

Dissertation Committee – Establishment and Activities. Procedures for Review and Preliminary Discussion of the Dissertation (section 6 – 7 of Regulation for Awarding Academic degrees at National Research University Higher School of Economics)

6.1. For dissertations accepted by a dissertation council for defense, a dissertation committee (hereinafter, the “dissertation committee” or “committee”) shall be set up and headed by a chairperson. Only experts possessing adequate competencies in the topic and research methods of the given dissertation shall be eligible to join the committee. The expert’s country of residence and place of work is irrelevant in such cases. In turn, the dissertation council shall take the necessary steps to ensure that the necessary specialists sit on the committee. Remuneration may be offered to external experts who are not employed at HSE.

6.2. A dissertation committee should include 5 (five) specialists with publications on the given topic or related topics. Members of dissertation councils, the candidate’s academic supervisor (-s) and field-specific HSE subdivisions may put forward nominees to join a dissertation committee. Expert competencies in the dissertation-related field must be confirmed by recognition of the relevant academic community and publications in topics related to the dissertation in peer-reviewed journals indexed in Web of Science, Scopus and other Russian and international citation databases. A list of such databases shall be established for each academic field. It is also advisable to use HSE’s list of high-quality journals: <https://scientometrics.hse.ru/goodjournals>. The specific criteria for selecting nominees to a dissertation committee shall be set forth by the dissertation council in view of the specifics of the given field of study.

6.3. For dissertations prepared by HSE doctoral students, a dissertation committee may be set up at earlier stages, once the dissertation topic has been approved.

6.4. A dissertation committee may be comprised of the members of dissertation council, HSE employees (no more than 3 (three) members of the committee) and external experts who hold a Candidate of Sciences, Doctor of Sciences or a PhD degree. At least one of the external candidates should be employed at a research or educational institution outside of the Russian Federation¹. To join a dissertation committee, nominees must provide their written

¹ Institutions located in the CIS countries are not eligible with the exception of universities positioned in Top-300 in at least one of the global academic rankings (QS, THE or ARWU).

consent (this consent may be submitted by e-mail). Information about the dissertation committee members (their academic degrees and titles, as well as the place of employment) shall be published on HSE portal no later than in within 7 (seven) working days after they joined the dissertation committee.

6.5. Specialists who may have a conflict of interest in regards to a dissertation defense, such as currently being a candidate's academic supervisor (-s) or official academic advisor, as well as his/her co-authors, may not sit on the dissertation committee.

6.6. At the discretion of the given dissertation council, one and the same dissertation committee may review more than one dissertation. In case a dissertation is characterized by multidisciplinary research, committee members may represent various academic fields.

6.7. The key functions of the dissertation committee include:

- reviewing a dissertation and its summary;
- formulating comments to a dissertation and its summary;
- holding an interview with the CS/DS candidate;
- holding a preliminary discussion about the dissertation;
- preparing references for the dissertation;
- arranging the dissertation defense;
- deciding as to whether or not the relevant academic degree may be awarded.

6.8. All decisions shall be made by the committee members via a simple majority vote. Open voting may be held with respect to all cases, except for the issue of academic degree conferment during the candidate's defense. E-voting via an electronic means of communication is also permitted. The dissertation committee's members (especially external experts) may take part in committee meetings in long distance mode (via an electronic means of communication).

6.9. The committee's chairperson and clerk shall be responsible for coordinating the committee's activities.

7. Procedures for Review and Preliminary Discussion of the Dissertation

7.1. A dissertation must be reviewed by the committee within 3 (three) months from the date of the (re-)submission of the dissertation to the committee. This period does not include the summer vacation period (July – August).

7.2. All committee members must familiarize themselves with the dissertation. Any member may suggest that a (personal or online) interview with the candidate should be held so as to confirm his/her professional qualification and

for other purposes.

7.3. At the discretion of the committee's chairperson, a preliminary discussion of the given dissertation may be held. The date of the preliminary discussion shall be postponed if, owing to reasons beyond their control, more than 1 (one) member of the dissertation committee is unable to attend the scheduled meeting. Committee members may take part in meetings via electronic means of communication. At the discretion of the committee's chairperson, the candidate, his/her academic supervisor (-s) (if applicable) and other specialists may also be invited to attend the preliminary discussion.

7.4. The preliminary discussion may be held in Russian or English (no official translation will be provided).

7.5. Based on the results of a review and/or preliminary discussion, the committee members shall formulate comments with respect to the dissertation and its summary. If the comments suggest that the dissertation contains material flaws, the committee may decide to reject it or return it to the candidate for subsequent revision. The committee may hold another discussion of the revised dissertation, but this may only take place once. If the committee establishes that a dissertation is ready for defense, it shall then set the date and language of the defense. If the dissertation is submitted as a separate academic paper, it is advisable to set the language of the dissertation as the language of the defense. The full text of the dissertation and its summary shall be published on HSE's portal. No modifications to the dissertation and its summary shall be permitted, once they have been published on the portal.

7.6. Once a positive decision on the dissertation defense has been made, each committee member must provide a personal written reference in Russian or English no later than 7 working days prior to the date of defense. This reference must include an assessment of the scientific quality of the research performed, the relevance of the selected topic, and it should also specify whether or not the concepts, conclusions and recommendations proposed in the dissertation are well-reasoned, verified and new. It must also contain remarks as to whether or not the dissertation meets the criteria established herein and a general opinion as to whether or not the candidate is eligible to be awarded a respective academic degree. The full name of the committee member, his/her academic title, email, the name of institution where he/she is employed and his/her position must also be stated in the reference.

The dissertation committee members are entitled to make amendments in their reference within 7 (seven) working days following the defense.

7.7. A reference must clearly state whether the committee member has a positive or negative opinion about the dissertation. The candidate is allowed to progress to the dissertation defense stage even if he/she has received negative feedback from some of the committee members.

7.8. No official opponents shall be assigned for the dissertation defense. An involved external organization does not need to provide a reference either. All references to the dissertation and its summary, except for those submitted by committee members, are optional. Additional references may be forwarded to the dissertation council and they shall be attached to the attestation file of the respective candidate by the academic secretary of the dissertation council (unless such references are in violation of academic ethical standards).

7.9. The dissertation, its summary in Russian and English shall be published at least 2 (two) months prior to the defense. Following the publication date, no modifications to the text of the dissertation and summary are permitted.