

Appendix 1

Approved

By order № 54 of June 25, 2020

Of the Catholicos-Patriarch of All Georgia

## **Regulation**

**For the Doctoral Department and the Dissertation Council**

**Of the Non-Profit (Non-Commercial) Legal Entity – the Orthodox Theological  
Higher Educational Institution - Tbilisi Theological Academy and Seminary  
which functions under the aegis of the Autocephalous Apostolic Orthodox Church  
of Georgia**

Tbilisi

2020

## **Article 1. General Provisions**

- 1.1. The present regulation establishes the rules and conditions for teaching and awarding the academic degree of a Doctor of Theology at the third level of higher academic education - Doctoral studies, at the N(N) LP Orthodox Theological Higher Educational Institution - Tbilisi Theological Academy and Seminary, which functions under the aegis of the Autocephalous Apostolic Orthodox Church of Georgia, (hereinafter - TTAS);
- 1.2. The main goal of the doctoral programme is to revive theological science in Georgia, to prepare highly qualified academic, scientific and/or pedagogical staff for work in this field and to expand the potential of teaching and research at TTAS. The qualified staff should be able to demonstrate scientific achievements based on the infallible teachings of the Church, and, being fully in conformity with the ecclesiastical teaching, to critically analyze the accumulated scientific experience and to disseminate the obtained results through publications and/or by introducing them into the teaching process and practice;
- 1.3. A doctoral student is a person who, in accordance with this Regulation, is taking a course on the Doctorate programme;
- 1.4. Doctoral studies are conducted in the Georgian language in accordance with the educational programme of Doctorate which is approved by the relevant rules;
- 1.5. The TTAS Doctorate graduate is awarded the academic degree of a Doctor of Theology after having defended his/her doctoral dissertation;
- 1.6. The duration of the doctoral programme is a minimum of three and a maximum of five academic years. The course is free of charge;

- 1.7. The Regulation of the Doctoral Department and Dissertation Council of Tbilisi Theological Academy and Seminary is approved by the Catholicos-Patriarch of All Georgia upon its presentation to him by the TTAS Academic Council;
- 1.8. TTAS provides a doctoral student with the material resources (a computer, internet connection, the library, etc.) required for research work, and the proper scientific environment (opportunity to interact with highly qualified researchers).

## **Article 2. Development and Supervision of Doctoral Programmes**

- 2.1. The doctoral educational programme is developed by a supervisor approved by the Academic Council;
- 2.2. The doctoral programme is initially reviewed by the relevant department/departments.

The considered programme with the attached to it minutes is submitted to the TTAS Quality Assurance Service for conclusion. In case of a positive decision, the programme is submitted to the TTAS Academic Council for approval;

- 2.3. Doctoral programmes are conducted by:

- A) The TTAS professors,
- B) If there arises a necessary - invited specialists holding an academic degree of a Doctor or its equivalent degree in the field of Orthodox Theology or Religious Studies;
- C) By the decision of the Academic Council - other specialists with relevant qualifications.

2.4. To the position of the Head of the Doctoral programme may be appointed a person holding an academic degree of a Doctor or its equivalent in the field of Orthodox Theology or Religious Studies. They ought to have published at least five papers, written in the relevant or related to it fields, in peer-reviewed journals or other international publications during the previous five years.

### **Article 3. Components of the Doctoral Programme**

3.1. The doctoral programme includes teaching and research components. The research component consists of the performance of a dissertation topic and research colloquia;

3.2. The study component does not exceed sixty credits and aims at the development of the doctoral student's specialty and methodological skills, assists the doctoral student in the preparation of the dissertation topic and prepares him/her for future pedagogical and scientific activities.

3.3. The parts of the study component are:

A) Teaching methods,

B) Academic writing,

C) Research methods,

D) An Assistant Professor - The doctoral student is obliged to assist the academic staff and participate in the teaching process. The assistantship of a professor is determined according to the special instruction determined by the Faculty of Doctorate,

- E) The seminar of a Doctoral student - in accordance with the seminar instructions for a doctoral student, before defending the dissertation, he/she is obliged to present at least once, a theoretical report to the commission of the specialty approved by the relevant department/departments. The instruction for the seminar of the doctoral student is determined by the Faculty of Doctorate,
- F) Other educational activities (for example, practice and other special courses that include special or related to the dissertation topic subjects),
- G) Other optional lecture courses/activities;
- H) Taking of each of the subjects included in the study component concludes with an examination.

3.4. Out of the elements of the study components, compulsory for all the TTAS doctoral students are teaching methods, assistantship to a professor and a doctoral seminar. Academic writing and research methods are compulsory lecture courses for those who have not coped with the obligatory course and content required for the Doctorate, which are academic writing and research methods, at the preliminary level of study completed before the taking the programme of higher education (Master's Degree Course);

3.5. The structure of the content of the study component is determined by the doctoral programme. Study components are selected according to the specifics of the dissertation topic which is to be prepared within the framework of the programme;

3.6. The seminar of the study component includes a report on various topical issues of the relevant doctoral direction in the educational programme of Doctorate, on the current state of research which is done in any of the scientific

issues. The seminar paper of a doctoral student must not be a part of the dissertation;

3.7. The compulsory research component includes:

- A) A dissertation - writing of a scientific paper;
- B) Minimum two colloquia, which are part of the dissertation paper.

3.8. The Doctoral Faculty determines the instructions for the colloquium scheme, which include:

- A) Putting forth of a research problem, as well as its exposition in the scientific literature;
- B) A research project, including the general structure and methodology of the future dissertation;
- C) The results of the research and their analysis.

3.9. The doctoral student is obligated to make a presentation to the commission of the branch of the science at least once a year. Presentations are evaluated by the doctoral student's supervisor and the branch commission set up within the department;

3.10. The doctoral student is obligated to publish the results of the doctoral dissertation in the form of at least three publications in the scientific editions from the list approved by the Dissertation Council. The articles published in these editions are considered as scientific papers obligatory for obtaining an academic degree;

3.11. The doctoral student is obligated to participate in at least one scientific seminar and/or conference with the support of TTAS, where he/she will present the results of the dissertation.

#### **Article 4. Rules for the Enrollment in the Doctoral Studies**

4.1. Admission to the doctorate on the basis of the approved doctoral programme is announced within the timeframe determined by the order of the Rector;

4.2. The licence to study for the doctorate programme can be granted to a person who holds a Master's degree as minimum of all degrees, with the following conditions:

4.2.1. The applicant should hold a degree of Master of Arts in the fields: Theology, History of Religion, Research of Religions or Religious Studies;

4.2.2. A person holding a Master's degree in any field who has completed the first stage of higher education (Bachelor's degree) in the field of Theology, History of Religion, Research of Religions or Religious Studies, and has been awarded the relevant qualification;

4.2.3. The applicant should speak one of the Western European languages (English, German or French) at least, at B2 level, or Russian and/or Modern Greek at no less than B2 level and one of the Western European languages (English, German or French) at least, at A2 level. An internationally recognized certificate of foreign language proficiency, issued by a relevant licensed institution, should be attached to the application, submitted by the doctoral candidate. In other circumstances, the foreign language proficiency of the doctoral candidate is confirmed by the positive results of the foreign language examination organized by TTAS for admission to the doctoral programme.

4.3. The license to study for a doctorate can also be granted to a citizen of another country, an Orthodox by religion. He/she must hold a Master's degree, meet the minimum requirements put forth in paragraph 4.2 and have a certificate confirming the knowledge of the Georgian language of the relevant level. In other circumstances, the knowledge of the Georgian language of the doctoral candidate is confirmed by the positive results of the examination organized by TTAS for admission to the doctoral programme;

4.4. Exceptions to the prerequisite for admission to the doctoral programme, provided in paragraphs 4.2 and 4.3 of this Regulation, is established by a one-time Academic Council, for a person holding a Master's degree, if the education and his/her working/pedagogical/scientific experience provide preconditions for the continuation of studies on the Doctoral level.

4.5. The application for the enrollment in the doctoral programme must be accompanied by the following on behalf of the Rector:

A) Data on education and employment (CV);

B) A copy of the identity card;

C) A notarized copy of the diploma certifying the academic degree in the relevant field and the diploma attachment;

D) The title and substantiation of the research topic (further, the report prepared by the probable scientific supervisor on the actuality of the research topic is submitted to the Academic Council);

E) In case of their existence - depending on the direction of the research – published in hard copy;

F) The recommendation of the Spiritual Father;

G) Two photographs in 3/4 size, attached with a disk;

H) In case of their existence - an internationally recognized certificate of a foreign language proficiency, issued by an institution with a relevant license.

4.5.1 The submitted application is registered at the TTAS secretariate and is directed to the relevant department for a further response;

4.6. The Academic Council of TTAS has the right to request additional information in order to clarify the documents. Additional requirements may be provided by the decision of the Academic Council;

4.7. The prospective supervisor and doctoral candidate designated by the Head of the doctoral programme will discuss the title and the substantiation of the research topic submitted by the candidate. The prospective supervisor prepares a report on the actuality of the research topic, which is submitted to the Academic Council together with the application for the doctoral dissertation;

4.8. Based on the application submitted by the doctoral candidate and the attached to it documents, the TTAS Academic Council makes a decision on admitting the candidate to the examination, determined by TTAS, in order to obtain the status of a doctoral candidate;

4.9. In order to be admitted to the doctoral programme, the doctoral candidate is obligated to pass the examination/examinations determined by TTAS. The examination issues (programmes) are approved by the relevant departments of the relevant doctoral educational programme, upon the recommendation of the Head of the doctoral programme;

4.10. The decision to enroll doctoral students is made by the Academic Council of TTAS;

4.11. In case of a positive decision taken by the TTAS Academic Council on the enrollment of a doctoral candidate, the TTAS Rector issues an order;

4.12. A person enrolled in the TTAS doctoral programme is the TTAS doctoral student who a research supervisor is appointed for. The research supervisor is a scientist with relevant qualifications and research experience;

4.13. A tripartite agreement is concluded between TTAS, the Head of the Doctoral Programme and the doctoral student, which defines the obligations and rights of the parties.

#### **Article 5. An Individual Plan of the Doctoral Student**

5.1. The doctoral student's individual plan, which consists of the doctoral student's individual curriculum and the doctoral student's individual research plan, is established by the doctoral student's scientific supervisor together with the doctoral student. The individual plan is approved at the meeting of the relevant department, which is recorded in the minutes, signed by the Head of the department and the chairman. The Head and/or co-supervisor of the doctoral programme, the doctoral student's scientific supervisor and the doctoral student sign the doctoral student's individual curriculum and research plan;

5.2. The individual plan, the main points of which are: the purpose of the research, the approximate structure of the dissertation paper and the approximate schedule of the performance of the curriculum and research components, are considered within one month after the admittance of the doctoral student to the relevant department;

5.3. The name of the doctoral programme, the supervisor/co-supervisor of the doctoral programme, the scientific supervisor/co-supervisor of the doctoral student, the date of the enrollment in the doctoral programme, the number of the order of the enrollment in the doctoral programme and the title of the dissertation topic should be mentioned in the individual plan;

5.4. The title of the doctoral dissertation is allowed to be specified before the end of the fourth semester of the doctoral studies. The re-selection of the doctoral topic is also allowed in the same period;

5.5. At the request of the PhD student and the Head of the doctoral programme, the Dissertation Council discusses the issue of changing the topic of the doctoral dissertation and records the concluded decision in the minutes of the session;

5.6. The doctoral student's individual plan includes all the compulsory and additional measures specified in the approved doctoral programme and in this regulation that the doctoral student must perform in order to protect his/her doctoral dissertation;

5.7. The individual plan of the doctoral student is kept in the personal file of the doctoral student.

## **Article 6. The Scientific Supervisor of the Doctoral Student**

6.1. In accordance with the doctoral programme, the TTAS Dissertation Council appoints a supervisor for the PhD student and approves the doctoral dissertation topic. The doctoral student can participate in choosing the scientific supervisor;

6.2. The doctoral student's supervisor should be a TTAS professor or an invited specialist holding a PhD (or the equivalent to PhD) in Theology or in any

scientific branch related to the dissertation topic of the doctoral student. The supervisor should be a current researcher (scientist) and should have research experience in the field related to the topic of the doctoral dissertation, which should be evidenced by relevant publications in peer-reviewed scientific journals, published over the past 5 years;

6.3. The supervisor of the doctoral student may be a member of the Dissertation Council;

6.4. The supervisor of the doctoral student supervises the fulfillment of the doctoral student's individual plan;

6.5. In the circumstances of the supervisor's resignation for any reason, he/she must submit a substantiated application to the Head of the Doctoral programme, the Head of the Doctoral Department and the dissertation Council of TTAS;

6.6. In case of the supervisor's refusal to supervise the doctoral student's work, upon the recommendation of the Head of the Doctoral Department and by the decision of the Dissertation Council, term of study for the doctoral student may be extended;

6.7. An individual professor of TTAS can, simultaneously, be the supervisor of four doctoral students at the most, while the invited specialist can only supervise the work of three doctoral students;

6.8. According to the decision of the Dissertation Council, a doctoral student may be appointed two or more scientific supervisors and/or co-supervisors in the following case if the content of the dissertation topic, due to its interdisciplinary

nature, requires it. The qualification requirements, provided in paragraph 6.2 of this Article, applies to the co-supervisor.

## **Article 7. Termination of the Status to the Doctoral Student**

7.1. The issue of the termination of the status for a doctoral student may arise:

A) In accordance with the rules established by TTAS, in case of violation of academic ethics, including the confirmation of plagiarism and/or falsification of the data;

B) In the circumstances of the inability to achieve the learning outcomes provided by the educational programme and/or of allowing themselves actions incompatible with the status of a student, in accordance with the rules established by the legal acts of TTAS;

C) On the basis of a personal application;

D) Due to the failure in the fulfillment of the conditions stipulated in the agreement concluded between TTAS, the doctoral student and the scientific supervisor.

7.2. The order for the termination of the status for the doctoral student is issued by the Rector of TTAS which is based on the application of the scientific supervisor of the doctoral student and the Academic Council.

## **Article 8. The Dissertation Council**

8.1. The Dissertation Council is the body which awards the academic degree of Doctor of Theology;

8.2. The Dissertation Council is organized by the order of the Catholicos-Patriarch of All Georgia for every five years. Its objective is a public review of dissertations and awarding of a PhD in Theology;

8.3. The Dissertation Council consists of TTAS professors with academic degrees of PhD in Theology or an equivalent degree. Upon the recommendation of the TTAS Academic Council, persons with relevant educational qualifications, who have experience in working on Orthodox Theology and/or in the field related to it and have published scientific works in peer-reviewed scientific journals and databases, can be invited as members of the Dissertation Council.

8.4. The Chairman of the Dissertation Council of TTAS is the Catholicos-Patriarch of All Georgia, and the Co-Chairman of the Dissertation Council is the Rector of the Tbilisi Theological Academy and Seminary. The Academic Secretary is appointed for the term of the Council, with the blessing of the Catholicos-Patriarch of All Georgia. In the absence of the Chairman, his duties are performed by the Co-Chairman and in the absence of the Co-Chairman - by any other member of the Dissertation Council, with the blessing of the Catholicos-Patriarch of All Georgia;

8.5. The Dissertation Council of TTAS approves the topic of the dissertation and the scientific supervisor of the doctoral student;

8.6. The Dissertation Council determines the maximum volume of the dissertation, the approximate format and other technical data; it defines the standards and criteria for the evaluation of the dissertation, including the preliminary review;

8.7. Establishes relevant ethical norms for the process of public defense;

8.8. Based on the approved doctoral programmes, the Dissertation Council appoints an expert commission and evaluators (reviewers);

8.9. The Dissertation Council approves the list of scientific publications prepared by the branches (departments), which conduct doctoral programmes. The articles, published in these scientific publications, will be considered as scientific papers compulsory for obtaining an academic degree;

8.10. Establishes and approves the list of addressees whom the dissertation messenger should be sent to;

8.11. Determines the date of the defense of the dissertation;

8.12. Approves the dissertation commission and on the basis of its conclusion grants the academic degree of Doctor of Theology;

8.13. The Dissertation Council makes the decision at the meeting. The meeting is authorized if it is attended by more than 2/3 of the Council members. The decision is made if at least 2/3 of the attendees vote for it. The proceedings of the meeting are recorded in the minutes, which are signed by the Chairman of the Dissertation Council and the Secretary of the Dissertation Council;

8.14. Any decision of the Dissertation Council must be notified in written form to the doctoral student.

## **Article 9. The Dissertation**

9.1. In order to obtain the academic degree of a Doctor of Theology, the dissertation must be an profound study, carried out independently by the doctoral student and based on the unchanging law and doctrine of the Holy

Church, which will have a significant scientific and theological value. The dissertation should contain scientifically substantiated findings of a theoretical research that contribute to the development of the relevant field of Orthodox theology (if the doctoral student is involved in a research group, his/her contribution should be clearly displayed);

9.2. The dissertation must be written in Georgian. It should be accompanied by a short version of main provisions – a synopsis (abstract) in Georgian and in one of the European (English, German, French), Russian and/or Modern Greek languages;

9.3. The volume, format, the registration format and other data of the dissertation and its synopsis are determined by the "Doctoral Instruction" approved by the Dissertation Council.

#### **Article 10. A Preliminary Review of the Dissertation**

10.1. Upon the completion of the dissertation thesis by the doctoral student, the supervisor of the doctoral student submits to the relevant department a conclusion on the satisfactory outcome of the requirements for the dissertation, which is prepared according to the evaluation criteria pre-determined by the Doctoral Faculty and approved by the Dissertation Council. After the conclusion, the Head of the department, in agreement with the Head of the Doctoral programme, submits the dissertation thesis to the professor of the relevant field of research (in the circumstances of the absence of a specialist in the field of research, a specialist of the relevant field can be invited). In accordance with the evaluation criteria, defined by the Faculty of Doctorate and approved by the Dissertation Council, the dissertation thesis is reviewed beforehand within one month of its presentation to the Department;

10.2. A preliminary review of the dissertation thesis is conducted at the meeting of the relevant department by the Head of the department or the Head of the programme (a preliminary review of the dissertation is appointed even in case of a negative conclusion). As the conclusion of the review, the meeting makes a decision on submitting the thesis to the Dissertation Council or determining a further course for it. In this case, the dissertation thesis is returned to the doctoral student for consideration. The re-examination of the thesis is possible only after six months. The progress of the preliminary review and the decision made are recorded in the minutes, which are signed by the Head of the Department and the Secretary. An integral part of the minutes is the conclusions made by the professor of the relevant field of research problems and the supervisor of the doctoral student.

#### **Article 11. The Submission of the Dissertation Thesis**

11.1. After the determining of the relevance of submitting the dissertation thesis to the Dissertation Council, as a result of its preliminary review, the Head of the educational programme of Doctorate submits to the Academic Secretary of the Dissertation Council and the Quality Assurance Service of the institution:

- A) The dissertation thesis,
- B) Documentations displaying the doctoral student's performance of the components of study and research;
- C) Publications published and/or submitted for publication in accordance with the list of compulsory publications, related to the topic of the thesis;

D) The dissertation synopsis (abstract) in Georgian, in one of the European (English, German, French) and Russian and/or Modern Greek languages, according to the rules approved by the Dissertation Council;

E) The minutes of the preliminary review of the dissertation thesis at the chair meeting together with the conclusion of the scientific supervisor and the specialist assigned for the preliminary evaluation;

F) The application of the doctoral student submitted to the chairman (co-chairman) of the Dissertation Council, in which the department where the dissertation was performed should be indicated, as well as the doctoral educational programme, the topic of the dissertation and the scientific supervisor;

G) A list of scientific seminars and conferences on which the results of the dissertation were presented in written form.

11.2. The relevance of the doctoral student's documentation, certifying the completion of the study and research components, with the requirements of the approved doctoral programme and this regulation is determined by the TTAS Quality Assurance Service;

11.3. The Academic Secretary of the Dissertation Council Checks the correctness of the materials provided in paragraph 11.1 of this article and accepts it together with conclusion of the Quality Assurance Service before the defense of the dissertation thesis;

11.4. The dissertation thesis should be submitted in four copies with the attached electronic version.

## **Article 12. The Examination of the Dissertation Thesis**

12.1. The Rector of TTAS hands over the doctoral student's application to the Dissertation Council with the appropriate resolution. After the Chairman/Co-Chairman of the Dissertation Council and the Academic Secretary have reviewed the submitted materials and decided that these materials meet the requirements of the Regulation, the Chairman/Co-Chairman determines the date of the meeting of the Dissertation Council (no later than seven days). The time span (six months) from the submission of the dissertation thesis to the defense is calculated from the date of the meeting of the Dissertation Council;

12.2. The Chairman or Co-Chairman of the Dissertation Council, in agreement with the Head of the Doctoral Programme, determines the Expert Commission with at least two members: One of them can be a member of the Dissertation Council, and the other can be a professor at TTAS holding an academic degree of a Doctor in (Theology) or in a related field to the topic of the doctoral dissertation (in case of necessity, a person with the same qualifications can be invited). The expert commission is approved by the Dissertation Council;

12.3. Based on the provisions made by the Dissertation Council, the evaluation of the dissertation thesis, made by the Expert Commission according to the report of the expert on his/her evaluation and conclusion, must be submitted by the members of the commission within thirty calendar days after receiving the relevant materials. In case of the non-fulfillment of the work within the deadline due to unreasonable reasons, the Dissertation Council approves the other composition of the commission (the counting of the deadline will start anew);

12.4. The members of the expert commission present the conclusion individually. If the conclusion of one of the experts is positive and the opinion of

the other is negative, the Dissertation Council decides on the selection of the third expert. In case of a negative conclusion, the doctoral student has the right to submit an amended version of the dissertation within six months;

12.5. In case of a positive conclusion of the expert commission, the Chairman or co-Chairman of the Dissertation Council, in agreement with the Head of the doctoral programme, appoints two evaluators (reviewers) and submits them to the Dissertation Council for approval.

### **Article 13. Evaluators (Reviewers)**

13.1. An evaluator (reviewer) is a specialist holding an academic degree of a Doctor and/or its equivalent in the scientific field related to the topic of the doctoral dissertation and has published at least three works in the peer-reviewed scientific bases or journals in the aforementioned field. The reviewer cannot be a co-author of the works performed by the doctoral student or a person officially dependent on the doctoral student;

13.2. The reviewers are acquainted with the dissertation thesis, the published materials written it, and submit to the Dissertation Council the reviews prepared in accordance with the report form approved by the Dissertation Council. The reviews assess the actuality of the topic, the scientific level of the research, the thoroughness of the results obtained and the recommendation for admission to the defense of the dissertation, or its return for correction to the doctoral student, and/or refusal to defend it. The reviewers must submit their evaluation of the dissertation in written form to the Dissertation Council no later than 30 days after receiving the dissertation. If the reviewer fails to submit the review for

plausible reasons within the determined time-span, the Dissertation Council has the right to extend this period by fifteen days. In case of its expiration, a new evaluator should be appointed;

13.3. If both of the two approved evaluators evaluate the dissertation negatively, the dissertation will not be accepted for defense, and if one evaluates positively and the other evaluates negatively, the third evaluator is appointed by the Dissertation Council. In case of a negative conclusion, the doctoral student has the right to submit a revised version of the dissertation no later than one year;

13.4. If the dissertation was not permitted to be defended, by the decision of the Dissertation Council, the doctoral student is allowed to work on the dissertation additionally. In this case, by the decision of the Dissertation Council, the doctoral student may be additionally appointed a new supervisor/co-supervisor. The revised thesis is considered in the same way. If the revised thesis is still evaluated negatively, the dissertation will no longer be accepted for defense;

13.5. The Dissertation Council hands the conclusions of the reviewers over to the doctoral student, and in case of admission to the defense, also notifies him of the date of the defense. The doctoral student must be given at least one month to prepare for the defense;

13.6. The dissertation thesis must be defended by the doctoral student within six months from the submission of the dissertation, in accordance with the rules and regulations established by the Dissertation Council.

#### **Article 14. The Dissertation Commission**

14.1. In the circumstances when the reviewers give consent on the admission of the dissertation thesis to its defense, the chairman of the Dissertation Council permits a dissertation synopsis to be issued and sent to the addressees defined by the Regulation of the Dissertation Council;

14.2. The Chairman of the Dissertation Council, on the bases of consultations held beforehand with the Head of the programme, sets up a Dissertation Commission, composed of at least five members, which will be authorized to organize a public debate;

14.3. As members of the Dissertation Commission, specialists holding the academic degree of a Doctor in Theology or its equivalent degree in the field related to the dissertation topic should be selected. The commission may include specialists, invited from other educational or scientific institutions, holding a doctoral degree in a scientific field related to the dissertation topic. At least half of the members of the commission should be composed of those of the Dissertation Council. The members of the Dissertation Commission may not be the chairman (co-chairman) of the Dissertation Council, the Head of the Doctoral programme, the scientific supervisor of the doctoral student and the members of the Expert Commission (in case of necessity, a member of the Dissertation Commission can be one of the evaluators);

14.4. The Dissertation Commission is headed by a chairman elected from among the members by open ballot. The Secretary is also elected by open ballot. The progress of the Dissertation Commission is recorded in the minutes, which is signed by the chairperson and the secretary of the Dissertation Commission;

14.5. The Dissertation Commission makes a decision in a closed session. The session is authorized if it is attended by more than 2/3 of the commission members. The decision is valid if at least 2/3 of the attendees vote for it.

#### **Article 15. A Procedure for the Defense of the Dissertation**

15.1. The defense of the dissertation is a public debate between the doctoral student and the evaluators, the doctoral student and the members of the Dissertation Commission. The language of the debates is Georgian;

15.2. If one of the reviewers fails to attend the defense for a plausible reason, but his or her positive review is presented, the defense of the thesis is valid. In the circumstances of a negative review, the defense must be postponed;

15.3. Only one dissertation can be defended at one session of the Dissertation Commission.

15.4. The defense of the dissertation consists of the following stages:

- A) The Chairman and Secretary of the Dissertation Council a presentation of the information related to the doctoral student;
- B) The PhD student gives his report (no more than twenty minutes);
- C) The scientific supervisor of the doctoral student gives his Conclusion;
- D) The reviewers present their reviews to the public;
- E) A scientific discussion,
- F) A closed session of the Dissertation Commission is held to evaluate the dissertation;
- G) Based on the evaluation made by the Dissertation Commission, the Dissertation Council awards by open voting the degree of a Doctor

- H) The announcement of the evaluation of the dissertation thesis;
- I) The approval is recorded in the minutes, which is signed by the Chairman/Co-Chairman and the Secretary of the Dissertation.

#### Article 16. Evaluation system

16.1. The educational component of the educational programme is evaluated by the following system (evaluation is of 100 scores):

- A) A - excellent (summa cum laude) - 91-100 scores,
  - B) B - very good (magna cum laude) - 81-90 scores,
  - C) C - good (cum laude) - 71-80 scores,
  - D) D - average (bene) - 61-70 scores,
  - E) E - satisfactory (rite) - 51-60 scores,
  
  - F) FX - unsatisfactory (insufficenter) - 41-50 scores. A maximum score of 41-50 means that the student needs more work to pass the examination and is allowed to take once the additional one by working independently,
  - G) (F) Failed - a maximum score of 40 or less, which means that the work done by the student is not enough and he/she has to study the subject again.
- 16.1.1. In case of receiving FX in the educational programme component, the student will be assigned an additional examination no less than five days after the announcement of the results of the final examination. The number of scores obtained in the final assessment is not added to the scores obtained by the student at the additional examination. The scores obtained at the additional examination are final and are added to the final scores of the educational programme component. Taking into

account the scores obtained at the additional examination, in case of getting 0-50 points in the final grade of the educational component, the student will be given a grade of F-0.

16.2. The scientific-research component of the educational programme is evaluated according to the following system:

- A) Excellent (*summa cum laude*) - an excellent work,
- B) Very good (*magna cum laude*) - a result that exceeds the requirements in every way,
- C) Good (*cum laude*) - a result that exceeds the requirements;
- D) Medium (*bene*) - an intermediate level paper which meets the basic requirements;

E) Satisfactory (*rite*) - a result which, despite the shortcomings, still meets the requirements;

F) Unsatisfactory (*insufficienter*) - a paper of unsatisfactory level, which fails to meet the requirements due to significant deficiencies;

G) Completely unsatisfactory (*sub omni canone*) - a result which does not fully meet the requirements.

In case of receiving the assessment provided in sub-paragraphs "a" to "e", the doctoral student is awarded the academic degree of Doctor of Theology;

In case of receiving the assessment provided in sub-paragraph "f", the doctoral student is entitled to submit an altered dissertation within one year;

In case of receiving the assessment provided in sub-paragraph "g", the doctoral student loses the right to submit the same dissertation;

The decision is recorded in the minutes signed by the Chairman and the Secretary of the Dissertation Council.

## **Article 17. The Diploma Which Certifies the Academic Degree of a Doctor**

17.1. The academic degree of a Doctor of Theology is certified by a diploma issued within six months after the defense of the dissertation;

17.2. The diploma certifying the acquisition of the academic degree of a Doctor of Theology is issued after the dissertation is published in hard copy or electronically on the TTAS website;

17.3. The name of the doctoral student, the title of the Dissertation Council, the date of the defense, the title of the dissertation thesis and the awarded degree are stated in the diploma. The diploma is signed by the Chairman of the Dissertation Council and the Rector of Tbilisi Theological Academy and Seminary. The diploma is verified with the seal of the institution;

17.4. The diploma is issued with an appendix, which is filled in the Georgian and the English languages. A copy of the diploma and its appendix is kept in the archives of the Doctoral Department of Tbilisi Theological Academy and Seminary;

17.5. The form of the diploma certifying the academic degree of a Doctor is approved by the Rector of Tbilisi Theological Academy and Seminary in agreement with the National Center for Quality Development in Education.

## **Article 18. An Annulment of the Academic Degree of a Doctor**

18.1. In the circumstances if the violation of the norms of academic and research ethics is confirmed, on the decision of the Dissertation Council, the doctoral student may be deprived of the academic degree of a Doctor (the academic degree of a doctor will be annulled).

