

#### ****CO-TUTELLE DE TH****ÈSE

#### THESIS CO-SUPERVISION

#### ****COTUTELA DE TESIS****

**General information**

The model for joint supervision of a thesis (“co-tutelle de thèse”) was introduced as a result of an initiative of the French Government to create a procedure for the joint supervision of doctoral candidates between French universities and universities in other countries. Nowadays, arrangements using the “co-tutelle” model are established between various universities in European countries and elsewhere.

To stress its support for high-quality doctoral study programmes, Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice (UPJŠ) considers “co-tutelle de thèse” – thesis co-supervision – “cotutela de tesis” to be a useful opportunity to improve and reinforce the international dimension of doctoral studies. UPJŠ views thesis co-supervision as a prestigious form of university study that aims to promote scientific cooperation between Slovakia and other countries by encouraging mobility among doctoral students.

Doctoral students enrolled in “cotutela de tesis” receive support from two research and academic communities and discover different scientific approaches and fresh theoretical perspectives as they work with experts who broaden their scientific horizons. Thesis co-supervision encourages the doctoral students to reach beyond their familiar borders to both enhance their education and take part in a world-class research network. Moreover, they experience the rich social and cultural life of their home university and of a university in a different country. Graduates of this type of study not only gain a significant professional advantage based particularly on the comparison of subject-matter and methodology and on mastering expert communication in a foreign language, but they also improve their professional opportunities in the framework of international competition.

The key feature of “co-tutelle de thèse” – thesis co-supervision – “cotutela de tesis” is that doctoral students can carry out their doctoral courses and their research projects partly in the foreign institution and partly in UPJŠ under the co-supervision of two or more supervisors (one for each university involved). The doctoral student must fulfil the respective requirements for a doctorate at both universities. The thesis co-supervision should be established from the outset of the doctoral studies or at the earliest possible stage.

At Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice, it is possible to set up a “co-tutelle de thèse” with any foreign academic institution. Each proposal by UPJŠ or by a foreign higher education institution is considered on a case-by-case basis. Up to now, Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice has drawn up thesis co-tutoring agreements with the following universities:

*France:*

Université Paris Diderot – Paris 7

Université Pierre et Marie Curie – Paris 6

Université Paris Sud – Paris 11

*Germany:*

Der Johannes Gutenberg-Universität in Mainz

*Spain:*

Universidad de Autónoma de Madrid

Universidad de Jaén

Universidad de Zaragoza

*The Czech Republic:*

Ostravská univerzita v Ostravě

*The Netherlands:*

University of Utrecht

**Legal framework**

In the Slovak Republic the legal framework for co-tutoring agreements and defences is partly provided by Act no. 131/2002 (Collection of Laws) on Universities (Universities Act) and on the amendment of some laws and acts, in § 54 Doctoral Study Programme. A “co-tutelle de thèse” – thesis co-supervision – “cotutela de tesis” allows a doctoral student to earn a double doctoral degree within the stipulations of a co-tutoring agreement signed by two participating institutions. Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice and the foreign institution each award a doctoral degree. They acknowledge the mutual acceptance of the degrees and the fact that the degrees are awarded as a result of “co-tutelle de thèse” – thesis co-supervision – “cotutela de tesis” in both diploma supplements, quoting the data of the respective co-tutoring agreement.

A joint doctoral programme and a joint doctoral degree are governed by Act no. 131/2002 (Collection of Laws) on Universities (Universities Act) and on the amendment of some laws and acts, § 51 Study Programme and Study Plan and § 54a Joint Study Programmes.

**Co-tutoring agreement**

For each doctoral student undertaking thesis co-supervision, a specific co-tutoring agreement should be signed by Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice and the foreign institution. The co-tutoring agreement must be completed by thesis co-supervisors and the doctoral student. The co-tutoring agreement should be signed by the representatives of the two institutions (rectors, presidents, vice-rectors, deans, etc.), the co-supervisors, the doctoral student, the head of the doctoral school (if applicable), and the guarantor of the doctoral study programme at UPJŠ.

The co-tutoring agreement constitutes a legally binding contract between Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice and a foreign institution which has the right to bestow doctoral degrees. It should be executed in two originals in each language version. One signed original in each language version is returned to the Department of Legal Agenda of Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice and one to the foreign institution. Copies of each language version are archived in the International Relations Office and University Education Office of Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice. Copies are also passed to the guarantor of the doctoral study programme at UPJŠ, the head of doctoral school at foreign institution (if applicable), the co-supervisors, and the doctoral student.

Because foreign academic institutions do not proceed uniformly in concluding co-tutoring agreements, it is not possible to create a uniform sample agreement. Existing co-tutoring agreements are available at the International Relations Office of Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice. These documents may be used and amended to suit the respective circumstances of foreign universities. It is also possible to use a sample co-tutoring agreement supplied by the foreign university. The completed co-tutoring agreement must include, among other things, the following data:

* names and seats of the partner institutions
* name of the doctoral student
* names of the co-supervisors
* the thesis topic
* names of the doctoral study programmes and/or degrees
* minimum period spent at each institution
* the language in which the dissertation will be written
* the language in which the dissertation will be defended
* the language/s of the summary/ies (résumé)
* the place of the defence
* information on the composition of the thesis reviewers and defence committee

All involved in the preparation and completion of co-tutoring agreements must follow and respect the regulations of Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice and the foreign institution and legal frameworks for doctoral studies in both countries. In all cases, the completed co-tutoring agreement must be submitted to the Department of Legal Agenda of Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice for approval before it can be concluded.

**“Co-tutelle de thèse” – thesis co-supervision – “cotutela de tesis”**

Once the co-tutoring agreement is concluded and signed, the doctoral student has to enrol at both Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice and the foreign institution. The conditions of insurance coverage, social security and other aspect of student’s status at both institutions are settled during the enrolment process at both institutions. Throughout the course of thesis co-supervision, the student is registered as a regular student and is obliged to comply with the internal regulations and fulfil all requirements arising from study obligations at both institutions.

The doctoral student pays the normal registration fees only to one of the two institutions or in accordance with the co-tutoring agreement.

The research periods spent by the doctoral student at Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice and at the foreign institution may vary and depend on practical needs. The length of the periods is fixed jointly by agreement between the thesis co-supervisors and is specified in the co-tutoring agreement. The minimum period spent in each institution is three months. The doctoral students may use LLP/Erasmus and other available mobility or research funds to finance their stays at any of the two institutions.

**Dissertation and defence**

Dissertation – a single doctoral thesis, is defended in a single disputation (defence) carried out on one occasion at either Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice or at the foreign institution, respecting the conditions stated in the co-tutoring agreement, and formally recognized by both institutions. In addition, the doctoral student must provide oral or written summaries in the languages specified in the co-tutoring agreement.

The doctoral thesis reviewers and the defence committee should be organized by mutual agreement and comply with the internal regulations of both institutions. If not specified in the co-tutoring agreement, payment of expenses connected with the participation of thesis reviewers and defence committee members from both institutions and the participation of external members are subject to the rules of inter-university agreements.

The graduation ceremony of the “co-tutelle de thèse” – thesis co-supervision – “cotutela de tesis” graduates takes place at one or both institutions.

**Contact**

Universities, university departments, doctoral schools, supervisors and students interested in “co-tutelle de thèse” – thesis co-supervision – “cotutela de tesis” with Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice are invited to contact the International Relations Office:

Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice

International Relations Office

Šrobárova 2

041 80 Košice

Tel.:  +421 55 234 1159

Fax: +421 55 234 1679

E-mail: [zahrodd@upjs.sk](mailto:zahrodd@upjs.sk)