signed by the Tribunal Secretary. Once signed, an email will be sent to the doctoral student and to all the tribunal members, indicating the qualification obtained and, where appropriate, the *cum laude* mention.

14) **Archive of the defended thesis:** Once defended, the doctoral thesis will be deposited in an institutional public repository set up by UAL and managed by the Library, as established in the national legislation. This repository will be electronic by default and therefore freely available via the network. However, once the thesis has been defended, the doctoral student may deposit a printed copy of the doctoral thesis so that this is the one stored and exhibited non-electronically in the repository.



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