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DOI <https://doi.org/10.36059/978-966-397-321-0-73>

THE LATEST AMENDMENTS TO AWARDING PH.D. IN UKRAINE

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In the conditions of the full-scale war, the universities of Ukraine are performing educational and scientific activities, making efforts to ensure proper training of doctors of philosophy. This, unfortunately, does not always lead to awarding the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

The purpose of the work is to analyze the reasons of failures through a prism of key requirements for applicants to awarding the degree of Doctor of Philosophy and to highlight some of the most relevant amendments in the procedure of thesis defense concerning these key requirements. To achieve the aim some governmental websites were reviewed, and some data was analyzed.

It is commonly acknowledged, that there are three main requirements for applicants: they must complete an accredited educational and scientific program which is confirmed by an academic certificate, prepare a high-quality

scientific research, framed in a dissertation, and have the required number of published scientific articles.

Regarding the educational and scientific program, Article 7 of the Law “On Higher Education” clearly states that “a document on higher education of the state model is issued by a higher education institution only according to an accredited educational program [1].” To overcome challenges of the war-time the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine dated by January 12, 2022 № 44 on “the Procedure for awarding and revoking the decision on awarding the degree of Doctor of Philosophy” confirmed, that a specialized one-time academic council can be formed only in an institution that has such an accredited program. Moreover, a conditional accreditation is also accepted, according to Leontiy Shipilov, the Head of the one-time academic council support and analytics department at the National Agency for Quality Assurance of Higher Education [3]. Therefore, a person who has completed an accredited educational and scientific program in the relevant institution is admitted to defense, and a one-time academic council is formed in this institution.

According to the Resolution, it is allowed not to take into account the period of martial law, as well as the following three months after its termination or cancellation when calculating the terms determined by the Procedure for awarding the degree of Doctor of Philosophy [2]. The Document also states that the applicant “in the presence of serious circumstances (due to health, family issues, service in the Armed Forces, etc.) by written application has the right to receive a conclusion on the scientific novelty, theoretical and practical significance of the results of the dissertation and conduct the defense of the dissertation in a one-time academic council within two years after expulsion from graduate school” [3].

As far as the quality of dissertation research is concerned, the main change that will be implemented is the so-called two-level verification of the dissertation. The reasons for this implementation lie, firstly, in the inconsistency of scientific publications with the topic of research, and secondly, in the incompetence of specialized one-time academic council members who fail to see this inconsistency. According to a study by the National Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education, a total of 92% of specialized one-time boards were suspended by the Ministry of Education and Science due to problems with the competence of their members in the subject of the applicant’s research. Most of them occurred in the sphere of health care (30%), law (14%), social and behavioral sciences, as well as education and pedagogy (8%) [3]. A more thorough expertise of the thesis (two-level) is supposed to contribute to the eradication of these negative phenomena.

Finally, regarding scientific publications, indexed in the scientometric databases Scopus or Web of science, – they are desirable, but not mandatory. This is due to the fact that in different fields of sciences there are different

opportunities to be published in publications included in scientometric databases. There are plenty of such journals in natural sciences, however, there are very few of them in the humanities. As for the DOI, after the entry into force of this Order, every publication must have it. An exception may be a publication that contains a state secret or has the label “for official use only” [3].

To sum up, the government documents of the wartime demonstrate the shift towards the European procedure for awarding scientific degrees of doctor of philosophy. This means new challenges both for applicants, and for members of the academic councils. In our opinion, the changes implemented by the National Agency for Quality Assurance of Higher Education will contribute to eliminating the shortcomings indicated above.

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THE PROBLEM OF DEFENDING DISSERTATIONS IN A STATE OF WAR FOR SCIENTISTS IN THE FIELD OF CULTURE AND ART: APPLIED RESEARCH

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Defending dissertations in a state of war for scientists in the field of culture and art – applied research – is a serious problem today.