

Annex to the HSE University's directive  
No. 6.18.1-01/1604-07, dated April 16, 2018

APPROVED by  
by the HSE University's Academic Council,  
Minutes No. 3, dated March 30, 2018

With amendments approved by the  
HSE University's Academic Council  
dated April 27, 2018, and enacted by  
HSE University's directive No. 6.18.1-  
01/3005-04, dated May 30, 2018;

With amendments approved by the  
HSE University's Academic Council  
dated June 01, 2018, and enacted by  
HSE University's directive No.  
6.18.1-01/2906-01, dated June 29,  
2018;

With amendments approved by the  
HSE University's Academic Council  
dated September 28, 2018, minutes  
No. 10, enacted by HSE University's  
directive No. 6.18.1-01/1610-03, dated  
October 16, 2018;

With amendments approved by the  
HSE University's Academic Council  
dated November 30, 2018, minutes  
No. 12, and enacted by HSE  
University's directive No. 6.18.1-  
01/2012-09, dated December 20, 2018;

With amendments approved by the  
HSE University's Academic Council  
dated April 26, 2019, minutes No. 6,  
and enacted by HSE University's  
directive No. 6.18.1-01/2905-08, dated  
May 29, 2019

### **Regulations for Awarding Academic Degrees**

## **at National Research University Higher School of Economics**

### **1. General Provisions**

1.1. The Regulations for Awarding Academic Degrees at National Research University Higher School of Economics (hereafter, the “Regulations”) set forth the procedure for awarding its own academic degrees at National Research University Higher School of Economics (hereafter, the “University”, or “HSE University”), including:

- the eligibility criteria for candidates seeking academic degrees, and requirements for dissertations;
- the procedure for nomination for dissertation, a dissertation’s preliminary discussion and defence;
- the procedure for compiling and publishing a candidate’s certification file on HSE University’s corporate website (portal);
- the procedure for issuing certificates (diplomas) confirming the awarding of academic degrees;
- the procedure for appeals, withdrawal and reinstatement of academic degrees at HSE University.

1.2. These Regulations have been drawn up in line with Federal Law No. 148-FZ, dated May 23, 2016 “On Amending Article 4 of the Federal Law “On Science and State Scientific and Technological Policy””, Resolution No. 553 of the Government of the Russian Federation, dated May 11, 2017, which approves the Regulations on the List of Scientific Organizations and Higher Education Institutions Entitled to Independently Award Academic Degrees, as well as the Concept for Awarding its Own Academic Degrees at HSE University, approved by the HSE University’s Academic Council on September 29, 2017 (Minutes No. 9).

1.3. These Regulations rely among other sources on the Regulations for Awarding Academic Degrees approved by Resolution No. 842 of the Government of the Russian Federation, dated September 24, 2013, and the Regulations on the Committees Responsible for the Defence of Dissertations Prepared by Persons Seeking Candidate of Sciences and Doctor of Sciences Academic Degrees, approved by Directive No. 1093 of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation, dated November 10, 2017.

1.4. The University is entitled to award the following academic degrees:

- HSE University’s Candidate of Sciences degree (Doctor of Philosophy HSE, PhD HSE) (hereinafter, “Candidate of Sciences”);
- HSE University’s Doctor of Sciences degree (Doctor of Sciences HSE, DS HSE) (hereinafter, “Doctor of Sciences”).

## **2. Requirements for Candidates Seeking HSE University’s Academic Degrees**

2.1. Candidates holding a Specialist or Master’s degree, or a document confirming the completion of a doctoral programme (hereinafter, collectively referred to as “a degree certificate”), are eligible to seek an HSE University’s Candidate of Sciences degree.

2.2. At the discretion of the HSE University’s Academic Council and upon the recommendation of the dissertation committee, candidates may be required to present a degree certificate in a specific field of study and/or specialization.

2.3. Only candidates who have successfully passed a qualification exam at HSE University in a respective field of study may be eligible to submit their dissertation for review. During the exam, the focus shall be made on a narrow specialized area, which corresponds to the candidate’s dissertation topic and has been determined by the dissertation committee, rather than on the given academic field in broader terms. If the candidate has passed his/her qualification exam at another institution, its results may be transferred to HSE University at the discretion of the HSE University’s dissertation committee. Candidates only have to pass 1 (one) qualification exam.

2.4. A candidate’s enrolment in a doctoral programme is not a prerequisite for seeking a Candidate of Sciences degree.

2.5. A candidate seeking a Candidate of Sciences degree (hereinafter, a “CS candidate”) shall be assigned an academic supervisor. Candidates enrolled in joint doctoral programmes delivered in conjunction with educational and research institutions may have a second academic supervisor employed at such an institution.

2.6. Should a CS candidate be assigned to an external organization in order to prepare his/her dissertation and take the qualification exam, he/she must present a dissertation statement signed by the head or a duly authorized deputy head of the organization. Graduates of an HSE University’s doctoral programme, as well as affiliated candidates seeking a Candidate of Sciences/Doctor of Sciences degree and post-doctoral students, shall present a dissertation statement signed by the head of the HSE University’s subdivision, to which they are assigned. The dissertation

statement must include an assessment of the personal contribution made by the candidate in the attainment of dissertation results, the reliability of research results obtained, novelty and practical significance of the research made by the candidate, the value of academic papers prepared by the candidate, academic specialization of the dissertation, and whether or not the dissertation materials were fully reflected in his/her published academic papers.

2.7. The procedure for the dissertation discussion and receiving the HSE University's statement on the dissertation shall be established by the HSE University's bylaw.

2.8. Candidates holding a Candidate of Sciences, Doctor of Sciences (with no previous Candidate of Sciences degree) or PhD (provided that this degree is officially recognized at HSE University in line with a respective HSE University's bylaw) degree and who have prepared a Doctor of Sciences dissertation based on their research results are eligible to pursue a Doctor of Sciences degree.

2.9. A candidate seeking a Doctor of Sciences degree may have one or several academic advisors.

2.10. The HSE University's Rector, Vice Rectors, the University's President and Vice Presidents may not submit their dissertations for defence to the dissertation committees based at HSE University.

### **3. Requirements for the Dissertation and Publications**

#### **Submitted by the Candidate**

3.1. A Candidate of Sciences dissertation must contain original solutions to a given research problem, which is significant for further development of the respective scientific and technological field, or, alternatively, a description of new scientific (technological) developments, which may possess applied value in solving a relevant scientific or practical task/problem.

3.2. A Doctor of Sciences dissertation must rely on the results of a large-scale research project (series of research projects), which has made a valuable contribution to the further development of theoretical and/or practical foundations of a given scientific and technological field. Furthermore, it must contain solutions to a major (large-scale) scientific or practical problem based on original research approaches proposed by the author.

3.3. A dissertation must be prepared independently by the author. Further requirements for the dissertation are its coherence, novelty of research results and

concepts presented for public defence, as well as clear identification of the author's personal contribution to the respective academic field.

3.4. Solutions proposed in the dissertation must be well-grounded and substantiated. The author must also include their evaluation in comparison with other known solutions in the given academic and technological field.

3.5. A dissertation must contain clear references to author(-s) and/or source(-s) of the materials or specific results referred to by the author. If the author relies on research results that he previously obtained independently and/or co-authored with other researchers, these instances must be specified in the dissertation.

3.6. The key research results contained in the dissertation must be published in peer-reviewed scientific journals (hereinafter, "peer-reviewed journals") indexed in Russian and international citation databases.

3.7. Specific requirements for the dissertation and publication of dissertation-related research results (i.e., requirements for the number of articles, journal bibliometric indicators, including appearances in specific quartiles, whether or not unpublished papers and preprints may be submitted, monographs are required/permitted, coauthors are present) shall be developed by a respective dissertation committee and approved by the HSE University's Academic Council.

3.8. Minimal requirements for the total number of publications containing key dissertation-related research results in peer-reviewed journals may not be lower than the respective requirements set forth by the Higher Commission for Academic Degrees and Titles under the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Russian Federation (hereinafter, the "VAK RF").

3.9. Dissertation committees may introduce additional requirements in line with the specifics of a particular academic field, e.g., approve lists of publications/journals and publishing houses, which are/are not recognized by a given committee. These lists shall be published on HSE University's corporate website (portal).

3.10. The list of Russian journals proposed by the VAK RF (hereinafter, the "VAK list") cannot be used for compiling the HSE University's list of recognized peer-reviewed journals. Instead, the HSE University's list shall be based on international databases such as Web of Science (e.g., Emerging Sources Citation Index, ESCI), Scopus and other Russian and international citation databases established for respective academic fields. An HSE University's list of recommended high-quality journals has been compiled: <https://scientometrics.hse.ru/goodjournals>. Publications in journals included on the

blacklist of journals shall not be considered (<https://scientometrics.hse.ru/blacklist>).

#### **4. Dissertation Submission Procedure**

4.1. A candidate may submit his/her dissertation to any HSE University's dissertation committee for defence. However, the scientific focus of the dissertation under review must be in line with the academic field of the committee awarding academic degrees. The committee's academic field is established in the profile of the respective academic field as approved by the HSE University's Academic Council. If the dissertation covers the results of a multi-disciplinary research project, the candidate may choose the committee to submit the dissertation for review at his/her own discretion. Two dissertation committees may be combined into a single dissertation committee as per their mutual decision.

4.2. A candidate shall submit a copy of his/her dissertation (manuscript copyright protected) and supporting materials in line with p. 5.1 hereof. The dissertation must be accompanied by a signed request for its review, formatted in line with Annex 1 hereto. A dissertation must be formatted in accordance with the requirements established in these Regulations and Annexes hereto.

4.3. A candidate's dissertation may be presented in one of the following ways at his/her discretion:

1) the dissertation comprises 3 (three) or more research articles (review papers are not permitted), which contain original research results in regard to one and the same research topic<sup>1</sup>. Submitted (published or accepted for publication) articles may be prepared in Russian or English. For specific academic fields, a monograph prepared in Russian or English may be submitted for defence.

2) the dissertation comprises 1 (one) separate coherent research paper, presented in English or Russian. This paper must be accompanied by research articles (published or accepted for publication) in Russian or English, dedicated to the same research topic as the dissertation.

4.4. The total number of publications may not be presented for defence. Only papers submitted by a candidate can be defended.

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<sup>1</sup> In Mathematics and Computer Science, oral reports (full paper/conference paper) and poster presentations at thematic conferences in Computer Science (level A\* and A according to CORE ranking), published in conference collections of papers or international journals, may be considered.

4.5. Candidates must submit an abstract of their dissertation in Russian and English. The abstract must contain the key ideas and findings of the dissertation, provide an overview of the author's contribution to the research project, and describe the theoretical and practical significance of the research results. It must also include information on the host organization, an academic supervisor(s) and academic advisor(s) (if any), as well as contain a full list of publications covering the key outcomes of the dissertation-related research project.

4.6. Further requirements for the dissertation's volume and structure as well as the abstract may be developed with regard to the specifics of the relevant academic field and approved by respective dissertation committees. Such requirements shall be approved by the HSE University's First Vice Rector in charge of the coordination of dissertation committees' activities.

4.7. A dissertation abstract shall be submitted as a manuscript and does not need to be printed in a print shop.

4.8. A dissertation committee may refuse to review a candidate's dissertation on the following grounds:

- the candidate's qualifications do not meet the requirements established in these Regulations;
- the dissertation topic and its contents do not comply with the academic field, for which a given dissertation committee is entitled to accept dissertations for defence;
- the dissertation committee does not have adequately-qualified specialists in the given dissertation topic to set up a dissertation sub-committee (for affiliated candidates);
- the requirements for the publication of key dissertation-related research results as set forth herein have not been met;
- the candidate used borrowed materials in his/her dissertation without providing proper reference to authors/sources, or failed to include references to his/her co-authors for co-authored research material;
- the candidate provided inaccurate or false information about his/her published works, which contain key dissertation-related research results.

4.9. Decisions made by the dissertation committees as to whether dissertations have been accepted for review or rejected shall be published on HSE University's corporate website (portal) within 5 (five) working days from the day when the respective meeting of the dissertation committee took place.

4.10. For affiliated candidates, the relevant dissertation committee may decide that a preliminary discussion of the dissertation at HSE University is required and thus assign a field-specific HSE University's subdivision where this discussion shall be held.

## **5. Acceptance of Dissertations for Review and Defence**

5.1. A dissertation committee may accept a dissertation for review provided that it meets all the requirements stipulated herein and the candidate has submitted the following documents:

a) a request to review his/her dissertation, which must be prepared in line with the template in Annex 1 hereto;

b) a duly certified copy of the candidate's degree certificate (Specialist, Master's diploma or a document confirming the completion of a doctoral programme (if applicable));

c) if the candidate's degree certificate was issued outside of the Russian Federation, he/she must submit a duly certified copy of the degree certificate (i.e., the document conferring a qualification). The latter must bear a legalization stamp/apostille<sup>2</sup> and must be recognized in the Russian Federation at the equivalent level of education (hereinafter, a "foreign degree certificate");

d) for DS candidates – a duly certified copy of a Candidate of Sciences or PhD degree certificate obtained overseas (if the latter is recognized as such in the Russian Federation);

e) for CS candidates - a document confirming the candidate's successful passing of a qualification exam in the respective field (not applicable to candidates who have completed a doctoral programme in the same field as their dissertation topic);

f) a digital copy of the candidate's dissertation in Russian or English and formatted in line with the requirements set forth in p. 5.2 hereof;

g) a digital copy of the candidate's dissertation abstract in Russian and English in line with the requirements established at HSE University;

h) a statement containing positive feedback on the dissertation provided by an organization, which hosted the candidate while he/she was working on the dissertation or to which the candidate has been assigned;

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<sup>2</sup> Unless legalization and apostille are not required/waived in accordance with Russian legislation and/or international treaties.



i) for CS candidates – academic supervisor’s positive feedback; for DS candidates – academic advisor’s feedback (if the candidate had an academic advisor).

5.2. A dissertation must be formatted as a manuscript and should feature the following structure:

- a) title page as per the format prescribed at HSE University;
- b) table of contents;
- c) the actual dissertation including its introduction, main body, conclusion, and bibliography.

5.3. A dissertation may also include a list of abbreviations and symbols, definitions, a list of images and annexes.

An introduction must include: a rationale explaining the relevance of the selected topic; the degree to which this topic has been previously developed; the dissertation’s goals and objectives, as well as its theoretical and practical significance; the methodology and research methods used, and key ideas which shall be defended; authenticity and validation of results.

The main text of the dissertation must be subdivided into chapters and paragraphs or sections and subsections (numbered in Arabic numerals).

The conclusion must feature a summary of the research results, recommendations and options for further development in regard to the given topic.

5.4. If a dissertation is submitted as a collection of research articles, the main body of the dissertation shall comprise an introduction and actual articles.

5.5. No later than within 3 (three) months from the date of the candidate’s submission of all required documents, the relevant dissertation committee shall commence the review of the dissertation or send a motivated refusal to accept the dissertation to the defence. This timeframe does not include the summer vacation period (July-August).

5.6. At a meeting of the dissertation committee, the academic secretary shall present a preliminary statement with the following information: whether or not the submitted documentation is complete, duly formatted; whether or not the candidate’s qualifications and his/her dissertation meet the established requirements; whether or not the dissertation contains inaccurate or false information regarding academic papers published by the candidate, as well as the results of dissertation/abstract check for borrowed materials.

5.7. At a meeting of the dissertation committee to accept the dissertation for review, it may set up a dissertation commission in order to hold a preliminary review of the dissertation and other submitted materials (hereinafter, a “dissertation commission” or “commission”).

5.8. A dissertation commission should include at least 3 (three) members elected via an open vote from among the dissertation committee’s members. HSE University’s staff who receive a simple majority vote of the dissertation committee’s members in attendance will join the commission. One of the members of the dissertation commission shall be appointed as its chairperson. Should the dissertation for review be of multi-disciplinary nature, members of another dissertation committee in the field related to the dissertation may be invited to join the commission.

5.9. A dissertation commission shall prepare a statement with information as to whether or not the dissertation topic and its contents correspond to the academic field, for which a given dissertation committee is entitled to accept dissertations for their subsequent defence. The commission’s statement must provide a rationale explaining why the dissertation may/may not be accepted for further review.

5.10. The commission’s statement shall be utilized by the dissertation committee to decide whether a given dissertation shall be accepted for further review or thereby rejected.

5.11. A dissertation committee may also decide to reject a dissertation without setting up a dissertation commission, based on a negative statement presented by the academic secretary of the dissertation committee with regard to the following: whether or not the submitted documentation is complete, or duly formatted; whether or not the candidate’s qualifications and his/her dissertation meet the established requirements; whether or not the dissertation contains inaccurate or false information regarding academic papers published by the candidate, as well as the results of dissertation/abstract check for borrowed materials.

5.12. If the dissertation is rejected by the dissertation committee, within 30 (thirty) calendar days following this decision, the candidate shall receive an e-mail containing an excerpt from the dissertation committee’s meeting minutes stating the reason for the rejection.

5.13. Within 5 (five) working days following the meeting of the dissertation committee where a decision is made as to whether accept or reject the dissertation for review shall be published on the HSE University’s corporate website (portal).

## **6. Dissertation Sub-Committee: Establishment and Activities**

6.1. For dissertations accepted by a dissertation committee for further review, a sub-committee to review such specific dissertations (hereinafter, the “sub-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 sub-committee. The expert’s country of residence and place of work is irrelevant in such cases. Therefore, the dissertation committee shall take all the necessary steps to ensure that such specialists sit on the sub-committee, and, if necessary, experts from outside of HSE University can be offered to join the sub-committee on a paid basis.

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

6.3. For dissertations prepared by HSE University’s doctoral students, a sub-committee should be set up at earlier stages, upon the dissertation topic’s approval.

6.4. A sub-committee may be comprised of the members of the dissertation committee, HSE employees (no more than 3 (three) members of the sub-committee) and external experts who hold a Candidate of Sciences, a Doctor of Sciences or a PhD degree. At least one external expert should be employed at an overseas organization<sup>3</sup>. To join a sub-committee, nominees must provide their written consent (may be submitted by e-mail). Information about the sub-committee’s members (i.e. academic degrees, academic titles, place of work) shall be published on HSE University’s corporate website (portal) no later than within 7 (seven) working days from the date of the nominees’ entry into the sub-committee.

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<sup>3</sup> Institutions located in the CIS countries are not eligible with the exception of universities positioned in Top-300 in at least one global academic ranking (QS, THE or ARWU).

6.5. Specialists who may have a conflict of interest, 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 sub-committee.

6.6. At the discretion of the given dissertation committee, one and the same sub-committee may review more than one dissertation. If a dissertation features multi-disciplinary research, sub-committee members may represent various research fields.

6.7. The key functions of the sub-committee include the following:

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

6.8. All decisions shall be made by the sub-committee members by a simple majority of votes. Open voting may be held with respect to all cases, except for the academic degree conferment during the candidate's defence. E-voting via electronic means of communication is also permitted. The sub-committee's members (especially external experts) may take part in its meetings via electronic means of communication. The sub-committee's decisions shall be drawn up in the minutes.

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

## **7. Procedures for Review and Preliminary Discussion of the Dissertation**

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

7.2. All sub-committee members must familiarize themselves with the submitted dissertation. Any member may suggest that a (personal or online) interview with the candidate should be held so as to confirm the candidate's professional qualification and for other purposes.

7.3. At the discretion of the sub-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 sub-committee is unable to attend the scheduled meeting. Sub-committee members may take part in meetings via electronic means of communication. At the discretion of the sub-committee's chairperson, the candidate's academic supervisor(s) (applicable if a dissertation is defended by a CS candidate) and other specialists may also be invited to attend the preliminary discussion of the candidates' dissertation.

7.4. The preliminary discussion may be held in Russian or English with no official translation to be provided.

7.5. Based on the results of a review and/or preliminary discussion, the sub-committee members shall formulate their comments with respect to the dissertation and its abstract. If the comments suggest that the dissertation contains substantial flaws, the sub-committee may decide to reject it or return it to the candidate for subsequent revision. At a later date, the sub-committee may hold another discussion of the revised dissertation, but this may only take place once. If the sub-committee establishes that a dissertation is ready for defence, it shall then set the date and language of the defence. If the dissertation is submitted as a separate coherent academic paper, it is advisable to set the language of the defence as the language of the dissertation. The full text of the dissertation and its abstract shall be published on HSE University's corporate website (portal). No modifications to the dissertation and its abstract shall be permitted after its publication.

7.6. Once a positive decision on the dissertation defence has been made, each sub-committee member must provide a personal written reference in Russian or English no later than 7 (seven) business days to the defence date. 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 sub-committee's member (the patronymic name is indicated, if any), his/her email, the name of the institution where he/she is employed and his/her position must also be stated in the reference.

The sub-committee's members may introduce changes to a reference within 7 (seven) after the dissertation's defence.

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

7.8. No official opponents shall be assigned for the dissertation defence. An involved host organization does not need to provide a reference either. All references to the dissertation and its abstract, except for those submitted by sub-committee members, are optional. Additional references may be forwarded to the dissertation committee and they shall be attached to the candidate's certification file (unless such references are in violation of academic ethical standards).

7.9. The dissertation, its abstract in 2 (two) languages (Russian and English), shall be published on HSE University's corporate website (portal) no later than 2 months to the defence date. Following the publication date, no modifications to the text of the dissertation and its abstract are permitted.

## **8. Procedure for Dissertation Defence**

8.1. Within 3 (three) months from the date when the positive decision regarding the defence of the dissertation was made, the relevant dissertation sub-committee (backed by the dissertation committee in terms of arrangements put in place for the relevant meeting to take place) shall hold a dissertation defence. This timeframe does not include the summer vacation period (July-August).

8.2. Dissertation defence shall be held at an open (public) meeting of the dissertation sub-committee. Sub-committee members may take part in this meeting either personally or through electronic means of communication (this applies primarily to external members). A dissertation defence meeting shall be deemed duly constituted if at least 4 (four) members of the dissertation sub-committee are in attendance. If a sub-committee member is not present at the meeting, the full text of his/her reference should still be read aloud. It is advisable that the Chairperson of the sub-committee should attend the meeting.

8.3. It is advisable that sub-committee members who provided negative feedback with respect to the dissertation should attend the defence. A dissertation defence may be postponed for up to 3 (three) months if such sub-committee members are not able to attend on the initial date and submit a relevant request. This timeframe does not include the summer vacation period (July-August).

8.4. A CS/DS candidate must attend the dissertation defence in person.

8.5. At the sub-committee's discretion, the defence may be held in one or in two languages (Russian and/or English). No official interpretation shall be provided.

8.6. The entire defence process shall be audio-recorded.

8.7. The defence shall be organized as an academic discussion, grounding in exacting professional and ethical standards.

8.8. The sub-committee's chairperson shall preside over the dissertation defence meeting. In case the chairperson is unable to attend the meeting, another sub-committee member may preside at the dissertation defence, as per the decision of the dissertation committee's chairperson.

8.9. It is advisable that the defence discussion is organized as follows:

The presiding sub-committee member shall announce that the dissertation is to be defended, then he/she shall give the full name of the candidate and the dissertation topic, present all members of the dissertation sub-committee, and deliver a report as to whether or not the documents submitted by the candidate are in line with the established requirements.

The candidate shall present the essential points and key concepts of his/her dissertation. Oral or written questions are then posed to the candidate. The presiding sub-committee member shall establish the order, whereby the candidate should address these questions.

The floor is then given to the candidate's academic supervisor(s) or academic advisor(s), who, in turn, are entitled to waive their right to present their remarks on the dissertation. The dissertation sub-committee members shall then give feedback on the dissertation. A reference submitted by the member who was unable to attend the meeting shall be read aloud. Any negative references shall be presented in full just like the positive ones.

Then, the candidate shall have an opportunity to provide his/her feedback regarding the remarks and comments presented by the sub-committee members in their presentations and references.

All persons present at the dissertation defence may take part in the subsequent discussion. Upon completion of the discussion, the candidate shall present his/her closing remarks.

8.10. Technical breaks are permitted during dissertation sub-committee meetings. Breaks shall be announced by the presiding sub-committee member.

8.11. Upon completion of the dissertation defence, the dissertation sub-committee shall hold a secret ballot to decide whether or not an academic degree may be awarded to the candidate. The secret ballot shall be held via the Mentimeter.com online system or a similar tool. In turn, the sub-committee's clerk shall distribute electronic addresses and voting codes among the sub-committee members present at the meeting. Each sub-committee member must personally take part in the ballot. Once voting is completed, the clerk shall display the results on the screen. If a sub-committee member has failed to take part in the ballot, his/her vote will be considered void.

8.12. A positive decision regarding the conferment of a CS/DS degree to the candidate shall be made if more than half of all sub-committee members who took part in the ballot opted to support this decision.

8.13. If 4 (four) sub-committee members take part in a dissertation defence and there is a tie after the secret ballot, a final decision shall be made in view of the reference submitted by the sub-committee member who was unable to attend.

8.14. The sub-committee's final decision shall be announced to the candidate by the presiding sub-committee member. This thereby concludes the dissertation defence meeting.

8.15. Within 3 (three) business days following the defence, the dissertation committee's clerk shall prepare the meeting minutes containing the final decision and ballot results, which are then signed by the dissertation sub-committee's chairperson. Within 3 (three) business days thereafter, the sub-committee's decision shall be published on HSE University's corporate website (portal). A general statement on the dissertation shall not be provided.

The references given by the sub-committee's members shall be also posted on HSE University's corporate website (portal) within 10 (ten) business days from the defence date. Published references shall not be in violation of the academic ethical standards.

8.16. A candidate may withdraw his/her dissertation at any stage of the review process, preliminary discussion, or at any stage of the defence process before the commencement of the secret ballot as to the issue of conferment of an academic degree. To withdraw a dissertation, a candidate must submit a written request addressed to the chairperson of the respective dissertation committee. In such cases, a revised dissertation may be re-submitted once at a later date, but not earlier than 1 (one) year following the date when the decision to withdraw the dissertation was enacted by the dissertation committee. This rule does not apply to cases when a dissertation was withdrawn due to the use of borrowed materials and



results without proper references (plagiarism), forged data or research results, and/or provision of inaccurate or false information with regard to candidate's publications containing key dissertation-related research outcomes. In such cases, a dissertation shall be withdrawn following the respective decision of the dissertation committee, and a candidate shall not be entitled to re-submit his/her dissertation. Such dissertations shall be published and made available on HSE University's corporate website (portal) for 10 (ten) years following the date when the respective decision was made.

## **9. Compiling a Candidate's Certification File**

9.1 The dissertation committee's clerk shall compile a candidate's certification file, which shall include the following items:

- a) the dissertation sub-committee's meeting minutes;
- b) the dissertation committee's meeting minutes or extracts therefrom which must contain the ballot results and the final decision as to whether or not a CS/DS degree shall be awarded;
- c) references provided by all dissertation sub-committee members, as well as other references, including those of the academic supervisor(s) or academic advisor(s) (if applicable);
- d) abstract of the dissertation in Russian and English (in hard copy and electronic media) ;
- e) full text of the dissertation or copies of the candidate's academic articles (on electronic media);
- f) announcement about the dissertation defence with the date of its publishing on HSE University's corporate website (portal) and on the website of the VAK RF;
- g) information about the date when the full text of the dissertation was published on HSE University's corporate website (portal) and the link to it;
- h) a duly certified copy of a degree certificate/diploma (Specialist/Master's degree certificate, a document confirming the completion of a doctoral programme (if available), a degree certificate issued outside of the Russian Federation);
- i) a duly certified copy of a Candidate of Sciences/PhD degree certificate issued outside of the Russian Federation (if available);

k) a document confirming the passing of the qualification exam in a specific academic field (not applicable to candidates who have completed a doctoral programme in the same field as their dissertation topic);

l) a positive statement provided by the organization which hosted the dissertation or where the candidate was assigned;

m) an audio file of the dissertation defence (in a digital machine-readable format);

n) details of the candidate's academic supervisor(s) (academic advisor(s));

o) details of the dissertation sub-committee's members who provided references with respect to the dissertation;

p) documents confirming that the dissertation's copy was submitted to the Russian State Library and body for scientific and technical information of the federal executive body in the field of scientific, technical and innovative activities, established by the Government of the Russian Federation;

q) other items.

9.2. Requirements for compiling and storing the candidate's certification file are set forth by HSE University's bylaws.

## **10. Procedures for Appealing Decisions Made by the Dissertation Sub-Committee**

10.1. Should a dissertation sub-committee establish that an academic degree cannot be awarded to a given candidate, he/she may file an appeal with the dissertation committee against this decision within 1 (one) month after the date when the decision was made.

10.2. An appeal must include:

- general information about the sub-committee's decision, with which the candidate disagrees;
- provisions of these Regulations, which may have been violated by the sub-committee members during the preliminary discussion and dissertation defence;
- signature of the candidate filing the appeal.

10.3. Appeals containing foul language and disparaging remarks shall not be considered. In such cases, within 30 (thirty) days from the date when such an appeal was received, the candidate will be informed by e-mail that his/her appeal

shall not be considered. Reasons as to why the appeal has been rejected shall be explained in the e-mail.

10.4. Once an appeal is received, the relevant dissertation committee shall suspend the dissertation review process until the date when a final decision on the appeal is made.

10.5. The dissertation committee shall review an appeal within 3 (three) months from the date of its receipt (this timeframe does not include the summer vacation period – July-August which is excluded from the timeframe for the appeal review).

10.6. The dissertation committee may request that the relevant dissertation sub-committee provide additional information on the preliminary discussion and defence of the dissertation, which is necessary to review the appeal and make a respective decision.

10.7. At the discretion of the Chairperson of the dissertation committee, a CS/DS candidate who filed an appeal may be invited to attend the dissertation committee meeting at least 7 (seven) days prior to such a meeting. If the candidate is unable to attend the meeting, his/her appeal shall be considered in his/her absence.

10.8. Upon completion of this meeting, the dissertation committee shall establish whether the appeal should be allowed or dismissed.

10.9. Should a dissertation committee decide that the appeal be allowed and the sub-committee's previous decision denying the candidate an academic degree be cancelled, the candidate may re-submit his/her dissertation for defence no later than within 6 (six) months following the date of the respective decision. In such cases, some or all members of the dissertation sub-committee may be replaced.

10.10. Within 3 (three) months from the date when an appeal was received, a scanned copy of the final decision with respect to such appeal, signed by the chairperson of the dissertation committee, shall be sent to the candidate who filed the appeal.

10.11. A candidate is entitled to file only 1 (one) appeal.

## **11. Procedures for Awarding Academic Degrees and Issuing Degree Certificates**

11.1. The final decision on the conferment of a Candidate of Sciences/Doctor of Sciences degree and on the issue of a Doctor of Sciences or a

Candidate of Sciences degree certificate (DS HSE or PhD HSE, respectively) shall be made by the dissertation committee in the relevant academic field based on the positive decision of the relevant sub-committee within 3 (three) months from the date of defence. This timeframe does not include the summer vacation period.

11.2. The dissertation committee shall confirm whether or not a dissertation was processed in line with the established procedure and approve the minutes on the dissertation defence.

11.3. If the dissertation committee finds that the dissertation processing procedure violates the procedures established herein, it may decide that an academic degree shall not be awarded to the given candidate. The dissertation will be then reviewed at a later date. Some or all members of the sub-committee may be replaced for subsequent defence.

11.4. Upon the recommendation of the dissertation sub-committee, the dissertation committee may award an academic degree with honours (cum laude).

11.5. If a negative decision with respect to a given dissertation is made, it shall be revised and then re-submitted at a later date but only once and not earlier than 1 (one) year following the date when a respective decision was made. This rule does not apply to cases when a dissertation has been withdrawn due to the use of borrowed materials and presentation of results without proper references (plagiarism), forged data and/or research results, and/or provision of inaccurate or false information with respect to candidate's publications containing key dissertation-related research results. In such cases, the given candidate shall not be entitled to re-submit the dissertation.

11.6. A diploma confirming the academic degree (hereinafter, the "diploma") shall bear the signatures of the HSE Rector and the chairperson of the relevant dissertation committee.

11.7. Diploma templates for Candidate of Sciences and Doctor of Sciences degrees are approved by the HSE University's Academic Council, specifications and relevant procedures for their preparation and issuance shall be drawn up in the University's bylaws.

11.8. A diploma must include the following information: the dissertation topic, the details of all dissertation sub-committee members who made the decision to award the academic degree to the candidate (full name and academic degree) and other information, which must be in line with Directive No. 1078 of the Ministry of Science and Education of the Russian Federation, dated August 19, 2016, "On Information, which Must Appear in Degree Certificates Awarded As

Per p. 3.1 Article 4 of the Federal Law No. 127-FZ, dated August 23, 1996, ‘On Science and State Scientific and Technical Policy’”.

## **12. Publication of a Candidate’s Certification File**

12.1. Within 3 (three) business days after a decision to accept the dissertation for review was made by the relevant dissertation committee, a special webpage related to the information about the candidate’s dissertation must be created on HSE University’s website (portal). All materials related to the candidate’s certification file shall be published on this webpage as per the timeline established herein and in the following order:

- the dissertation committee’s decision to accept the dissertation for review (within 5 (five) business days after such a decision was made);
- the dissertation committee’s decision to accept the dissertation for defence (within 5 (five) business days after such a decision was made);
- the date of the dissertation defence (within 5 (five) business days after such a decision was made);
- information about the dissertation (within 3 (three) business days after the dissertation committee decided to accept the dissertation for review);
- abstract and the dissertation (no later than 2 (two) months before the defence date);
- research articles or links to such articles, if the editorial policy of the respective magazines restricts access to such publications made in them (no later than 2 (two) months before the defence date);
- details about a candidate’s academic supervisor and his/her reference (no later than 2 (two) months before the defence date);
- details about the sub-committee’s composition and the name of its chairperson (no later than 7 (seven) business days after the dissertation committee establishes a sub-committee);
- references of the sub-committee’s members (within 10 (ten) business days after the defence);
- all obtained external references (if they are not in violation of academic ethical standards) (on the defence day);
- details about the defence outcomes (within 3 (three) business days after a decision was made).

No further modifications of this webpage, except for corrections of technical errors, are allowed.

12.2. As per Federal Law of the Russian Federation No. 77-FZ “On Mandatory Copy of Documents”, dated December 29, 1994 (as revised on July 3, 2016, Section 10 p. 3.1), within 30 (thirty) days after the dissertation defence and conferment of an academic degree, a mandatory digital copy of the dissertation, certified by HSE University’s qualified digital signature, must be delivered to the Russian State Library and body for scientific and technical information of the federal executive body in the field of scientific, technical and innovative activities, established by the Government of the Russian Federation.

12.3. A candidate’s certification file materials may be published on the website of the VAK RF.

### **13. Procedures for Reviewing Dissertations Submitted by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation for Additional Review**

13.1. If a dissertation is submitted to HSE University by the Ministry of Education and Science, the relevant dissertation committee must act in accordance with the procedures for the dissertation review and defence established herein.

13.2. A dissertation submitted for additional review along with the candidate’s certification file shall be reviewed within 2 (two) months from the date of its submission.

13.3. The relevant dissertation committee shall set up a dissertation commission consisting of at least 3 (three) members of the dissertation committee, for the purpose of reviewing the candidate’s dissertation and certification file.

13.4. The dissertation committee may choose to also set up a dissertation sub-committee and hold another defence.

13.5. The dissertation committee may provide its negative opinion with respect to a given dissertation based on the review conducted by the dissertation commission and without setting up a dissertation sub-committee and without holding a repeat dissertation defence.

13.6. The dissertation committee may provide its positive opinion, provided that a repeat dissertation defence was held.

### **14. Processing Appeals Submitted in Relation to Decisions Made by the Dissertation Committee**

14.1. If the dissertation committee receives an appeal with respect to its decision on the conferment of an academic degree (the full text of the appeal must be attached), the committee members shall set up a commission, which shall review the necessary materials and prepare a draft statement on the results of the appeal review (hereafter, the “appeals commission”).

14.2. The author(-s) of an appeal, the candidate seeking an academic degree and other persons who are directly connected to the appeal in question must be present at the meeting of the dissertation committee. It is advisable that sub-committee members should also take part in the meeting. The dissertation committee shall inform the specified persons about the meeting not later than 15 (fifteen) days prior to the day when it takes place. A meeting announcement must be published on HSE University’s website (portal) at the same time when the aforementioned persons are being informed.

14.3. The dissertation committee may decide to hold the meeting in the absence of the author(s) of an appeal, the candidate seeking an academic degree and other persons directly connected to the appeal, if these persons did not show up for the meeting, requested that the session be held in their absence, or if it was impossible to inform them about the meeting.

14.4. At the meeting of the dissertation committee, the presiding member shall announce that an appeal is going to be reviewed and pass the floor to the academic secretary so that he/she can present the relevant document. The discussion shall open with a speech delivered by a member of the appeals commission. All persons present at the dissertation committee meeting may take part in the subsequent discussion. The meeting shall be concluded with the final remarks of the candidate seeking an academic degree (if he/she is present at the meeting).

14.5. Upon completion of the discussion, the dissertation committee shall prepare a statement on the results of the appeal review, which shall be established by a simple majority open vote among the committee members present at the meeting.

14.6. Information on the appeal and the results of its review shall be published on HSE University’s website (portal).

## **15. Procedure for Withdrawing and Reinstating Academic Degrees**

15.1. The dissertation committee is entitled to invalidate the results of dissertation defence and decide to withdraw an academic degree. Academic

degrees may be withdrawn if 1 (one) of the following instances has been uncovered: borrowed material(s) or specific results without proper references to its sources (i.e., plagiarism), which calls into question the authorship of a dissertation; forged data and research results; inaccurate or false information about a candidate's published academic papers, which feature key dissertation-related research results. Such cases are not limited by any expiry date.

15.2. Academic degrees, which have been awarded by a dissertation committee in violation of the aforementioned criteria, may be withdrawn upon the decision of the same dissertation committee.

15.3. A request to withdraw an academic degree, addressed to the chairperson of the given dissertation committee, may be submitted by an individual or a legal entity in written or electronic form provided that a digital signature is used, within 10 (ten) years from the date when a positive decision on the conferment of an academic degree was made by the relevant dissertation committee.

15.4. A request to withdraw an academic degree must include:

- a) information on the dissertation committee, which reached the decision to award the academic degree in question to the candidate;
- b) full name of the individual (with a patronymic, if any), who is submitting a request to withdraw an academic degree bearing his/her signature, or name and address of the legal entity, which is submitting a request to withdraw an academic degree, signed by the head of the relevant legal entity, telephone number(-s), e-mail address(-es) for updates on the status and results of a review of a request to withdraw the given academic degree;
- c) information on the decision of the dissertation committee under appeal (i.e., date when the respective decision was made, the full name of the candidate (with a patronymic, if any) who was awarded the academic degree based on this decision);
- d) arguments that prompted an individual or a legal entity, which is submitting a request to withdraw an academic degree, to disagree with the decision reached by the dissertation committee (documents in support of the proposed arguments must be attached).

15.5. No later than within 3 (three) months from the day when the request was received, the relevant dissertation committee shall provide its authors by e-mail with the statement on the outcomes of the review of the request to withdraw an academic degree.



15.6. When a relevant dissertation committee receives a request to withdraw an academic degree, it shall establish whether or not the request is substantiated and may be accepted for further consideration.

15.7. A request to withdraw an academic degree shall not be accepted in the following cases:

a) the dissertation committee had already reached a decision regarding another request to withdraw the academic degree, which had been submitted earlier in regard to the same subject;

b) the request to withdraw academic degree does not contain arguments that prompted an individual or legal entity, submitting the request to withdraw an academic degree, to disagree with the decision made by the dissertation committee, or documents in support of such arguments;

c) the request to withdraw an academic degree does not contain the full name of the individual (with a patronymic, if any), who is submitting the request, his/her signature, e-mail address, or the name and address of a legal entity, submitting the request, signed by the head of this legal entity (or his/her deputy), telephone number(-s), e-mail address, and the seal of the legal entity;

d) the text of the request to withdraw an academic degree is illegible;

e) a request to withdraw an academic degree contains foul language and disparaging remarks.

15.8. Upon the receipt of a request to withdraw an academic degree, the relevant dissertation committee shall set up a commission which will include dissertation committee members. This commission will consider all necessary information and prepare a draft statement of the dissertation committee on the results of the review of a request to withdraw an academic degree (hereinafter, “commission on withdrawal of academic degrees”).

15.9. A meeting of the dissertation committee shall be held (if possible) in the presence of the individual or the legal entity, which has submitted a request to withdraw an academic degree, the person against whom the request was filed, and other individuals, who are directly connected with the issues raised by the request to withdraw the academic degree. It is advisable that representatives of the dissertation sub-committee also attend the meeting. The dissertation committee shall inform all aforementioned persons about the meeting no later than 15 (fifteen) days before its scheduled date. A meeting announcement shall be published on HSE University’s website (portal), while the aforementioned persons are also being notified.

15.10. A dissertation committee may decide to hold a meeting in the absence of the individual or legal entity, which has submitted a request to withdraw an academic degree, the person against whom the request was filed, or other individuals who are directly connected to the issues raised by the request to withdraw the degree, in case these persons failed to show up, submitted a request to hold a meeting in their absence, or if it was impossible to inform them properly.

15.11. At the dissertation committee meeting, the chairperson shall announce that a request to withdraw an academic degree will be reviewed and then pass the floor to the academic secretary, who shall present the relevant materials. One of the members of the commission on withdrawal of academic degrees shall open the subsequent discussion. After this, all persons at the meeting may take part in the discussion. At the end of the discussion, the holder of the academic degree under review shall present his/her closing remarks (if he/she is present at the dissertation committee meeting).

15.12. Upon completion of the discussion, the dissertation committee shall prepare a statement on the results of the request review based on the outcomes of an open simple majority vote among the committee members present at the meeting.

15.13. The dissertation committee shall reach one of the following decisions:

- to withdraw the academic degree;
- to reject the withdrawal of the academic degree.

15.14. A full text of the request to withdraw an academic degree and a statement from the relevant dissertation committee shall be published on HSE University's website (portal) within 10 (ten) days after the decision was made. These documents shall be accompanied by details of the academic supervisors (academic advisors) of the person holding the academic degree, in regard to which a relevant decision was made by the dissertation committee, as well as sub-committee members who submitted positive references in regard to conferment of the given academic degree.

15.15. Subsequent requests on this subject shall not be considered by the dissertation committee unless additional arguments supported by relevant documents are presented.

15.16. An academic degree, which has been withdrawn, may be reinstated if there are sufficient grounds to do so. The reinstatement of academic degrees shall follow the procedure that is in place for the withdrawal of academic degrees.

## **16. Procedure for Dissertation Defence for Persons with Limited Mobility and Disabilities**

16.1. For persons with disabilities, special conditions for the dissertation defence shall be ensured. The defence shall be organized with due consideration for his/her state of health and psychophysical development. Special conditions foresee the utilization of special technical means, provision of services by an assistant providing required technical help to the candidate, access to the HSE University's campus and other conditions.

16.2. When the dissertation defence is underway, the following requirements shall be met for candidates with disabilities, depending on their individual characteristics:

a) for blind and visually-impaired persons:

- materials of a certification file, as well as references, shall be read aloud by an assistant (if appropriate);

b) for deaf persons or persons with hearing impairments:

- provision of sound-amplifying equipment and hearing aids;

c) for blind persons with hearing impairments:

- tactile sign language services may be provided;

d) for persons with serious speech disorders, for the deaf, or hearing-impaired persons:

- the candidate's speech, as well as questions and answers to the questions, shall be presented in written form.

16.3. The aforementioned conditions are ensured for a candidate on the basis of a request for the provision of respective special conditions.

## **17. Procedure for Transition to Independent Awarding of Academic Degrees at HSE University**

17.1. The procedure for awarding academic degrees at HSE University, as specified in these Regulations, came into effect as of February 1, 2018. At this point, all existing dissertation committees, which award Candidate of Sciences or Doctor of Sciences academic degrees, shall be eliminated. A transitional period is stipulated so as to ensure smooth and efficient progression to the new procedure. During this period, new dissertation committees will be established and they shall prepare academic field profiles, requirements for dissertations, publications and

candidates' professional qualifications, as well as build a pool of internal and external experts who can be invited to take part in the work of dissertation sub-committees. Therefore, new dissertation committees shall not accept dissertations for defence until February 1, 2018. Until this point, existing dissertation committees will continue their activities in accordance with the requirements stipulated by the VAK RF.

17.2. All existing dissertation committees, working in accordance with the VAK RF requirements, shall be dissolved as of January 31, 2018. New dissertation committees will start accepting dissertations for defence on February 1, 2018.

17.3. For candidates who have successfully completed one of the HSE University's doctoral programmes, a transitional period with respect to the requirements for the publication of dissertation research results shall be introduced. These requirements shall be the same as those established by the VAK RF until December 31, 2018, while publications made in journals that have been included in the blacklist of journals (<https://scientometrics.hse.ru/blacklist>) will not be considered.

To the Chairperson of the HSE University's Dissertation Committee

in \_\_\_\_\_  
(academic field)

from \_\_\_\_\_  
(full name, with a patronymic, if any)

registered at the following address \_\_\_\_\_

residing at \_\_\_\_\_

passport \_\_\_\_\_ issued \_\_\_\_\_  
(serial number) (date and authority)

e-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

phone \_\_\_\_\_

**Request**

I hereby request to accept my dissertation titled:

“ \_\_\_\_\_ ”  
(topic of the dissertation)

for review and defence with respect to the possible conferment of a Candidate of Sciences  
(Doctor of Sciences) degree in \_\_\_\_\_  
(academic field)

My dissertation was prepared at \_\_\_\_\_  
(full name of the organization)

My Academic Supervisor (Academic Advisor) (if any): \_\_\_\_\_  
(the full name and academic degree)

The defence shall be held for the first (second) time.

I hereby give my consent to have my personal details included in the certification file and for their subsequent processing. I hereby attest that all data and results submitted for the defence are original and authentic, and have been obtained independently on my part (with the exception of instances expressly stated otherwise in my dissertation).

The consent shall be valid for the term of \_\_\_\_\_ years from the day when it was submitted.

Date, signature