

Annex to HSE Directive  
No. 6.18.1-01/2003-07,  
dated March 20, 2018

APPROVED by HSE  
Academic Council Minutes No. 2  
dated March 2, 2018

## **Procedure for Preliminary Defense of Dissertations at National Research University Higher School of Economics**

1. The Procedure for Preliminary Defense of Dissertations at National Research University Higher School of Economics (hereinafter, the “Procedure”, and “HSE” or the “University”, respectively) has been developed on the basis of the Regulations on Awarding Academic Degrees at National Research University Higher School of Economics, as approved by the decision of the HSE Academic Council on December 22, 2017, Minutes No. 13, and Regulations on Dissertation Councils of National Research University Higher School Economics, as approved by the decision of the HSE Academic Council on December 22, 2017, Minutes No. 13.

2. These Procedures set out the rules for HSE’s educational and/or research subdivisions (i.e., faculties, departments, schools, institutes, centres, laboratories and other subdivisions) with affiliated HSE doctoral students/candidates to carry out discussions of dissertations prepared by HSE doctoral students and other candidates for Candidate of Sciences and Doctor of Sciences degrees (hereinafter, “dissertations”, and “candidates”, respectively).

3. A decision to hold a preliminary defense with respect to a dissertation shall be made by the relevant HSE subdivision’s head in conjunction with the academic supervisor or (if present) an advisor<sup>1</sup> of the given candidate.

4. A candidate must present the following to the dissertation council in order to hold a discussion of his/her dissertation for the pursuit of an advanced academic degree:

4.1. the full text of the dissertation;

4.2. the text of the dissertation synopsis;

4.3. publications (i.e., texts, published in hard copy or in electronic versions after peer review and editing, with ISBN/ISSN/UDK (or BBK) numbers), including those in peer-reviewed scientific journals, included on the List of the Higher Attestation Commission of the Russian Ministry of Education and Science (hereinafter, “the VAK List”):

4.3.1. in social, economic sciences and humanities – at least 3 publications;

4.3.2. in technical sciences and physics/mathematics – at least 2 publications;

4.4. successfully completed qualification examinations on the given subject of the dissertation.

5. A candidate must present the following to the dissertation councils in order to hold a discussion of a dissertation for the pursuit of a Doctor of Sciences degree:

5.1. the full text of the dissertation;

5.2. the text of the dissertation synopsis;

5.3. publications (i.e., texts, published in hard copy or in electronic versions after peer review and editing, with ISBN/ISSN/UDK (or BBK) numbers), including peer-reviewed scientific journals, included on “the VAK List”:

5.3.1. in social, economic sciences and humanities – at least 15 publications;

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<sup>1</sup> for dissertations prepared by candidates for a Candidate of Sciences or a Doctor of Sciences degree, respectively.

5.3.2. in technical sciences and physics/mathematics – at least 10 publications.

5.4. A Candidate of Sciences degree.

6. A preliminary defense concerning a dissertation for the pursuit of a Candidate of Sciences degree shall be held by a relevant HSE subdivision with at least 5 (five) staff members, for whom HSE is their primary place of work and who hold Doctor of Sciences, Candidate of Sciences or PhD degrees. Furthermore, their field of expertise should correspond to the subject of the given dissertation, as expressed in their relevant publications.

7. A discussion concerning a dissertation for the pursuit of a Doctor of Sciences degree shall be held by a relevant HSE subdivision with at least 5 (five) staff members, for whom HSE is their primary place of work. Such persons must hold Doctor of Sciences degrees and be experts in the field of study covered by the dissertation, as expressed in their relevant publications. The discussion should also involve at least 2 (two) external specialists, who should hold Doctor of Sciences degrees and be experts in the field of study covered by the dissertation. HSE should not be the primary place of work for such persons.

8. When holding a discussion of a dissertation for the purpose of awarding an academic degree in accordance with these Procedures, a quorum of the relevant HSE subdivision is not required.

9. If not enough staff members are available for a discussion of a dissertation as per p. 6 of these Procedures, the relevant HSE subdivision shall organize a preliminary defense in coordination with other HSE subdivisions (hereinafter, a “joint meeting”). The requirements for the minimum number and composition of participants of a joint meeting are specified in p. 6 of these Procedures.

10. HSE subdivisions may delegate the authority to hold discussions of dissertations (on a one-time or ongoing basis) to sections. The composition of sections, the term of their authority, administrator and powers shall be determined by the head of the relevant HSE subdivision jointly with the academic supervisor of the relevant doctoral school. Sections shall be put together as per the requirements set out in p. 6 of these Procedures.

11. The head of the relevant HSE subdivision, along with the academic supervisor or (if present) advisor to the candidate, as well as (if present) the head of the relevant section, shall decide on the specialists to be invited to the preliminary defense of the dissertation. They shall also select reviewers of the dissertation from among the relevant subdivision’s academic staff, and/or from other HSE subdivisions and other organizations:

11.1. for Candidate of Sciences dissertations – at least 2 (two) specialists, who must hold a Doctor of Sciences, Candidate of Sciences or PhD degree;

11.2. for Doctor of Sciences dissertations – at least 3 (three) specialists holding a Doctor of Sciences degree; at least 1 (one) of these people should not be an HSE staff member and a member of a dissertation council at the University;

12. HSE subdivisions, including those with associated status, shall inform the dean of the relevant faculty about discussions of dissertations, as well as the HSE Office of Doctoral Studies, the academic supervisor of the relevant doctoral school, and the academic secretary of the relevant HSE dissertation council. A public announcement about a preliminary defense shall be posted on the webpage(s) of the relevant HSE subdivision, the doctoral school and the HSE Office of Doctoral Studies on HSE’s corporate website (portal) no later than 10 calendar days prior to the meeting. If a public announcement is not made about an upcoming meeting, the discussion of the dissertation shall be deemed as not having taken place.

13. Preliminary defense of dissertations shall be held at meetings of HSE subdivisions (sections). Such discussions must include a presentation of a dissertation’s results in the form of a report by the given candidate, an analysis and evaluation of the findings by the appropriate academic supervisor or (if present) an advisor, and respective reviewers, as well as attendees to the discussion.

The procedure for holding a discussion of a dissertation shall be decided by the person chairing the meeting. The meeting shall be chaired by the head of the relevant HSE subdivision or, as per his/her decision, a deputy head or another staff member from the subdivision, who meets the criteria stated in p. 6 of the Procedures.

If an appointed reviewer is unable to attend the discussion in person, he/she shall send a written final evaluation (reference) of the dissertation to the HSE subdivision's head.

14. After the discussion of a dissertation is concluded, an open vote shall be held to recommend the dissertation for defense. Staff members of the relevant HSE subdivision (section) and invited specialists may take part in this vote. A final decision shall be made by a simple majority of votes. If there is a tied vote, the person chairing the meeting shall retain the right to cast the deciding vote. A decision made by a meeting of an HSE subdivision (section), shall be enacted as per minutes of said subdivision. The relevant subdivision, which may also hold the status of associated subdivision, shall inform the relevant doctoral school, the HSE Office of Doctoral Studies, the candidate and faculty dean about the decision taken.

15. If a positive decision is made in regards to a candidate's dissertation, the relevant HSE subdivision shall draw up a statement on behalf of HSE as an organization where the dissertation was completed or with which the candidate is directly affiliated (hereinafter, the "conclusive statement of the organization").

16. The conclusive statement of the organization (presented in 2 (two) copies) shall be signed by the head of the relevant HSE subdivision, where the discussion of the dissertation took place.

If the head of an HSE subdivision is also the academic supervisor or (if present) an advisor to the candidate, the conclusive statement of the organization shall be signed by the subdivision's deputy head or another of its staff members, who meets the criteria specified in p. 6 of these Procedures.

If a joint meeting is held, the conclusive statement of the organization shall be signed by the heads (or deputy heads) all subdivisions involved.

If a discussion of a dissertation is carried out by a section, the conclusive statement of the organization shall be signed by the head of the HSE subdivision, which delegated authority to the section to carry out the preliminary thesis defense.

The signature of the HSE staff member authorized to sign a conclusive statement of the organization shall be certified as per established procedure at the University.

17. Within 7 (seven) calendar days after the discussion is held, a signed conclusive statement of the organization should be presented for approval to the vice rector in charge of degree programmes at HSE. The document should also be presented to the academic supervisor of the relevant doctoral school and the dean of the relevant faculty.

Within 3 (three) days after its approval, the conclusive statement of the organization (in 2 (two) copies) shall be presented to the candidate so that it can be provided to the appropriate dissertation council. A copy of this document will be kept in the candidate's file at the HSE Office of Doctoral Studies.

18. If a dissertation is either rejected or recommended for defense after revisions, a second discussion of the dissertation shall be held as per these Procedures after any deficiencies have been rectified.