

## **I. PROVISIONS AND AGREEMENTS OF THE COMPLUTENSE UNIVERSITY'S GOVERNING BODIES**

### **I.1. GOVERNING BOARD**

#### **I.1.3. Office of the Vice-Chancellor for Scientific Policy, Research and Doctorates**

**Agreement of the Governing Board of 05 July 2016, approving the procedure regulating the declaration of foreign higher education degrees as equivalent to the academic level of doctor.**

#### **PROCEDURE TO DECLARE FOREIGN HIGHER EDUCATION DEGREES AS EQUIVALENT TO THE ACADEMIC LEVEL OF DOCTOR AT THE COMPLUTENSE UNIVERSITY OF MADRID**

In compliance with Royal Decree 967/2014, of November 21 (BOE 22.11.2014), establishing the requirements and procedure for approving and declaring the equivalence of degrees and official university academic levels, and for recognising foreign higher education studies, at the initiative of the Vice-Chancellor for Scientific Policy, Research and Doctorates, with the approval of the Doctorate Committee, the following procedure is established to regulate how foreign higher education degrees can be declared equivalent to the academic level of doctor.

#### **1. PURPOSE**

This regulation establishes the procedure applicable at the UCM for foreign higher education degrees to be declared equivalent to **the academic level of doctor**.

#### **2. SCOPE OF APPLICATION**

The UCM may declare foreign higher education degrees to be equivalent to the academic level of doctor only when equivalence is requested for higher education degrees issued by an officially recognised foreign university or higher education institution. These degrees must reflect studies in an official programme that meets the requirements listed below, after the appropriate application has been filed, processed and approved.

##### **2.1. Requirements for foreign degrees**

For a degree to be declared equivalent to the academic level of doctor, it must meet the following requirements:

- a) Issued by a competent authority in the country of origin, so designated by law, regulations, or administrative provisions in said country.
- b) Accredited that its holder meets the requirements for the level of studies needed in Spain to be admitted to a doctoral degree programme.
- c) Accredited that its holder has completed the studies that grant an academic level equivalent to a doctoral degree.

### **3. PROCEDURE**

#### **3.1. Application**

The procedure will begin with an application by the interested party sent to the UCM Chancellor. The application may be filed at the Student Building Registry, or in any of the places set forth in article 38.4 of Law 30/1992, of 26 November, on the Legal Framework of Public Administrations and the Common Administrative Procedure.

The equivalence application may be filed simultaneously at more than one university. All applications for degrees that have already been declared equivalent shall be excluded. However, when equivalence has been denied, the procedure may be started at a different university.

#### **3.2. Required documentation**

Applications must be accompanied by the following documents:

- a) Photocopy and original, or a certified copy, of a document that accredits the applicant's identity and nationality, issued by the competent authorities of their country of origin or by the competent Spanish authorities on matters of immigration. For Spanish citizens, certified photocopy of their national identification document.
- b) Original and photocopy, or certified copy, of the degree for which equivalence is being requested or of the document certifying its issuance and the corresponding official translation, if applicable.
- c) Original and photocopy, or certified copy, of the transcript certifying the studies completed by the applicant to obtain the degree, which must include, among other details, the official length of the curriculum followed in academic years, the courses taken and the credit hours for each, and the corresponding official translation, if applicable.
- d) A report explaining the dissertation, written in Spanish, as well as a copy of the dissertation, a list of the members who comprised the dissertation committee and the grade obtained, if applicable. The report must contain a representative summary of the content of the dissertation (between 20 and 25 pages).
- e) Proof of payment of the fee established for the application for equivalence of the academic level of doctor at the time the application is submitted.
- f) Sworn statement that recognition/equivalence has not been obtained before.

All documents submitted must be official and issued by the appropriate authorities in accordance with the legal system of the country in question. Additionally, except for documents issued by authorities in European Union member states or signatories to the European Economic Area Agreement, all original documents must be duly legalised with the Apostille of the Hague or via diplomatic means. The legalisation or apostille must appear on the original document before any certified copies are made.

All documents must be accompanied by their corresponding official translation to Spanish, if applicable.

If the application is incomplete, the interested party will be notified so that they may correct any errors or provide the necessary documents within ten days. If they fail to do so, their application will be understood to be withdrawn, in accordance with article 71 of Law 30/1992, of 26 November, on the Legal Framework of Public Administrations and the Common Administrative Procedure.

Under no circumstances will the procedure begin without the aforementioned documents being submitted first. However, in the event that the body examining the application deems it necessary, the applicant may be required to provide other documents regarding their education (course syllabi that reflect the content and breadth of the studies, or the academic documentation accrediting that the student passed all studies required to be admitted to the degree for which they are requesting equivalence).

### **3.3. Examination**

The Office of the Vice-Chancellor for Scientific Policy, Research and Doctorates, or the corresponding Office of the Vice-Chancellor, will examine the application; once the documentation has been reviewed and they have verified compliance with the above conditions, said Office of the Vice-Chancellor will send the file to the Doctorate Committee or equivalent body, who will designate a team of experts to assess the application and issue the corresponding report. To assess the dissertation, at least two experts must issue a report; a third report may be requested if the first two are not conclusive. The reports must be issued within three months of being requested by the body leading the examination.

The following criteria will be considered when issuing the report:

- a) A comparison between the academic levels required to be admitted to the studies leading to the foreign degree and for admission to the Spanish degree.
- b) The duration and course load of the educational period required to obtain the foreign degree, and the competencies that said education allows the student to acquire.
- c) A comparison between the academic levels of the foreign degree and the Spanish doctoral degree for which equivalence is being requested.

Once the file has been reviewed by the examining body, the Doctorate Committee or equivalent body will send the proposal to the Chancellor for their decision.

## **4. APPLICATIONS EXCLUDED FROM THE PROCEDURE**

The UCM will not process applications for equivalence to the official academic level of doctor for degrees or studies issued or carried out abroad, in the following cases set forth in article 3.2 of RD 967/2014, of 21 November:

- a) Degrees that are not officially valid in the country of origin.
- b) Degrees that correspond to studies abroad taken, in full or in part, in Spain, when the schools lack the mandatory authorisation to teach said studies, or when the studies approved by the foreign degree for which equivalence is sought were not effectively instituted at the foreign university or higher education institution at the time it issued the degree, in accordance with the provisions of article 86 of Organic Law 6/2001, of 21 December, on Universities.
- c) Degrees for which a recognition procedure or equivalence procedure for the academic level of doctor has been approved in Spain.

## **5. FEES**

The fees that the interested parties must pay to initiate the procedure are the updated amounts established in article 28 of Law 53/2002, of 30 December, on Tax, Administrative and Social Order Measures, or those which may be established by the Community of Madrid; these are mandatory fees for the application to be resolved, and are an indispensable requirement for the file to be processed.

## **6. DECISION**

The Chancellor is responsible for issuing a decision on the application for equivalence to the academic level of doctor; there must be suitable grounds for the decision, and it will contain one of the following pronouncements:

- a) The foreign degree will be declared equivalent to the academic level of doctor in Spain.
- b) Equivalence to the academic level of doctor will be denied.

The maximum period for issuing a decision and providing notice of the end of the procedure will be six months from the date the application was entered in the Registry. The three-month period allowed for the technical report to be issued shall halt the clock on the period established for the corresponding decision to be issued.

If no express decision is issued within the above period, the application for equivalence shall be understood to be denied, as established in the twenty-ninth additional provision of Law 14/2000, of 29 December, on Tax, Administrative and Social Order Measures, in appendix 2 thereto.

## **7. APPEALS**

The Chancellor's decision puts an end to the administrative proceedings; however, either an administrative reconsideration appeal may be filed within one month of notification, or an appeal to an administrative court may be filed within two months from the date after notification, according to the provisions of Law 29/1998, of 13 July, regulating the jurisdiction of Administrative Courts, and of Organic Law 6/1985, of 1 July, on the Judicial Branch. Said appeal may not be filed until the previous administrative reconsideration appeal, if applicable, has been expressly resolved or implicitly dismissed.

## **8. EFFECTS**

The equivalence to the academic level of Doctor grants the foreign degree the effects corresponding to the academic level for which equivalence has been declared, in all of Spain, from the date it is approved and the corresponding certification is issued.

The equivalence to the academic level of doctor does not imply, under any circumstances, the recognition or declaration of equivalence for other foreign degrees in the interested party's possession, nor the recognition of a level other than doctor in Spain.

## **9. CERTIFICATE OF EQUIVALENCE**

Equivalence shall be accredited through the corresponding certificate of equivalence issued by the Complutense University; said certificate shall include the foreign degree held by the interested party and the university it was issued by.

Prior to issuing the certificate, the Complutense University, through the corresponding service, will notify the Subdirector General of Degrees and Recognition of Qualifications of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport, so that they may register it in the special section of the National Registry of Official University Degree Holders referred to in article 15.4 of RD 967/2014, of 21 November.

The Official Degrees Section will set up a registry to record the equivalence and credential decisions made at the Complutense University.

The certificate will be delivered to the interested party using a procedure similar to the one used for official degrees.

#### **10. FIRST ADDITIONAL PROVISION**

The Office of the Vice-Chancellor for Scientific Policy, Research and Doctorates, or the corresponding office, is hereby authorised to take whatever measures needed to implement and execute this Regulation.

#### **11. FINAL PROVISION**

This regulation will enter into force the day after it is published in the BOUC (Official Gazette of Complutense University).