

FAQ INTERNATIONAL JOINT SUPERVISION OF DOCTORAL STUDIES ‘OUTGOING’***Procedure for EPHE-PSL students***

International joint supervision of doctoral studies is a scheme that promotes the mobility of doctoral students by developing scientific cooperation between French and foreign research teams.

Any French higher education institution authorised to award the national doctoral degree may enter into an agreement with a foreign higher education institution with the same prerogatives in its country to organise an international joint supervision of doctoral studies for the joint supervision of a doctoral student.

Students in joint supervision programmes carry out their work under the supervision of a thesis supervisor in each of the two countries concerned and obtain two doctoral degrees.

Each joint doctoral supervision programme is carried out within the framework of an individual agreement between the two institutions involved and the doctoral student, in accordance with the principle of reciprocity.

▼ Who to contact?

International Relations Department - dri@ephe.psl.eu

▼ What are the applicable texts for the French part?

- [Decree of 26 August 2022](#) amending the [Decree of 25 May 2016](#) establishing the national framework for training and the procedures leading to the award of the national doctoral degree.
- Internal regulations of Doctoral School 472 EPHE-PSL of 16 March 2017.

▼ What do you need to know before committing to an international joint doctoral supervision arrangement?

- Negotiations with the partner institution must begin during the first year of doctoral enrolment so that the joint supervision coincides with the entire duration of the thesis preparation. Joint supervision will only become effective after the joint supervision agreement has been signed and administrative enrolment has been completed at both partner institutions.

Some countries/institutions require a framework cooperation agreement to be signed before international joint PhD agreements can be put in place.

These procedures, which can take several months, must be anticipated.

- The international joint PhD agreement does not generally specify the practical and financial arrangements for the joint defence between the two partner institutions. The compatibility of the two systems must be verified in advance, particularly with regard to the appointment of preliminary examiners, preliminary reports, and the rules governing the composition of the examination board. In the event of incompatibility, the British party is authorised, on an exceptional basis, to derogate from certain rules under the authority of the director of the doctoral school.
- Some countries/institutions do not practise international joint supervision of doctoral studies.

▼ What are the main stages of international joint supervision of a thesis?

From the project to the signing of the agreement:

- It is up to the doctoral student to identify two thesis supervisors: one at EPHE-PSL and the other at a foreign university. In France, only lecturers and researchers with Habilitation à Diriger des Recherches (HDR) or Autorisation à Diriger une Thèse (ADT) accreditation may supervise a doctoral student.

Consult the [directory of EPHE-PSL teaching and research staff](#).

- The agreement with the partner institution is negotiated by the International Relations Department in consultation with the thesis supervisors.
- All parties involved validate and then sign the agreement (doctoral student, thesis supervisors, president or rector of the co-supervising universities, etc.).
- Once all signatures have been obtained, the joint supervision is established, subject to administrative registration at both institutions involved.

Registration and registration fees:

- Registration takes place simultaneously at both partner institutions and must be renewed each year.

EPHE-PSL doctoral students who wish to establish joint supervision with a foreign institution pay their annual registration fees either solely to EPHE-PSL or alternately to both institutions. The terms and conditions agreed upon must be included in the joint supervision agreement.

- At EPHE-PSL, candidates for joint supervision must register administratively in one of the three specialisations of Doctoral School 472 with the Directorate of Teaching and Student Life (DEVE).

Candidates registering primarily at EPHE-PSL (i.e., paying their registration fees to EPHE-PSL) must submit their application online via the ADUM platform within the deadlines set out in the [procedure](#) in force at the institution.

Their application will be reviewed by a committee at the beginning of the academic year.

Students must inform their doctoral supervisor at the DEVE, corresponding to their chosen specialisation, that they are applying for an international joint doctoral supervision programme.

Composition of the thesis jury:

- The jury may comprise between four and eight people (six on average). The EPHE-PSL Doctoral School 472 recommends a panel of at least five members for international joint supervision of theses.
- The panel must have a balanced proportion of members from each institution, appointed jointly by the contracting parties, and also include individuals from outside these institutions.

In France, pursuant to the [Decree of 26 August 2022](#) amending the [Decree of 25 May 2016](#) establishing the national framework for training and the procedures leading to the award of the national doctoral degree and the Internal Regulations of ED 472 EPHE-PSL, the composition of the jury must ensure a balanced representation of women and men.

- The EPHE-PSL requires the presence of thesis co-supervisors on the jury and in the deliberations. However, the EPHE-PSL thesis supervisor does not take part in the vote.

Awarding of the degree:

- The defence leads to the awarding of two degrees corresponding to each of the two countries at the end of doctoral studies: a doctorate from the French university and an equivalent degree from the foreign university.
- The degree specifies that the doctorate is awarded jointly with the partner institution.
- EPHE-PSL awards the degree of Doctor of the University of PSL prepared at EPHE.

▼ Is it necessary to stay at both institutions that have signed the joint supervision agreement?

Yes. The duration of the thesis preparation must be divided between the two institutions involved in the joint supervision, alternately in each of the two countries.

EPHE-PSL recommends a minimum stay of one semester (six months) to allow the doctoral student to integrate into their research team.

▼ How long does it take to prepare a joint doctoral thesis?

In France, the legal duration of doctoral preparation is set at 3 years and cannot exceed 6 years.

Abroad, it is generally 3 years. However, some countries allow for a longer period.

▼ In which language is the thesis written?

When the doctoral thesis is written in a language other than French, it must be accompanied by a substantial summary in French (150,000 characters, including spaces, or at least 10% of the total length of the thesis, according to the internal regulations of ED 472 of the EPHE-PSL).

▼ Are the procedures for submitting, reporting and reproducing the thesis carried out at a single institution?

No. They must comply with the regulations in force in France and in the partner country.

▼ Is the defence organised by a single institution?

Yes. The institution where the defence will take place is responsible for its material and logistical organisation.

However, authorisation for the defence must comply with the procedures and deadlines in force at both institutions.

Unless specifically agreed otherwise, each institution is responsible for financing the missions of the members of the defence jury it has appointed, in accordance with its usual practices.

▼ Are there two thesis defences?

No. The only thesis defence recognised by both institutions is a single, joint defence, which takes place at one of the two institutions.

Some countries may, however, organise a so-called ‘private’ defence or a presentation of the research results before the single joint defence itself, which is generally public.

▼ How can I finance my international joint supervision of a PhD?

International joint supervision of a PhD does not necessarily give rise to funding.

Some programmes and countries have adopted specific measures in favour of international joint supervision of theses, allowing for the financing of the thesis (doctoral contracts or equivalent, for which you must apply before the start of the joint supervision PhD) or for mobility assistance:

- [UFI](#) - Franco-Italian University (Vinci Programme chapters II & III);
- [UFA](#) - Franco-German University;
- [Grants from the Île-de-France Region](#) (joint supervision is a priority for this programme);
 - Grants from the French government and the [Campus France](#) Agency, etc.

▼ What is an international co-supervision of a PhD thesis?

International co-supervision of a PhD thesis is established when international joint supervision of a PhD is not possible.

It is subject to a single administrative registration and results in a single degree being awarded by the institution where the PhD student is registered.



▼ In summary

