

DOCTORAL DEFENSE

Authorisation to defend a thesis is granted by the head of Université de Technologie Belfort-Montbéliard (UTBM), upon the doctoral school (DS) head's recommendation, and on proposal from the thesis supervisor (*article 17 of the decree of 25 May 2016, modified 1 July 2016, setting the national framework of doctoral training and the modalities leading to the deliverance of the French doctoral degree*).

The deadline for defending a thesis at UTBM in the academic year 2025/2026 without administrative re-enrollment is set to 31 December 2026.

AT LEAST 2 MONTHS BEFORE DEFENSE: DESIGNATION OF REPORTERS, COMMITTEE MEMBER PROPOSAL AND BEFORE DEFENSE MANUSCRIPT ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION

Information about defense and manuscript electronic submission are completed in the PhD student's ADUM profile by the PhD student and his/her thesis supervisor to generate a pre-filled request file for authorization to defend.

To guide the PhD student, **a tutorial is available on his/her ADUM profile.**

DESIGNATION OF REPORTERS

Reporters will meet the following conditions:

- there will be at least two of them
- they will be external to the research unit, the DS and the registration institution
- they will be habilitated to direct research (HDR) or holders of equivalent qualification based on their academic achievements
- they will belong to different research units
- they will have no publication in common (whether published, under way or submitted) with the PhD student

If a researcher from a foreign Higher education institution is proposed, or a non-HDR reporter in exceptional circumstances, the thesis supervisor submits the prospective reporter's CV to the DS head for approval prior to their submission on ADUM.

Th reporters receive a letter requiring them to upload their signed report on ADUM, within one month from thesis reception and 14 days before defense at the latest, otherwise defense may be delayed.

DESIGNATION OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Committee composition will be as follows:

- 4 to 8 members
- at least half of them will be external to the research unit, the DS and the registration institution
- at least half of them will be professors or staff with equivalent ranking according to article 6 of the decree of 16 January 1992
- at least one university professor or lecturer will be present.

Equal gender representation should be sought for.

In the light of the reports, authorization to defend will be granted by the head of UTBM, upon the DS director's recommendation.

Then an official notification will be sent to the jury members, who will have access to the reporters' reports on ADUM website.

MANUSCRIPT SUBMISSION

You upload the digital version of your thesis on your ADUM personal web page. This version, whose submission complies with article 24 of the decree of 25 May 2016, is the same as the one sent to the reporters and the jury.

Once these steps are completed and your choices for the publication are done, you save and validate.

Your thesis supervisor is informed that he has to check and validate the file.

Your doctoral school then receives your application. It checks that the proposals for the jury and rapporteurs comply with the regulations in force and, where applicable, with the cotutelle agreement. If there are any errors in the application, the DS will give you your hand back (you will be notified by e-mail) so that you can correct your data. If (or when, after correction) the application is correctly completed, the DS validates it.

AT LEAST 14 DAYS BEFORE DEFENSE: AUTHORIZATION TO DEFEND

Once your doctoral school has received the reports and provided that they are favorable, the head of your doctoral school signs the authorization to defend. The file is then transmitted to the head of UTBM, who issues the final authorization.

An official notice is sent to the members of the jury, who have access to the reports on ADUM.

ON DEFENSE DAY

Conditions :

- a president is designated by the committee members
- the president of the committee must be a professor, a director of research – *in compliance with the decree of 15 June 1992 establishing the list of civil servant corps equivalent to university professors*). The thesis supervisor, the thesis co-supervisor, an HDR lecturer or an HDR research fellow cannot be presidents of the committee
- all members may take part to defense *via* videoconference or electronic communication allowing their identification and their effective participation to a collegial debate, provided that the required technical characteristics for ensuring simultaneous and uninterrupted transmission of the debate are met
- if one or several jury members happen to be unable to participate to defense, the composition of the remaining committee members (at least 4 members) should meet the requirements described above, namely at least 50% of members external to the co-accredited institutions for the DS and 50% of Professors or equivalent academics
- the thesis supervisor can participate to the jury's debate but does not take part in the deliberation or final decision

The thesis supervisor brings all the forms indispensable for defense to take place.

The defense report:

- is written by the president of the committee
- includes the committee's assessment, and potential honours
- is countersigned by all committee members, including the thesis supervisor if he or she is a member of the jury

The defense transcript will be fully completed and will clearly mention:

- the thesis title, which will be identical in all documents (designation of reporters, memoir, defense report)
- the name of the president of the name of the committee members
- the last, first names, and exact titles of all the committee members, including the thesis supervisor
- the signatures of all the committee members, except the thesis supervisor
- the committee's decision as to about thesis publication
- "passed" or "failed"
- If you took the oath.

If one or several members take part to defense *via* videoconference, the president of the jury will have previously received all the proxies (delegations of signature) from the jury members in videoconference so that the report may effectively be signed by all members.

The defense transcript will be sent to the doctoral school 15 days after defense at the latest. The full report will be sent to the office of doctoral studies as soon as possible.

WITHIN THE THREE MONTHS FOLLOWING DEFENSE

After revising the thesis as required by the committee during defense, you will proceed with the electronic submission of the thesis on your ADUM profile.

Your thesis supervisor (in the case of minor corrections) or the president of your defense jury (in the case of major corrections) will check that the corrections requested by the jury have been made.

Your diploma will then be printed and delivered to you (please refer to the diploma delivery procedure on the Collège doctoral website for details of how to receive your diploma).

SPECIAL CASES

In camera thesis defense

In exceptional cases, defense may be held *in camera* for confidentiality reasons.

Confidentiality agreements for the reviewers, the jury members and eventual guests are at your disposal in your ADUM personal space if you did check the "confidential thesis" box while preparing your defense. If you can't find these documents, please get in touch with your doctoral school.

Defense in videoconference

Please indicate this choice when you launch your defense procedure so that it can be approved by the head of UTBM (according to the article 19 of the decree of 25 May 2016).

Absent committee member cannot be taken into account:

If the absence of a committee member has not been anticipated and is not justified, the committee member will not be taken into account.

Absent committee member allowed to take part to the jury:

The committee complies with current regulations (at least half of its members Professors in compliance with the decree of 16 January 1992, and half of them external to the co-accredited institutions for the DS). The thesis supervisor informs the DS about the absence of a committee member as soon as he/she knows about it so that the following procedure might be implemented:

- the committee member will send a report (if he/she is a reporter, his/her pre-report will be sufficient) and a list of questions he/she would have asked the student if he/she had been present
- the thesis supervisor will bring the "certificate of absent committee member" form, which will be signed by himself/herself and the president of the committee at the end of defense
- the report and the questions will be read by the president of the jury during defense
- the proof of absence will be added to the defense transcript

Guests will neither be mentioned in the documents nor sign the reports.

REFERENCE TEXTS

- decrees of 25 May establishing the national training framework and the modalities leading to the deliverance of the French doctoral degree
- decree of 15 June 1992 establishing the list of civil servant corps equivalent to university professors and lecturers as designated by the members of the CNU (National Council of Universities).