

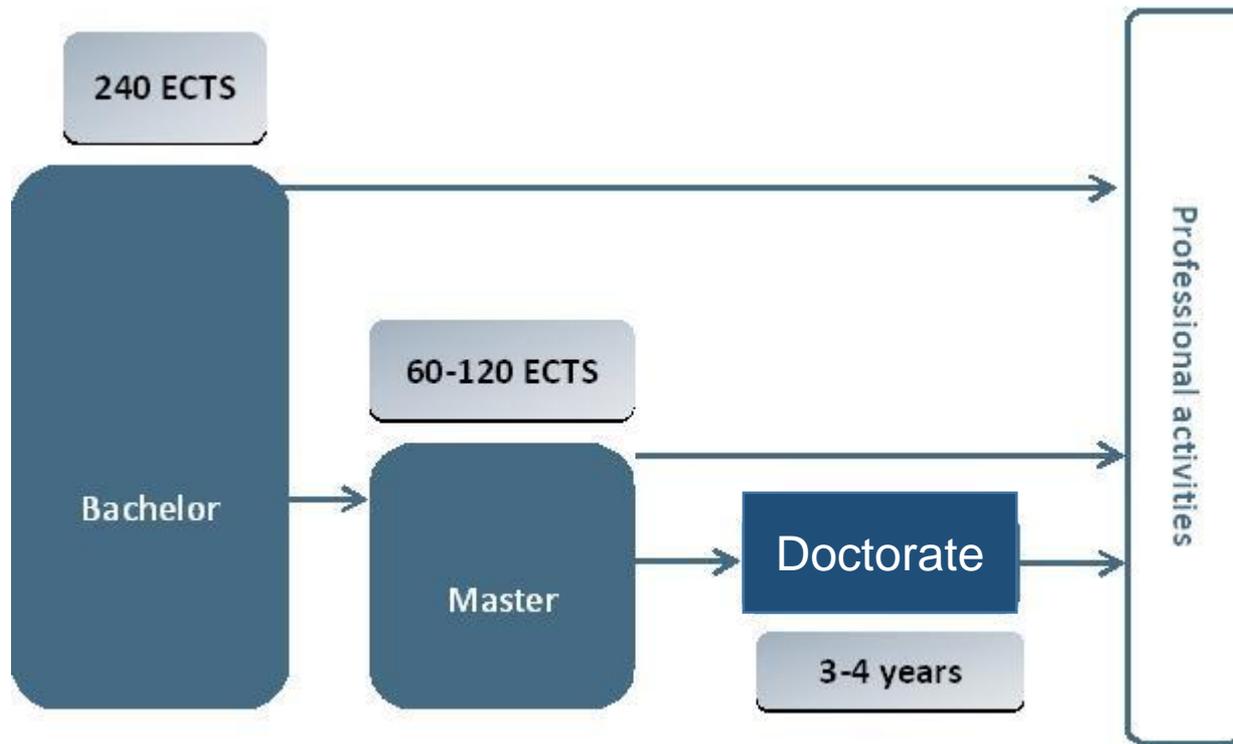
Staff Week  
Best Practices for International Collaboration at Doctorate Level  
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# Doctoral Education in Spain

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- General features of Doctorate in Spain.
- Access and admission into PhD programs.
- Supervisor and tutor of the PhD candidate.
- Duration of PhD studies.
- Laboral status of PhD candidates
- Monitoring and annual assessment of PhD candidates.
- Training activities.
- Approval and defense of PhD theses.
- Publication of PhD theses.
- International PhD mention.
- Cotutelle agreements.
- Joint Doctorates

# Higher Education System in Spain



# General Features of Doctoral Studies in Spain

- Traditionally the Doctorate in Spain followed an apprenticeship model based on the individual relationship between the doctoral candidate and the supervisor (in a research group).
- New regulation (Royal Decree RD99/2011) established the creation of structured PhD Programs and Doctoral Schools.
- PhD Programs are managed by an Academic Committee composed of representatives of each research line of the program and chaired by the Program Coordinator. All academic aspects of the admission, assessment and thesis authorization processes are handled by this Committee.

# Requirements to Access Doctoral Studies: RD 99/2011

- In general, candidates who wish to access a PhD program must hold an official Bachelor's Degree or equivalent qualifications, and a university Master's Degree, or equivalent, provided that they have passed a total of at least 300 ECTS credits in these two degree courses.
- Candidates can also access doctoral studies if they hold a degree obtained under foreign educational systems if the university has verified that the degree certifies a level of studies equivalent to that of an official Spanish University Master's Degree and that it provides eligibility for students to take Doctorate studies in the country that issued the diploma.

# Admission into PhD Programs

- Admissions are assessed by Academic Committees of PhD Programs according to their internal rules.
- To be admitted candidates must meet the access requirements, and usually pass a program-specific assessment, submit a research proposal in one of the program's research areas and choose a supervisor.

# Supervisor and Tutor of the PhD thesis

- On admission to the Doctoral Programme, each candidate is assigned a Thesis Supervisor by the Academic Committee. The Thesis Supervisor is in charge of monitoring the PhD candidate's research tasks. Co-supervisors may also be appointed.
- The Academic Committee of the PhD Program also appoints a Tutor who is responsible for monitoring the training of the PhD candidate. The Tutor may or may not be the Supervisor of the PhD thesis.
- Criteria to appoint Thesis Supervisors and Tutors are defined by Academic Committees of PhD Programs.
- A Learning and Good Practice Agreement is signed by the PhD Program Coordinator, the PhD candidate, Tutor and Supervisor.
- The Academic Committee of the PhD Program may modify the appointment of the Tutor and Thesis Supervisor.

# Duration of PhD Studies

- Doctoral candidates enrolled (full time) in a PhD program have **3 years** to present their theses. They may apply for a **1 year** extension, and **exceptionally** for another **1 year** extension, which must be approved by the Academic Committee of the PhD Program.
- Most contracts for doctoral candidates last for **4 years**.

# Laboral Status of Doctoral Candidates

- Doctoral candidates used to be considered as students.
- The Science Act 14/2011 establishes the obligation of contracts (not fellowships) for PhD candidates who are now considered early-stage researchers in training.
- Details about the laboral rights of PhD candidates are now being discussed within the frame of a Statute of Predoctoral Research Staff in Training.



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# Monitoring and Annual Assessment of PhD Candidates.

- Doctoral candidates are subject to annual assessment by the Academic Committee of the PhD Program.
- During 1<sup>st</sup> year the **research plan** is subjected to evaluation.
- Later assessments are mostly based on the progress achieved on research and the performance in required training activities.
- In the case of a negative assessment, the PhD candidates are assessed again later. The PhD candidates must respond satisfactorily to the requirements expressed by the Academic Committee in its report. If they do not pass the assessment, they will be definitively excluded from the PhD Program.

# Training Activities

- Aimed at a specific scientific training (including ethics and scientific integrity as well as the methodology and research techniques of each specific scientific area).
- Required for high professional training (including training in transferable skills).
- Do not usually accredited ECTS credits.

# Approval and Defense of PhD Theses

- Approval to defend the doctoral thesis depends on the specific quality criteria established by the Academic Committee of the PhD Program and the Doctoral School.
- The committee that evaluates the doctoral thesis is composed according to the requirements fixed by the Doctoral School. All the members that make up the committee must have proven research experience. In any case, the thesis committee must be formed by a majority of members external to the University.

# Publication of PhD Theses

- Once the doctoral thesis is approved, the university will take care of its file in open electronic format in an institutional repository.
- In exceptional circumstances such as, among others, the existence of confidentiality agreements with companies or the possibility of generation of patents that fall on the content of the thesis, Doctoral School may enable procedures that ensure the non-disclosure of these aspects.

# International PhD Mention

- To obtain the Mention as International PhD, the PhD candidate must stay for at least three months outside Spain in a university or research institution.
- The PhD candidate must write part of the doctoral thesis and defend it, at least the summary and conclusions, in one of the normal languages for scientific communication in the area of knowledge in question, other than the official languages of Spain.
- The thesis must be subject to a report by at least two experts belonging to a university or research institution outside Spain.
- The committee assessing the thesis defense must include at least one expert belonging to a non-Spanish university or research institution, who is not the person responsible for the stay.

# Cotutelle Agreements

- Cotutelle (double doctorate) is an option for developing a doctoral thesis whereby the candidate simultaneously meets the requirement of two institutions: a Spanish and a foreign university.
- The PhD candidate must complete a minimum stay of **six months** in the institution with which the cotutelle agreement is established,
- Only one thesis is written but it allows the doctoral candidate to receive a degree from both institutions under an agreement between the two institutions that reflects the mutual understanding between the two and stipulates the conditions under which the work will be carried out.

# Joint Doctorates

- Joint doctoral programs created through international consortiums which have been evaluated and selected by the European Commission in competitive calls as programs of excellence with the Erasmus Mundus stamp are understood that they have a favorable verification report.
- The applicant university must send the proposal to the Ministry with the proposal approved by the European Commission together with the notification letter of having obtained the Erasmus Mundus stamp.
- All other joint doctorates (including those approved as European Training Networks) have to be submitted for evaluation and verification to the corresponding Spanish Quality Agency.

Thank you!



Universidad Autónoma  
de Madrid