

Implementation Rules for the Master's and Doctoral Degree Conferral of University of Science and Technology of China

Chapter I General Provisions

Article 1 These implementation rules are formulated to standardize the university's degree conferral process, protect the legitimate rights of degree applicants, and ensure the quality of academic Degree, in accordance with the *Degree Law of the People's Republic of China*, the *Overall Plan for Deepening the Reform of Education Evaluation in the New Era*, the *Opinions on Further Strengthening and Regulating the Quality Management of Degree and Graduate Education*, and the *Opinions on Accelerating the High-Quality Development of Doctoral Graduate Education*, while also taking into account the university's actual conditions.

Article 2 The university confers master's and doctoral Degree in accordance with the disciplines, professional degree categories, and degree types (academic and professional) authorized by the Academic Degree Committee of the State Council.

Article 3 Degree applicants shall uphold the leadership of the Communist Party of China, support the socialist system, abide by the Constitution and laws, and comply with academic ethics and standards. Applicants who meet these criteria and fulfill the university's academic and professional requirements, as prescribed in these rules, shall apply for the corresponding degree.

Article 4 All key steps in the degree application process—including thesis preliminary review, formal review, and thesis defense—shall be completed within the maximum study duration stipulated by the university's academic regulations (calculated up to August 31 of each year, hereinafter the same).

Chapter II Master's Degree

Article 5 Academic or Professional Proficiency

Master's students, who have completed master-level education, passed all required course examinations (or assessments) with the required credits, completed academic research training or professional practice, and passed the thesis defense or required defense of practical outcomes, shall be awarded the master's degree upon demonstrating the following competencies:

1. Solid foundational theories and systematic specialized knowledge in their academic discipline or professional field;
2. Academic degree applicants shall be proficient in conducting academic research; Professional degree applicants shall be proficient in carrying out professional practice.

Article 6 Eligibility Review

1. The eligibility review for master's degree applicants shall be organized by designated personnel from the academic unit. In addition to complying with the provisions of Article 5, the review shall also include a comprehensive assessment of the applicant's entire study period, including ideology,

research integrity, academic performance, and professional competence.

2. The specific training requirements during the applicant's study shall comply with the graduate training program of their discipline or professional field. The standards for conferring the master's degree are to be formulated by the respective degree evaluation subcommittee (hereinafter referred to as "subcommittee"), and approved and published by the University Academic Degree Evaluation Committee.

3. Master students who fail to pass the graduation review, are not eligible for the degree application.

4. Applicants who commit academic and research misconduct, or other behaviors deemed unfit for degree conferral, are not eligible to apply for the degree during the investigation or penalty period. They may only apply after the penalties are lifted.

Article 7 Course and Examination Requirements for Master's Students

Within the prescribed study period, master's students shall meet the credit requirements and academic performance standards specified in their graduate program in order to be eligible to apply for a degree.

If a master's student has completed the required credits but with a weighted average score below 75 in any of fundamental courses and core professional courses, they may still apply for their thesis review and defense. If the thesis review and defense are passed, the student may apply for graduation, but shall not be eligible to apply for the master's degree.

Article 8 Master's Thesis Requirements

An academic master's degree thesis shall be a systematic and complete scholarly paper. The core arguments, conclusions, and recommendations of the thesis shall possess academic value or contribute theoretically and practically to national economic development. It shall demonstrate the author's solid foundation in basic theories and comprehensive expertise in the specialized field, and reflect the application of scientific research methods and demonstrate competent technical skills. The thesis shall also present novel insights with certain research or technological achievements.

A professional master's degree thesis shall be closely integrated with practical applications. The content shall reflect the author's ability to analyze and solve real-world problems with theoretical knowledge and methodologies in their professional field and related disciplines. The outcomes of the thesis shall have highly practical value. The thesis may take the form of a specialized research project, a high-level research report, or a case analysis report. The specific requirements for professional master's degree theses shall follow the relevant regulations issued by the Ministry of Education, national professional degree education advisory committees, the Anhui Provincial Department of Education, and the university rules. For engineering professional master's Degree, the basic thesis requirements shall follow the *Basic Requirements for Master's Degree Theses in Engineering Professional Degree Categories (Trial)*, issued by the Office of the Academic Degree Committee of the State Council ([2023] Document No. 19), and shall be implemented in accordance with the university's actual circumstances.

The master's thesis shall be completed independently under the guidance of their advisor (hereinafter referred to as "advisor"). The thesis completion period shall generally be no less than one year, and a student may only apply for his thesis review after six months since the proposal has been approved. The main body of the thesis shall generally be no fewer than 30,000 words. Thesis format shall follow the university's thesis writing template and guidelines.

Article 9 Master's Thesis Advisors

For academic master's Degree, the thesis advisor shall hold university-approved master's advisor qualifications, either a full-time staff with a senior professional title, or a term-appointed research fellow. In principle, no more than two advisors may be listed on the thesis.

For professional master's Degree, advisors shall generally hold a senior professional title. For engineering proficiency-oriented professional master's programs, students shall be jointly supervised by a university-industry advisory team. Within the advisor team, no more than two advisors from the university may be listed. And the team shall include at least one advisor from relevant industry, with extensive engineering experience and a high level of supervisory ability. Advisors from industries shall meet the selection requirements in accordance with the university's practice advisor selection and management criteria. Under university-industry joint supervision, students shall complete the thesis independently.

Article 10 Master's Thesis Preliminary Review

The preliminary review of a master's thesis is a pre-evaluation conducted by the graduate training unit, to evaluate whether the thesis meets the required standards in terms of innovation, workload, literature review, formatting, and relevance to the discipline or professional field. Master's students who have passed the thesis proposal and mid-term assessment, and completed the thesis writing, may apply for the preliminary review.

The preliminary review is organized and implemented by the graduate training unit. The expert panel for the preliminary review shall consist of no fewer than two qualified master's advisors, and a designated person shall record the review process. For degree programs that uniformly adopt the Ministry of Education's double-blind review system, the graduate training unit and degree-granting program may flexibly conduct the preliminary review phase.

The outcome of the preliminary review is classified into two levels: "Approved for External Review" or "Not Approved for External Review". The preliminary review panel may reach its conclusion through either collective discussion or individual feedback. When two-thirds or more of the responses are in agreement to proceed in the individual feedback, the result is considered "Approved for External Review." Students whose theses are "Approved for External Review" shall revise their thesis according to expert feedback. After the revisions are approved by their advisor, the student

may submit the thesis for external review. Students whose theses are “Not Approved for External Review” shall make substantial revisions to the thesis according to expert comments. After approval by the advisor, students may then resubmit an application for another round of preliminary review.

Article 11 Master’s Thesis Review

Master’s students who have completed all required credits, met the academic performance requirements, and received an “Approved for External Review” result in their thesis preliminary review, may proceed to the formal master’s thesis review, upon approval by their advisor and degree-granting program. In principle, the thesis review shall be conducted in a double-blind review format, organized by the training unit based on guidance from the University Academic Degree Committee Office.

Master’s thesis shall be reviewed by at least two experts. For academic master’s Degree, reviewers shall hold a formal senior professional title. For professional master’s Degree, reviewers shall meet the university’s qualifications for either professional master’s advisors or practical advisors. For engineering professional master’s Degree, at least one reviewer shall be a master’s advisor from the academic unit, and at least one from an enterprise or industry. If the review is conducted entirely via the Ministry of Education’s Thesis Quality Review Platform, the number of internal/external reviewers and enterprise/industry experts is not subject to the above restrictions. The applicant’s advisor may not serve as a reviewer for the thesis.

Article 12 Evaluation of Thesis Review Results

There are four thesis review results in our university: “Approved for Defense,” “Approved for Defense with Minor Revisions,” “Revise and Resubmit for Review,” and “Not Approved for Defense” (hereinafter referred to as “A,” “B,” “C,” and “D,” respectively). The overall evaluation results for thesis review are “Pass” and “Fail.” The evaluation criteria for different review outcomes are explained as follows:

1. If all thesis review results are rated “B” or higher, the thesis is considered a Pass. However, if any result is “B” or if any specific revision comments are provided, the defense can only be scheduled 5 days after the date the final “B” rating is issued or the date the revision comments are given.
2. If there is one or more “C” ratings but without “D” ratings, the thesis shall undergo a revision period of at least 15 days, from the date the final “C” is issued. The revised thesis and the *Thesis Review Feedback and Revision Form* (hereinafter referred to as the “revision feedback form”) shall be submitted to the system for re-review. The department shall assign the same reviewers who gave the “C” ratings as re-reviewers (except when the original reviewer rejects the re-review), and the number of re-reviewers shall match the number of “C” results. Afterwards, if all re-review results are “B” or higher, the thesis is considered a Pass. If any result is “B” or if any specific revision comments are provided, the defense can only be scheduled 5 days after the date the final “B” rating is issued or the date the revision comments are given. However, if any re-review result is “C” or “D”, or if the re-review is not submitted within two months of the final initial review result, the

thesis is considered a Fail. From the date of the final “C” or “D,” the thesis shall undergo at least one month of revision, after which it, along with the revision feedback form, shall be resubmitted for review. The reviewers shall again include the original experts who gave the “C” or “D” results (except if they reject the re-review).

3. If the thesis has only one review result that is not “A” or “B” (i.e., a single “C” or a single “D”), and the students themselves assume the evaluation is biased or inaccurate, they may appeal the result with the advisor’s approval. Before appealing, students shall respond to the reviewer’s comments in the revision feedback form, making point-by-point revisions or explaining why certain suggestions are not adopted. The revision period shall be no less than 15 days and no more than one month from the date of the “C” or “D” rating. Students shall submit the revision feedback form, revised thesis, and a detailed appeal report to the department. The department will organize an expert panel of no fewer than three experts in the relevant discipline or field (all members handling master’s thesis appeals shall be master’s advisors with formal senior professional titles). If two-thirds or more of the experts agree that the student has adequately revised based on the adoptable suggestions and the appeal is valid, the department can proceed with additional reviews by two new reviewers, excluding the original reviewers who graded “C” or “D”, on the original review platform. If both new reviewers give “A” or “B” results, the thesis is deemed a Pass. If any result is “B” or if any specific revision comments are provided, the defense can only be scheduled 5 days after the date the final “B” rating is issued or the date the revision comments are given. If either result is “C” or “D” in the re-review, the thesis is considered a Fail. From the date of the final “C” or “D,” the thesis shall undergo at least one month of revision, after which it, along with the revision feedback form, shall be resubmitted for review. The reviewers shall again include the original experts who gave the “C” or “D” results (except if they reject the re-review).

4. If the review result includes only one “D” but does not meet the conditions for additional review, or if there are two or more “D” results, the thesis is considered a Fail. For a single “D” without meeting the conditions for additional review, the revision period shall be at least one month from the date of the “D” rating. For two or more “D” ratings, the revision period shall be at least three months from the date of the last “D” rating. The revised thesis and revision feedback form shall then be resubmitted for a re-review, and the re-reviewers shall include the original reviewers who gave “C” or “D” ratings (unless they reject the re-review).

5. If the same reviewer consecutively gives a “C” or “D” rating twice, and the thesis has already been revised in response to initial comments, the advisor and student assume in the second review the revisions are ignored, the result is biased and unfair, or specific suggestions are absent, they may apply to exclude this reviewer from next re-review. Only one reviewer may be excluded per thesis. The advisor and student shall submit a written request detailing the reason for the exclusion (the valid and feasible parts of the original review shall still be responded in the revision). The statement shall be signed and submitted along with all thesis review opinions to the subcommittee for review. The subcommittee will vote to determine whether to approve the request (valid only if two-thirds of members are present and passed by a majority vote). Upon subcommittee approval and notification to the university’s Academic Degree Committee Office, the thesis may proceed to the next review stage without the excluded reviewer, provided the revision requirements of these rules

are met.

If the student has exceeded the maximum duration for the master's program, his thesis review application will no longer be accepted.

Article 13 Master's Thesis Defense

After the master's thesis review, the thesis defense shall be organized by the applicant's academic unit according to relevant discipline or academic field. The applicant's advisor and relatives are not allowed to serve as members of the defense committee. The Master's Thesis Defense Committee shall consist of no fewer than three peer experts with senior professional titles, including those master's advisor from the academic unit. The Chair of the committee shall be a professor (or an expert with an equivalent professional title). For engineering professional degree master's students, the defense committee shall include at least three experts who meet the qualifications of the university's professional or practical master's advisor standards. Among them, at least one is a professional degree master's advisor from the academic unit, and another one shall be an expert from enterprise (/industry) who is qualified for a professional practice advisor. For management and humanities professional degree master's theses, the defense shall comply with the requirements specified in the university's relevant implementation rules for degree conferral in those disciplines.

The thesis or practical outcomes shall be submitted to all defense committee members for review prior to the defense. All committee members shall independently and responsibly fulfill their duties and shall attend the entire defense session. The defense shall be conducted in accordance with university regulations. The committee will deliberate on whether the applicant has passed the defense and announce the result on the spot. The outcome is determined by voting, and the conferral of the master's degree requires approval by at least two-thirds of all committee members. Unless the research content of the thesis is confidential, the defense shall be held publicly.

If the applicant fails the thesis or practical outcome defense, the committee may approve a re-defense after thesis revision. The re-defense shall be conducted at least two months after the first defense and within the maximum duration of study specified by academic regulations. If the applicant does not re-defend within the specified time, or he again fails the re-defense, the master's degree application shall no longer be accepted.

Article 14 Degree Application

After passing the thesis defense, graduation application and approval, the student shall formally apply for the degree in accordance with university procedures. The application shall include all required documents listed in the Master's Degree Application Checklist, to be reviewed by both sub-committee and university academic degree evaluation committee.

Article 15 Degree Conferral

After all required materials for a master's degree applicant have been collected and compiled, the application shall undergo tiered review by the applicant's academic unit and its corresponding

subcommittee. The subcommittee shall convene a formal meeting to evaluate all application, and the meeting is considered valid only if two-thirds or more of the members are present. The subcommittee shall strictly assess the application based on the master's degree conferral standards, conducting a comprehensive review and holistic evaluation of the applicants' qualifications. A decision to recommend the conferral of the master's degree shall be determined by voting, and is valid only if more than half of all members approve.

The University Academic Degree Evaluation Committee typically convenes meetings in April, June, and December each year to review degree conferral. The committee shall also conduct evaluations in formal meetings, which are valid only if at least two-thirds of all members are present. Degree conferral decisions shall be made through voting, and are valid only if approved by more than half of the full committee.

The University Academic Degree Evaluation Committee shall issue the official degree conferral documents, publish the name list of degree recipients, award degree certificates, and submit the degree conferral information to the provincial Academic Degree Committee. The official degree conferral date is the date on which the University Academic Degree Evaluation Committee issues the resolution to confer the degree.

Chapter III: Doctoral Degree

Article 16 Academic or Professional Competency

Doctoral students who have completed doctoral education, passed all course examinations (assessments) with the required credits, completed academic research training or professional practice, and passed the dissertation defense or the defense of designated practical outcomes, shall be awarded the doctoral degree upon demonstrating the following competencies:

1. Solid and comprehensive mastery of fundamental theories and systematic, in-depth specialized knowledge in their academic discipline or professional field;
2. Academic degree applicants shall demonstrate the ability to conduct independent academic research; professional degree applicants have the ability to independently undertake professional practice work;
3. Academic degree applicants shall produce innovative achievements in academic research; professional degree applicants shall achieve innovative results in professional practical fields.

Article 17 Eligibility Review

1. The eligibility review for doctoral degree applicants shall be organized and conducted by designated personnel from the academic unit. In addition to complying with the provisions in Article 16 of these regulations, the review shall also involve a comprehensive assessment of the doctoral student's entire study period, including evaluation of their ideology, research integrity, academic performance, and professional competence.

2. The specific training requirements for doctoral students shall comply with the graduate training

program of their respective discipline or professional field. The standards for doctoral Degree conferral shall be formulated by each subcommittee and then submitted to the University Academic Degree Evaluation Committee for approval.

3. Students who fail the graduation review are not eligible to apply for the degree.

4. Applicants who commit academic and research misconduct, or other behaviors deemed unfit for degree conferral are not allowed to apply for the degree during the investigation or penalty period. They may only apply after the penalties are lifted.

Article 18 Doctoral Coursework and Examination Requirements

Within the prescribed study duration, doctoral students shall meet the credit requirements and grade standards specified in the curriculum of the doctoral program before they are eligible to apply for a degree.

If a doctoral student has completed the required credits but has a weighted average score below 75 in any of master-level fundamental courses and core professional courses, they may still apply for their thesis review and defense. If the thesis review and defense are passed, the student may apply for graduation, but will not be eligible to apply for the doctoral degree.

Article 19 Doctoral Dissertation Requirements

An academic doctoral dissertation shall demonstrate that the author has a solid and comprehensive command of the fundamental theories and systematic, in-depth specialized knowledge in the relevant discipline, as well as the ability to conduct independent academic research, and has produced innovative results in their academic field. The dissertation shall be a systematic and complete expression of the scientific research findings.

Professional doctoral dissertation shall be based on practical applications in the relevant field. The core content of the dissertation shall have both theoretical significance and practical value in real-world application, following the relevant regulations issued by the Ministry of Education, national professional degree education advisory committees, and the university rules. Engineering professional doctoral Degree shall follow the *Basic Requirements for Engineering Professional Degree and Practical Achievements (Trial)*, issued by the Office of the Academic Degree Committee of the State Council (Degree Office Document No. 18 [2024]), and shall be implemented in accordance with the university's actual circumstances.

The doctoral dissertation shall be independently completed by the doctoral student under the guidance of their advisor. The research duration for the dissertation shall be no less than two years, and the student may only apply for dissertation review after one full year since the proposal is approved. The main body of the dissertation shall generally be no fewer than 50,000 words, and the dissertation format shall follow the university's dissertation writing template and guidelines.

Article 20 Doctoral Dissertation Advisors

For academic doctoral Degree, the dissertation advisor shall hold doctoral advisor qualifications at the university. In principle, no more than two advisors may be listed as official dissertation advisors.

For professional doctoral Degree, advisors shall generally hold the university's professional doctoral advisor qualification. In principle, no more than three advisors may be listed on a professional doctoral dissertation. For engineering proficiency-oriented professional doctoral programs, students shall be jointly supervised by a university-industry advisory team. Within the advisor team, no more than two advisors from the university may be listed. And the team shall include at least one advisor from relevant industry, with extensive engineering experience and a high level of supervisory ability with a senior professional title. Advisors from industries shall meet the selection requirements in accordance with the university's practice advisor selection and management criteria. Under university-industry joint supervision, students shall complete the dissertation independently.

Article 21 Doctoral Dissertation Preliminary Review

The preliminary review of a doctoral dissertation is a pre-evaluation conducted by the graduate training unit, to evaluate whether the dissertation meets the required standards in terms of innovation, workload, literature review, formatting, and relevance to the discipline or professional field. Doctoral students who have passed the dissertation proposal and mid-term assessment, and completed the dissertation writing, may apply for the preliminary review.

The preliminary review is uniformly organized and implemented by the graduate training unit. The review panel shall consist of no fewer than three doctoral supervisors. The review may be conducted in the form of correspondence review or in-person panel evaluations (open defense). If conducted as a panel review, a designated person shall record the process.

The outcome of the preliminary review is classified into two levels: "Approved for External Review" or "Not Approved for External Review". The preliminary review panel may reach its conclusion through either collective discussion or individual feedback. When two-thirds or more of the responses are in agreement to proceed in the individual feedback, the result is considered "Approved for External Review." Students whose theses are "Approved for External Review" shall revise their dissertation according to expert feedback. After the revisions are approved by their advisor, the student may submit the dissertation for external review. Students whose dissertations are "Not Approved for External Review" shall make substantial revisions to their dissertation according to expert comments. After approval by the advisor, students may then resubmit an application for another round of preliminary review.

Article 22 Doctoral Dissertation Review

Doctoral students who have completed all required credits, met the academic performance

requirements, and received an “Approved for External Review” result in their dissertation preliminary review, may proceed to the formal doctoral dissertation review, upon approval by their supervisor and degree-granting program. In principle, the dissertation review shall be conducted in a double-blind review format, organized by the training unit based on guidance from the University Academic Degree Committee Office.

Each doctoral dissertation shall be reviewed by at least five experts, including at least one doctoral supervisor from the academic unit, and at least three external experts. For engineering professional doctoral dissertation review, at least two reviewers shall be from enterprises or industries. If the review is conducted entirely via the Ministry of Education’s Dissertation Quality Review Platform, the number of internal/external reviewers and enterprise/industry experts is not subject to the above restrictions. The applicant’s supervisor may not serve as a reviewer for the dissertation.

For academic doctoral Degree, reviewers shall hold doctoral supervisor qualifications. For professional doctoral Degree, reviewers shall hold doctoral supervisor qualifications, or are experts from enterprises or industries with a senior professional title.

第二十三条 学位论文评审结果评定

Article 23 Evaluation of Doctoral Dissertation Review Results

There are four dissertation review results in our university: “Approved for Defense,” “Approved for Defense with Minor Revisions,” “Revise and Resubmit for Review,” and “Not Approved for Defense” (hereinafter referred to as “A,” “B,” “C,” and “D,” respectively). The overall evaluation results for dissertation review are “Pass” and “Fail.” The evaluation criteria for different review outcomes are explained as follows:

1. If all dissertation review results are rated “B” or higher, the dissertation is considered a Pass. However, if any result is “B” or if any specific revision comments are provided, the defense can only be scheduled 5 days after the date the final “B” rating is issued or the date the revision comments are given.
2. If there is one or more “C” ratings but without “D” ratings, the dissertation shall undergo a revision period of at least 15 days, from the date the final “C” is issued. The revised dissertation and the *Dissertation Review Feedback and Revision Form* (hereinafter referred to as the “revision feedback form”) shall be submitted to the system for re-review. The department shall assign the same reviewers who gave the “C” ratings as re-reviewers (except when the original reviewer rejects the re-review), and the number of re-reviewers shall match the number of “C” results. Afterwards, if all re-review results are “B” or higher, the dissertation is considered a Pass. if any result is “B” or if any specific revision comments are provided, the defense can only be scheduled 5 days after the date the final “B” rating is issued or the date the revision comments are given. However, if any re-review result is “C” or “D”, or if the re-review is not submitted within two months of the final initial review result, the dissertation is considered a Fail. From the date of the final “C” or “D,” the dissertation shall undergo at least two months of revision, after which it, along with the revision feedback form, shall be resubmitted for review. The reviewers shall again include the original

experts who gave the “C” or “D” results (except if they reject the re-review).

3. If the dissertation has only one review result that is not “A” or “B” (i.e., a single “C” or a single “D”), but at least one “A”, and the students themselves assume the evaluation is biased or inaccurate, they may appeal the result with the advisor’s approval. Before appealing, students shall respond to the reviewer’s comments in the revision feedback form, making point-by-point revisions or explaining why certain suggestions are not adopted. The revision period shall be no less than 15 days and no more than one month from the date of the “C” or “D” rating. Students shall submit the revision feedback form, revised dissertation, and a detailed appeal report to the department. The department will organize an expert panel of no fewer than three experts in the relevant discipline or field (all members handling master’s dissertation appeals shall be master’s advisors with formal senior professional titles). If two-thirds or more of the experts agree that the student has adequately revised based on the adoptable suggestions and the appeal is valid, the department can proceed with additional reviews by two new reviewers, excluding the original reviewers who graded “C” or “D”, on the original review platform. If both new reviewers give “A” or “B” results, the dissertation is deemed a Pass. If any result is “B” or if any specific revision comments are provided, the defense can only be scheduled 5 days after the date the final “B” rating is issued or the date the revision comments are given. If either result is “C” or “D” in the re-review, the dissertation is considered a Fail. From the date of the final “C” or “D,” the dissertation shall undergo at least two months of revision, after which it, along with the revision feedback form, shall be resubmitted for review. The reviewers shall again include the original experts who gave the “C” or “D” results (except if they reject the re-review).

4. If the review result includes only one “D” but does not meet the conditions for additional review, or if there are two or more “D” results, the dissertation is considered a Fail. For a single “D” without meeting the conditions for additional review, the revision period shall be at least two months from the date of the “D” rating. For two or more “D” ratings, the revision period shall be at least six months from the date of the last “D” rating. The revised dissertation and revision feedback form shall then be resubmitted for a re-review, and the re-reviewers shall include the original reviewers who gave “C” or “D” ratings (unless they reject the re-review).

5. If the same reviewer consecutively gives a “C” or “D” rating twice, and the dissertation has already been revised in response to initial comments, the advisor and student assume in the second review the revisions are ignored, the result is biased and unfair, or specific suggestions are absent, they may apply to exclude this reviewer from next re-review. Only one reviewer may be excluded per dissertation. The advisor and student shall submit a written request detailing the reason for the exclusion (the valid and feasible parts of the original review shall still be responded in the revision). The statement shall be signed and submitted along with all dissertation review opinions to the subcommittee for review. The subcommittee will vote to determine whether to approve the request (valid only if two-thirds of members are present and passed by a majority vote).

Upon approval by the subcommittee and filing with the university's Academic Degree Committee Office, the dissertation may proceed to the next round without the excluded reviewer. The previous "Fail" review result will not count toward the total number of reviews as defined by the *Measures for the Reposition and Withdrawal Regulations for Doctoral Students in University of Science and Technology of China*. However, the dissertation shall still meet all revision requirements outlined in these rules before resubmission. If the student accumulates two failed dissertation reviews (as per the *Measures for the Reposition and Withdrawal Regulations for Doctoral Students in University of Science and Technology of China*.) or exceeds the maximum doctoral study duration, the dissertation review application will no longer be accepted

Article 24 Doctoral Dissertation Defense

After the doctoral dissertation review, the defense shall be organized by the applicant's academic unit according to relevant discipline or academic field. The Doctoral Dissertation Defense Committee shall consist of no fewer than five members, including at least two external experts. The applicant's supervisor and relatives are not allowed to serve as members of the defense committee.

For academic doctoral Degree, the defense committee shall include at least five doctoral supervisors from the relevant or related disciplines. Among them, at least one doctoral supervisor is from the academic unit, with at least two external doctoral supervisors.

For professional doctoral Degree, the defense committee shall consist of at least five experts either with doctoral supervisor qualifications, or senior experts from enterprises (industries) with senior professional titles. Among them, at least one doctoral supervisor is from the academic unit, and at least two shall be enterprise (industry) experts with senior professional titles. The total number of external experts shall not be fewer than two.

The dissertation or practical outcomes shall be submitted to all defense committee members for review prior to the defense. All committee members shall independently and responsibly fulfill their duties and shall attend the entire defense session. The defense shall be conducted in accordance with university regulations. The committee will deliberate on whether the applicant has passed the defense and announce the result on the spot. The outcome is determined by voting, and the conferral of the doctoral degree requires approval by at least two-thirds of all committee members. Unless the research content of the thesis is confidential, the defense shall be held publicly.

If the applicant fails the dissertation or practical outcome defense, the committee may approve a re-defense after revision. The re-defense shall be conducted at least two months after the first defense and within the maximum duration of study specified by academic regulations. If the applicant does not re-defend within the specified time, or he also fails the re-defense, the doctoral degree application will no longer be accepted.

If the Doctoral Dissertation Defense Committee determines that the applicant does not meet the standards for a doctoral degree but does meet the standards for a master's degree, and the applicant has not previously received a master's degree in the same field or degree category from this

university, then—with the applicant’s consent, and in accordance with university regulations—the committee may issue a recommendation to award a master’s degree. This recommendation shall then be submitted to the two-tier Academic Degree Evaluation Committees for review and approval.

Article 25 Degree Application

After passing the dissertation defense, graduation application and approval, the student shall formally apply for the doctoral degree in accordance with university procedures. The application shall include all required documents listed in the Doctoral Degree Application Checklist, to be reviewed by both sub-committee and university academic Degree evaluation committee.

Article 26 Degree Conferral

After all required materials for a doctoral degree applicant have been collected and compiled, the application shall undergo tiered review by the applicant’s academic unit and its corresponding subcommittee. The subcommittee shall convene a formal meeting to evaluate all application, and the meeting is considered valid only if two-thirds or more of the members are present. The subcommittee shall strictly assess the application based on the doctoral degree conferral standards, conducting a comprehensive review and holistic evaluation of the applicants’ qualifications. A decision to recommend the conferral of the doctoral degree shall be determined by voting, and is valid only if more than half of all members approve.

The University Academic Degree Evaluation Committee typically convenes meetings in April, June, and December each year to review degree conferral. The committee shall also conduct evaluations in formal meetings, which are valid only if at least two-thirds of all members are present. Doctoral degree conferral decisions shall be made through voting, and are valid only if approved by more than half of the full committee.

The University Academic Degree Evaluation Committee shall issue the official degree conferral documents, publish the name list of degree recipients, award degree certificates, and submit the degree conferral information to the provincial Academic Degree Committee. The official degree conferral date is the date on which the University Academic Degree Evaluation Committee issues the resolution to confer the degree.

Chapter IV Degree Quality Assurance

Article 27 If a degree applicant or degree recipient commits any of the following actions during the study period, the University Academic Degree Evaluation Committee may, through a formal resolution, decide to deny the conferral of the degree or revoke an already awarded degree:

1. The thesis or practical achievement is found to involve academic misconduct, such as ghostwriting, plagiarism, or fabrication;
2. The admission or graduation certificate is obtained via identity theft, falsified documents, or other illegal means;
3. Other serious legal violations occur during their study period, rendering them ineligible for degree conferral under law.

Article 28 If the University Academic Degree Evaluation Committee intends to make a decision to deny or revoke a degree in accordance with Article 27, the degree applicant or recipient shall be notified in writing of the proposed decision, including the facts, reasons, and legal basis. This notice shall be personally signed by the student himself to confirm the receipt. Any of responsive statement of explanation or defense shall be recorded. If the individual refuses to sign, is unable to sign due to special circumstances, or has already left the university, the notice shall be delivered via postal mail, email, or public announcement on the university website or other appropriate means.

Chapter V: Supplementary Provisions

Article 29 The thesis review and defense procedures mentioned in this document also apply to the review and defense of practical achievements for professional degree graduate students.

Article 30 Honorary doctorates may be conferred, upon the approval from the Academic Degree Committee of the State Council after the review of the University Academic Degree Evaluation Committee, to individuals who have made outstanding contributions to academic or professional fields, scientific education, cultural exchange, world peace, or human development.

Article 31 Foreign degree applicants (including international students at the university) may be granted Degree in accordance with these rules, provided they meet the same academic or professional standards and procedural requirements. For international students enrolled in English-language graduate programs, theses may be written in English, but a Chinese abstract shall also be provided. The defense may be conducted in either Chinese or English.

Article 32 For part-time doctoral students with non-standard enrollment (e.g., single certificate system), degree applications are handled in accordance with national policies, these rules, and the *“Implementation Measures for Doctoral Degree Conferral to Candidates with Equivalent Academic Credentials in University of Science and Technology of China.”*

Article 33 Exceptionally outstanding graduate students may apply for early thesis defense, in accordance with university regulations and procedures.

Article 34 All degree applicants and their advisors shall sign the *“Thesis Authorization and Usage Agreement of University of Science and Technology of China”*, granting the university certain rights to use the thesis. These include, but are not limited to the situations: submitting copies and digital versions of the thesis to government departments or databases; permission for the thesis to be accessed, borrowed, and included in national thesis sampling inspections at various levels as required; Inclusion of the thesis in relevant databases for retrieval; Use of reproduction methods such as photocopying, microfilming, or scanning to preserve and compile the thesis.

Article 35 All degree application materials, including the thesis and practical outcomes, shall be collected and reviewed by the training unit and promptly submitted to the University Academic Degree Evaluation Committee Office.

Article 36 During the degree application process, any special cases shall be submitted to the University Academic Degree Evaluation Committee for review, provided they are first approved by a majority vote of the sub-committee with at least 2/3 of members present. The University Academic Degree Evaluation Committee shall also meet with a two-thirds quorum and approve decisions by a majority vote of all members present.

Article 37 These rules are interpreted and amended by the University Academic Degree Evaluation Committee.

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Article 38 These rules shall come into effect upon the date of issuance. The previous versions—*“Implementation Rules for the Conferral of Master’s and Doctoral Degree at University of Science and Technology of China”* (Degree Doc No. 117 [2023]) and *“Implementation Measures for the Degree Conferral to International Students at University of Science and Technology of China”* (Degree Doc No. 278 [2018])—shall be repealed simultaneously.