

Cotutelle Scheme

Approved by: Academic Board on 13 October 1999

Last amended: 10 December 2008

Date of effect: 11 December 2008

1. Background

- 1.1 In February 1998, Senate approved amendments to the PhD resolutions providing for the establishment of cotutelle agreements whereby, if the necessary conditions for joint candidature had been met, a candidate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy could also receive a doctorate from another University in respect of that candidature, each testamur acknowledging the circumstances under which the award was made.
- 1.2 These arrangements were made in response to an initiative of the French Government designed to establish and develop partnerships between French and other research units which include the facilitation of movement of French and other doctoral candidates under joint supervision arrangements. Cotutelle arrangements exist between French universities and universities in a number of other countries.
- 1.3 The prime intent of such agreements is that they form part of an ongoing or developing cooperative research collaboration between a department or research group in the University and one elsewhere. If the sole collaboration between the two departments or research groups was to be in respect of a particular candidature, then the net benefit to the University would have to be questioned.
- 1.4 Evidence of appropriate financial support both for student's and supervisor's/examiners' travel in each case would have to be provided by the School/Faculty concerned. It should be noted that if the agreement is with a French University the student will be required to complete an oral defense of their thesis in order to satisfy French university examination requirements, therefore the cost of airfares and accommodation for external examiners must be taken into consideration by the relevant School at the University of Sydney. The Dean would have to be satisfied that supervision and examination arrangements were satisfactory and fully understood by the potential candidate.
- 1.5 Cotutelle agreements fall under the Guidelines for Inter-Institutional Agreements and require the approval of the Head of School, Dean and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (International) for each individual candidature.
- 1.6 Agreements should be negotiated prior to the commencement of candidature. Back-dated agreements may be made in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (International). However students who have completed more than two semesters of their dissertation research are not eligible for the cotutelle scheme.

- 1.7 Examination arrangements must be approved by the PhD Award Sub-Committee of the Graduate Studies Committee of the Academic Board.

2. General principles governing cotutelle arrangements

The following general principles apply to cotutelle agreements.

- 2.1 A cotutelle agreement must be drawn up between the two participating institutions in respect of each candidate, detailing the particular arrangements pertaining to that particular candidature. Normally such agreements take effect from the beginning of a candidature.
- 2.2 The agreement lists the two supervisors who are to undertake the joint supervision.
- 2.3 The candidature is to be divided between the two countries with alternate stays in each of the two countries and a minimum of 30% in each country.
 - 2.3.1 The agreement sets out the arrangements with regard to fees. At the least a candidate should be exempt from fees at one institution. An Australian student would be HECS exempt and an international student would normally receive at least a fees waiver scholarship for the period within Australia. An overseas student proceeding under a cotutelle arrangement would be otherwise subject to the normal requirements and arrangements for international students.
 - 2.3.2 Unless otherwise agreed by the Parties in writing (noting the potential impact on the Student's insurance coverage), the Student will simultaneously enrol at The University of Sydney and the Partner Institution for each year of the candidature.
 - 2.3.3 The agreement should specify the copyright of the thesis and other intellectual property issues.
 - 2.3.4 The thesis is to be written in either English or the language of instruction at the other participating institution, with an abstract provided in the other language.
 - 2.3.5 There is to be one examination process, and in the initial agreement it is determined whose processes will be followed, with both Universities agreeing to respect the outcome. There would be an exchange of letters with the candidate to ensure he/she was fully aware of all the special arrangements applying.
 - 2.3.6 The Candidate shall be entitled to graduate at the University of Sydney and receive a testamur which (a) states the conferral of the Jointly Awarded Degree; and (b) carries the names of both The University of Sydney and the Partner Institution.

3. Country-specific principles

- 3.1 France

In respect of a cotutelle arrangement with a French university, the following principles apply:

- 3.1.1 If the examination is carried out by a French institution at least two examiners would be appointed by each institution. Of the two examiners nominated by the University of Sydney, one must be external. Two of these examiners (one nominated by the French institution and the external examiner nominated by the University of Sydney) prepare written reports on the thesis which are made available to the candidate and the examining jury. The candidate is required to defend the thesis in person by the way of an oral defense (*Viva Voce*) in French or English and to provide an oral summary in the other language. The candidature does not progress to the oral defense stage if the examiners are not convinced of the candidate's *prima facie* preparedness.
- 3.1.2 If the examination is carried out under the University of Sydney's procedures the relevant Sydney Faculty would coordinate the examining process in the normal way.
- 3.1.3 The successful outcome of either examining process would be the award of the PhD from the University of Sydney and a Doctorat from the relevant French institution. The agreement would state that the award was made as a consequence of a cotutelle agreement with the University of The French Doctorat is normally awarded with the qualification *honorable, très honorable* or *très honorable avec félicitations*. This could be accommodated within the Sydney examination process by specifically asking examiners for their recommendation in respect of the Doctorat.
- 3.1.4 The signing of such an agreement, particularly if the French institution is to examine, has financial implications for the University. At the very least the University may have to fund expenses associated with two examiners attending a thesis defense. Support for the student concerned, including travel, is another consideration. However, the intent of such agreements is that they should operate in a broader context of cooperative research between the two institutions. Schools/Faculties proposing cotutelle arrangements would have to certify that the necessary financial support would be forthcoming. There is some French Government funding available on a competitive basis.

Cotutelle agreement pro-forma/checklist

Attach documents as appropriate

University of Sydney Department
Proposed partner institution and department
Evidence of past and ongoing research collaboration including any existing cotutelle agreements
Proposed candidate and qualifications
Research topic
Rationale for a cotutelle agreement rather than other means of collaboration
Proposed supervisors and qualification/position University of Sydney
Partner Institution
Proposed periods of residence at each institution

Proposed language of thesis
Proposed form of examination
Evidence of willingness of partner institution to enter into an agreement
Arrangements for fees
Scholarship/stipend and travel support for candidate
Funding arrangements for travel for supervisors/examiners
Evidence of candidate's understanding of proposed arrangements
Evidence of consultation with International Office to ensure visa and other requirements have been considered
Evidence of consultation with Student Centre to ensure Student Information System requirements have been considered
Other comments

Approvals
Head of Department
Dean
Pro-Vice-Chancellor (College)
<i>Copy to be sent to Chair, Graduate Studies Committee and the Scholarships Officer</i>
Notification to Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education)
Approval by Vice-Chancellor if no previous cotutelle agreement in existence with this institution