

<p>Descriptive note of the procedure for the submission of subjects and applications for the ED BS</p>
--

Document for the attention of project leaders and students, setting out:

1. The procedures for submitting a thesis subject and its validation
2. The procedures for evaluating applications (by competition or outside competition)

1. Proposal of a thesis topic

1.1. Prerequisites for project leader

A thesis project leader must hold an HDR (or equivalent, or exemption granted by the institution). They must belong to a research structure evaluated by the HCERES (UMR, UPR EA, etc.) and attached to the ED BS.

They may submit only one subject proposal per year with a view to obtaining an institutional doctoral contract (CDE). A second application may be made by the same applicant if it concerns another type of funding (CIFRE, association, etc.). The same applicant may be co-director of another CDE contract in the same year.

The applicant must comply with the conditions setting out the limits for the supervision of doctoral students. These limits set the ratio of doctoral student(s)/HDR at less than or equal to 3 (or 4, under the conditions of derogation defined in the internal regulations of the ED), assuming that the subject(s) is (are) assigned. A supervision, whether it is in direction or in co-direction, counts as 1. Thesis supervision ending before the end of the current calendar year is not counted, provided that a letter of commitment to defend before the end of the calendar year, signed by the thesis director, is provided. It is made clear that this commitment is based on trust, and that new registrations will be refused in case of abuse.

1.2. Submission of the thesis topic

Proposals for thesis subjects must be submitted on the Thèses en Bretagne Loire portal (<https://theses.doctorat-bretagneloire.fr/bs/theses-2024/++add++Thesis>) (by the project leaders. For reasons of confidentiality, the submission of CIFRE-type subjects on TEBL is not required. In this case, the subject and supervision forms must be sent by email to the ED.

1.3. Review of thesis topics

The thesis subjects and the supervision conditions are analysed by the ED management manager or the site managers, and the Site Selection Committees (CSS). The CSS are made up of three members of the ED BS research commission from each site (Angers et Nantes).

ED managers check the following points:

- The two sheets "subject" and "supervision" are well filled in.
- The ratio PhD student/HDR is below or equal to 3 (or 4 under conditions of derogation defined in the internal regulation of the ED)
- The thesis director appears in the list of HDRs of the ED BS.
- The presence of the proof of funding, if it is declared acquired

The CSS assesses the following points:

- The quality and adequacy of the publications of the thesis supervisor (if not, of the team) on the proposed subject. The publication activity of the subject holder with the doctoral students he/she has already supervised (Supervision form)
- The fate of the subject holder's and the team's former doctoral students. In particular, the professional future (fixed-term contract, permanent contract, adequacy with the level of study) after the end of the thesis is taken into account.
- The status of a possible mediation procedure in progress between the project leader and one (or more) doctoral student(s)

1.4. Posting of topics online

The online publication of the topic is made by the executive manager when all the criteria are met.

2. Applying for a doctoral degree

2.1. Application process

The student must apply for a doctorate on the Thèses en Bretagne Loire portal (<https://theses.doctorat-bretagneloire.fr/bs>) under the heading "Apply for a subject". The following documents are required:

- a detailed curriculum vitae outlining the student's academic career and research experience,
- a certificate of the ranking obtained in the 2nd year (semesters 9 and 10) signed by the Master's supervisor. In the absence of the final ranking, the ranking obtained in semester 9 (generally corresponding to the theoretical training) is accepted at this stage; in case of absence of ranking in the training, a certificate signed by the head of the training stipulating the absence of ranking and giving an opinion concerning the merit of the candidate must be provided. The final ranking replaces the provisional ranking as soon as it is known. If the student already has it, a copy of the national diploma of Master 2 or another diploma conferring the grade of Master at the end of a training course establishing his/her aptitude for research,
- a summary of the research work carried out during the 2nd year of the Master's programme and, if applicable, during the 1st year of the Master's programme; the total should not exceed one page (approximately 400 words)
- a letter stating the applicant's motivation for undertaking a thesis,
- a summary of the research project (the candidate must have contacted the project leader and obtained his/her authorisation to apply for the subject),
- letters of recommendation from teachers, internship supervisors (optional).

2.2. Admissibility of applications

The ED BS secretariat checks the administrative admissibility (decree of 25 May 2016 modified by decree of 26 August 2022) of these applications. The candidate is notified by an e-mail from the Director (or Deputy Director) of the ED BS in case of rejection of his/her application.

3. Application assessment procedures

Depending on the source of funding for the doctoral thesis, the evaluation of applications will be done outside the competition or via the ED competition.

- The non-competitive procedure concerns salaried candidates, CIFRE applications, funding from ANR-type contracts, associations or foundations, and co-supervised theses. It also concerns allocations co-financed with the Pays de la Loire region, such as allocations from the Ligue contre le Cancer/Région, INSERM/Région, etc.
- The ED competition concerns students who are candidates for a Contrat Doctoral d'Établissement (CDE). By extension, the competition is open to mixed funding involving a CDE/ARED component. A list of Doctoral Contracts is established for each site, in consultation with the funding institution.

3.1. Out-of-competition evaluation procedure

The candidate's funding must be justified, in accordance with article 7 of the doctoral school's internal regulations. Even when the funding has been obtained, the student must apply for the thesis subject proposed by the project leader (see § 1 and 2).

The CSS (see § 1.3) assesses the application files as requests are received during the year. The evaluation criteria taken into account by the CSS are:

- results obtained during the Master
- research experience
- skills in line with the chosen thesis subject
- validation of the application by the thesis director.

The CSS reserves the possibility of auditioning the candidates (on site) according to modalities equivalent to the ED competition oral. If a student has been accepted in session 2 of his master 2, this audition will be systematic.

When necessary, a confidentiality agreement may be signed by the members of the CSS (CIFRE funding for example).

After examining the file and possibly interviewing the candidate, the members of the CSS deliberate and formulate an opinion concerning the student's application which is transmitted to the ED Director. The authorisation for final registration is delivered by the Presidency of the University to which the student belongs, after recommendation of the Director of the ED.

3.2. Procedure via the ED competition

A. Selection of applications

The selection of application files for the audition for the ED's competition for the allocation of CDEs depends on the policy of the funding institution. Thus, depending on the sites, the directors of the research structure (units or EA) may be asked to propose application files, or the selection may involve the ED. In the latter case, the CSS, enriched by a site doctoral student representative who is a member of the ED Council (CSS+), evaluate the application files according to criteria identical to the non-competition procedure.

A subject leader can present only one candidate for the audition. The same candidate can only apply for one subject proposed to the competition.

B. Jury of the oral admission

To compose the admission juries, the ED invites the HDRs of the sites by a call for applications, an arbitration is then carried out by the ED Research Commission so that the representativeness of the research laboratories, the competences and the male/female parity are respected as much as possible.

The director and deputy directors of the ED moderate the hearings and ensure the neutrality of the procedure.

C. Practical details of the oral admission test

The admission oral takes place at each sites. It consists of a 25-minute interview between the candidate and the jury, during which they are asked:

- introduce themselves and their research internship work (Master 2) (3-4 min)
- present their thesis research project, develop their motivations and explain their conception of their future thesis work (5-6 min).

As the hearing will be held in closed session, thesis supervisors are not invited to this hearing. A video projector (presentation in pdf strongly recommended) is available. This presentation should not exceed 10 minutes and is followed by a 15-minute interview with the jury. Auditions may be conducted in English for foreign candidates. Candidates located abroad may be auditioned by videoconference. Technical tests will be organised the day before between the ED and the candidates to ensure that the technical connection is working properly. In case of technical malfunction on the day of the audition, the ED cannot be held responsible. Telephone interviews are not allowed.

D. Evaluation of candidates

The admission oral aims to inform the jury about the candidate's ability to undertake a successful research training in terms of acquired skills and professional project. The criteria chosen by the jury are :

- research and research experience: motivation, research skills, disciplinary and technical skills in relation to the chosen subject
- ability to analyse and conduct the chosen subject: justification of the choice of subjects, situation in the general problematic, scientific understanding of the subject, ability to show the adequacy between skills and the chosen subject, quality of the proposed approach
- the ability to express oneself orally
- the integration of the thesis into a professional project.

At the end of the auditions, each member of the Jury establishes a ranking of all the candidates he or she has auditioned. In order to break any ties, discussions may take place at this stage and the final ranking of the jury is approved by all its members. For each site, a main list of successful candidates is established, as well as a supplementary list in order of merit. The jury reserves the right not to rank a candidate whose level proves to be too low. The jury may be required to meet afterwards by video conference in the particular case of "arrowed" contracts (such as ARED or certain CDEs).

E. Candidate admission

The rankings of the files and the oral of each candidate are compiled by the ED to establish the final list of admitted candidates. The ranking of the files is weighted at 40% of the final ranking, that of the oral at 60%. A complementary list is established to deal with possible withdrawals.

The ED Council meets to validate the final list of admitted candidates and those on the complementary list. It transmits this list with the classification by site to the Presidents of the Universities and the Direction of the co-accredited establishments for signature and final validation of the attribution of the CDE.

F. Competition calendar

- From 23 January 2024 to 29 March 2024 : Submission of subjects by the subject holders on the Theses in Brittany Loire platform
- 29 March 2024 : Deadline for submission of subjects by the holders
- From 1st April to 19 April 2024 (Weeks 14 at 16) : Examination of the subjects by the ED managers and the site selection committees
- 19 April 2024: Subjects put online and applications opened on the platform Theses in Bretagne Loire
- 20 May 2024 : Closing of applications. There remains the possibility of completing the files until they are selected in order to communicate transcripts and rankings of semester 10, if applicable.
- Each CSS+ meets to determine the applications
- 24 June 2024: Research Committee to decide on the list of candidates for the auditions. The selected candidates will receive their invitation by email.
- 1st and 2 June 2024: Auditions at each site.
- 5 July 2024: Sending of the results to the candidates and publication of the list of candidates admitted to receive a doctoral contract on the ED website
- End of August and end of September: Final validation of the attribution of the doctoral contract and signature of the University Presidents
- Catch-up session (optional) at the beginning of September 2022

3.3. Ethics charter

A charter of ethics is signed by the members of the selection committees and the competition jury evaluating the applications. This is to guarantee confidentiality with regard to the data presented, as well as to commit to neutrality with regard to the candidates, both in attitude and in the evaluation of the subjects.