

VILNIUS GEDIMINAS TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

REGULATIONS ON ADMISSION TO THIRD-CYCLE STUDIES (DOCTORAL STUDIES)

CHAPTER I GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. Vilnius Gediminas Technical University regulations on admission to third-cycle studies (doctoral studies) (hereinafter referred to as the Regulations) determine the procedure of admission for doctoral studies conducted by Vilnius Gediminas Technical University (hereinafter referred to as VILNIUS TECH) and other institutions, that implement joint doctoral studies together with VILNIUS TECH.

2. The admission dates for doctoral studies are approved every academic year by the order of the VILNIUS TECH rector and announced on the VILNIUS TECH official website.

3. Admission is carried out to state-funded and non-state-funded (full-time and part-time) doctoral study positions. Individuals who have studied at a state-funded position for more than half of their doctoral studies duration, foreign nationals, who have pursued doctoral studies abroad and who have already held a doctoral degree cannot apply for state-funded doctoral study places.

4. Admission is carried out separately to the full-time and part-time doctoral positions for each partner institution that has acquired the right to the doctoral degree.

5. Admission to doctoral studies is carried out through an open competition. The procedure of admission to the doctoral studies: submission and registration of applications and documents for admission to the doctoral studies; applicants of doctoral studies participate in the motivation interview at the scientific field doctoral committees; signing of the doctoral study contract.

6. Lists of dissertation topics and their supervisors have been published on the official VILNIUS TECH websites and partner institutions with which VILNIUS TECH has joint doctoral programs.

CHAPTER II SUBMISSION OF ADMISSION DOCUMENTS

7. Applicants who have attained the specified qualification in the relevant field of study, as outlined in Table 1, are eligible for admission to doctoral studies.

Table 1. Qualification requirements

Field of study code	Field of study	Qualification requirements
H 003	History and Theory of Arts	Individuals who have obtained a master's degree in architecture, landscape architecture, art studies or a related field, or an equivalent qualification (art studies, etc.)
S 003	Management	Individuals who have obtained a master's degree in management or a related field or an equivalent qualification (business, public administration, economics, law, political science, sociology, psychology, educology, etc.)
S 004	Economics	Individuals who have obtained a master's degree in economics or a related field, or an equivalent qualification (management, business, sociology, etc.)

Field of study code	Field of study	Qualification requirements
S 008	Communication and information	Individuals who have obtained a master's degree in communication or a related field or an equivalent qualification (Economics, Political Science, Sociology, Social Work, Anthropology, Social Geography, Psychology, Public Safety, Information Services, Communication, Publishing, Journalism, Law, Business, Management, etc.)
T 001	Electrical and Electronic Engineering	Individuals who have obtained a master's degree in electrical engineering or a related field, or an equivalent qualification (electronic engineering, informatics, informatics engineering, etc.)
T 002	Civil Engineering	Individuals with a master's degree in civil engineering or a related field, or an equivalent qualification (safety engineering, geology, materials technology, environmental engineering, production engineering, transportation engineering, etc.)
T 003	Transport engineering	Individuals with a master's degree in transport engineering or a related field, or an equivalent qualification (aeronautical engineering, mechanical engineering, marine engineering, electronics engineering, civil engineering, energy engineering, computer science engineering, business, etc.)
T 004	Environmental Engineering	Individuals with a master's degree in environmental engineering or a related field, or an equivalent qualification (chemistry, physics, environmental science, ecology, civil engineering, mechanical engineering, chemical engineering, energy engineering, biotechnology, etc.)
T 008	Materials engineering	Individuals with a master's degree in materials technology or a related field, or an equivalent qualification (technological science, mechanical science, physics, chemistry, biology, etc.)
T 009	Mechanical engineering	Individuals with a master's in mechanical engineering or a related field or equivalent qualification (manufacturing engineering, transport engineering, bioengineering, physics, mathematics, etc.)

8. To enter the competition for a doctoral study position, interested individuals are required to submit the following documents:

8.1. application form¹;

8.2. a diploma confirming a master's degree or a qualification corresponding to it and its supplement (originals of the diploma and its supplement are submitted, after the documents are formalized, the diploma and supplement are returned). Academic institution certificate of completion and results of master's degree studies is not accepted. If the diploma was obtained at a foreign

¹ The application form is available on the VILNIUS TECH website. Applicants for doctoral studies may specify no more than one dissertation topic per science field in their application (from the published list of dissertation topics or propose their topic when enrolling in a non-state-funded study place).

university, a certificate of recognition of the higher education qualification obtained abroad issued by the Study Quality Assessment Centre (SKVC) or VILNIUS TECH International Studies Centre must be submitted together with the diploma (qualifications related to higher education that have been issued in Latvia or Estonia are the subject to automatic recognition since 2019). The average of the grades of the completed Master's (or equivalent) studies must be at least 7.0 (on the ten-point scale); otherwise, the applicant's documents will not be accepted;

8.3. curriculum vitae (CV);

8.4. one or more recommendations from scientists are required, with one of them being the recommendation consent of the scientific supervisor of the dissertation topic to which the applicant is applying. The recommendations should be prepared within the same calendar year as the admission to doctoral studies;

8.5. a list of scientific publications and their copies. If there are no existing publications, a research proposal, based on the specified topic in the application, or a scientific paper, related to the dissertation topic, specified in the application (up to 30 pages);

8.6. a copy of the bank transfer receipt as proof of payment for the application fee;

8.7. a copy of the passport or a copy of the identity card;

8.8. foreign applicants who intend to study in English are required to submit proof of English proficiency, such as an IELTS (score of 6 points), a TOEFL (score from 70-78 points), or a *Duolingo* certificate indicating a B2 level of English (issued no more than 3 years ago). However, if the first or second-cycle studies were completed in English, the English proficiency certificate is not necessary.

8.9. consent for the processing of personal data at Vilnius Gediminas Technical University.

9. Applicants are advised to submit their application and all mandatory documents to the VILNIUS TECH Doctoral School before the specified deadline, which is publicly announced on www.vilniustech.lt. Documents issued in any language other than Lithuanian or English must be translated into one of these languages and duly certified following the procedures prescribed by the laws of the Republic of Lithuania. Failure to submit all required documents will result in the application not being processed, and the applicant will be notified of this in writing.

CHAPTER III COMPETITION SCORE AND ITS CALCULATION

10. Applicants seeking admission to doctoral studies in the field of science are selected through a competitive process based on their competitive score. The competitive score (*KB*) for doctoral studies admission comprises the following components:

$$KB = 0.15 \times TB + 0.15 \times VB + 0.7 \times PB,$$

here, *TB* – represents the evaluation of the novelty, relevance, and alignment of the dissertation topic with the priority scientific research areas of the department (unit) by the scientific field doctoral committee (with a maximum score of 10 points);

VB – score evaluation of the scientific activity of the prospective supervisor of the candidate for doctoral studies consists of:

- number of publications (in technological sciences only *Web of Science* (WoS), in social and humanities – *Web of Science* (WoS) and/or the number of publications in *Scopus* in the last 5 years) compared to the scientific activity of other prospective supervisors;
- effectiveness of doctoral training (number of doctoral students who defended dissertations / (number of admitted doctoral students – number of currently studying doctoral students) in the last 5 years) (up to 4 points);

$$\text{effect. of doct. training} = \frac{\text{number of doctoral students who defended dissertation}}{(\text{numb. of admitted doc. stud.} - \text{numb. of doc. stud. current. studying})}$$

- an additional 1 point awarded for the applications submitted during the current calendar year to the Research Council of Lithuania (LRC) for doctoral places or *MSCA Doctoral Networks* call (1 point).

The points assigned in the main admission round are carried forward to the secondary admission round; they are recalculated only if, before the second admission round, new articles have been published or a doctoral dissertation has been successfully defended;

PB – evaluation of the applicant's preparation for doctoral studies in points (up to 10 points), calculated as follows

$$PB = 0,25 \times MP + 0,25 \times PK + 0,5 \times SIV,$$

here *MP* is the scoring of scientific publications published or accepted for publishing in the relevant field of science, calculating the applicant's contribution proportionally according to the number of authors (up to 10 points):

- 8 points – an article in a scientific journal (except MDPI and *Emerging Source Citation Index* (ESCI)) with a citation index in the *Web of Science* database, and in the fields of social sciences and humanities and the *Scopus* database;
- 6 points – an article in a scientific journal (MDPI and *Emerging Source Citation Index* (ESCI)) with a citation index in the *Web of Science* database, and in the fields of social sciences and humanities and the *Scopus* database;
- 4 points – an article in another scientific journal or the publication of the proceedings of an international conference (except for the conference of young scientists);
- up to 2 points – an article in the publication of the proceedings of the conference of young scientists or in electronic media, and if there are no such works, a research proposal (which summarizes the relevance of the topic, scientific novelty and problem, purpose, tasks, significance, methodology and expected results);
- up to 1 point or scientific paper (the scientific paper must consist of: an introduction, literature review, research methodology and bibliography). The scientific research proposal and the paper are evaluated by the chairman and secretary of the doctoral committee of the relevant field of science (in which VILNIUS TECH has the right to do doctoral studies).

PK - evaluation of the interview at the scientific field doctoral committee for admission to the doctoral studies (up to 10 points). During the interview, it is recommended (a maximum of 20 minutes is allocated for the doctoral candidate's interview), that the applicant's scientific qualifications (2 points), understanding of the selected topic's scientific problems (2 points), ability to formulate answers within the selected scientific topic (2 points), scientific research experience (2 points), preparation and motivation to study for a doctoral degree, and the ability to answer questions in a foreign language are assessed (2 points). The assessment also includes an evaluation of whether applicants work in other institutions will have sufficient time available to dedicate to research activities, attend lectures, participate in internships, and engage in conference attendance. If the interview with the applicant is evaluated with 4 points or less, the scientific field doctoral committee may not recommend the applicant for admission to the doctoral studies;

SIV – the weighted average of the grades of completed master's degrees or equivalent studies (at least 7 points), calculated as follows

$$SIV = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n DP_i \cdot DK_i}{\sum_{i=1}^n DK_i},$$

here *n* is the number of items; *DP_i* – subject grades; *DK_i* – is the number of subject credits.

11. In the event of applicants having an equal number of competitive points, the higher position in the competitive queue is awarded to the candidate whose published scientific publications (*MP*) possess a higher rating.

CHAPTER IV COMPETITION FOR ADMISSION TO THE DOCTORAL STUDIES

12. Attendance at the doctoral committee meeting for admission to doctoral studies is mandatory for all applicants; the time and venue of which are posted on the www.vilniustech.lt website; failure to attend will result in the applicant's candidacy not being considered. The decision regarding the applicant's participation in the doctoral study admission meeting is made by the doctoral committee of the respective scientific field on a case-by-case basis. An audio or audio-video recording is made during the field committee meeting for doctoral admissions (the recording after admission by the scientific field committee secretary should be submitted to the Doctoral School and stored for up to 1 year). Supervisors of the dissertation topics for which the applicants are applying should participate in the meeting for admission to doctoral studies. If the supervisor is unable to attend scientific committee meeting due to the serious reasons, the interview should proceed under the standard procedures. Applicants, together with their supervisors, are invited to attend the interview individually. After the interview with the applicants, the scientific field doctoral committee calculates the competition score (*KB*) of each applicant.

13. Applicants must achieve a minimum competitive score of 6.5. Those who score below the minimum competitive score are ineligible to apply for state-funded doctoral study positions.

14. If, at the time of admission, the doctoral committee for the relevant scientific field concludes that the applicant's competencies are insufficient, it may prescribe supplementary doctoral-level modules to be taken in the first year of study, which the doctoral candidate must complete in addition to the doctoral study modules.

15. Applicants are arranged in descending order of competitive score in the competitive queue of each field of science. The doctoral committee selects the applicants with the highest competitive score from the list of those invited to the doctoral program. Applicants who did not get into state-funded places may be offered to study at their own expense.

16. The list of dissertation topics, indicated in the application of those invited to study, is published on www.vilniustech.lt website.

17. Applicants who have obtained the highest competition scores and fall within the quota of funded study places set by the state shall be considered invited to the state-funded doctoral study places. The Doctoral School shall inform the applicants who participated in the doctoral admission competition about the admission results individually, to the e-mail address specified in the application for the admission to the doctoral study.

18. Study contracts for admitted candidates must be signed within the dates announced. Doctoral study contracts may be signed in person at the Doctoral School. If the individuals who are invited to study fail to sign the study contract within the specified deadlines, the invitation to study becomes invalid, and the vacant positions are transferred to the next stage of admission.

CHAPTER V APPLICATION FEE

19. According to Article 28, Part 2, paragraph 14, Article 83, Parts 1–3 of the Law on Science and Studies of the Republic of Lithuania, the VILNIUS TECH Senate determines the tuition fee and the amounts of contributions that are not directly related to the implementation of the study program. Prices and fees are published on the websites of VILNIUS TECH and partner institutions.

20. The application fee can only be paid to the specified banks. Details of the admission fee: recipient – Vilnius Gediminas University of Technology; recipient's bank – Swedbank AB, account no. LT32 7300 0100 0245 9012 or AB SEB, account no. LT39 7044 0600 0031 7750; the name of the fee – Doctoral admission fee; payment code – 102918; payer code – the code of the enrolling person.

If the fee is not paid or paid to another account, the application fee and the application will not be considered. The application fee is non-refundable.

CHAPTER VI FINAL PROVISIONS

21. Admission to doctoral studies is organised by the VILNIUS TECH Doctoral School and is carried out by certain scientific fields doctoral committees. Address: Vilnius Gediminas Technical University (VILNIUS TECH), Doctoral School, Room SRC 803, Saulėtekio al. 11, LT-10223 Vilnius; tel. (8 5) 274 4956; email *doktor@vilniustech.lt*. Applicants' documents are accepted on working days following the dates and deadlines for admission to doctoral studies as approved by the rector of VILNIUS TECH.

22. If there are remaining vacancies after the conclusion of the initial admission period for the doctoral studies, an additional competition for admission may be announced.

23. Substantiated appeals concerning the admission results must be submitted to the Doctoral School within the dates specified on the www.vilniustech.lt website. Appeals are reviewed and decisions made by the Doctoral Student Appeals Examination Commission, established by the Rector's order, for all cases not covered by the Regulations.

CHAPTER I SCIENTIFIC ESSAY

1. The scientific essay must address the selected scientific topic for doctoral admission. It is to be an independent, original work that demonstrates the applicant's theoretical and methodological knowledge, prior research experience in the chosen scientific field, critical-thinking skills, originality of ideas, and capacity for scholarly inquiry. A bachelor's or master's final project – or any written work prepared during earlier studies – may not be submitted.

2. The scientific essay should follow these recommended specifications: the length of the scientific essay should be up to 30 pages; formatting: *Times New Roman*, 12-point font, single line spacing; the academic Lithuanian or English language should be used; the title must correspond to the selected dissertation topic. The scientific essay shall comprise the following sections: introduction – outlines the relevance and significance of the research, the scientific problem, research aim, objectives, and expected results. Literature review – an up-to-date review of the latest scientific literature relevant to the dissertation's topic should be provided. Research methodology – defines the intended research methods or overall methodological approach. References – lists all sources cited in the paper, formatted in APA style.

3. The applicant's scientific essay should be submitted to the Doctoral School along with other application documents. Members of the scientific field committee evaluate the applicant's scientific essay, taking into account the dissertation topic supervisor's proposed evaluation.

CHAPTER II RESEARCH PROPOSAL

5. The research proposal must be prepared for the selected dissertation topic.

6. The purpose of a research proposal is to assess the applicant's subject-specific knowledge, critical-thinking ability, originality of research ideas, ability to formulate and pose relevant research questions and objectives, theoretical preparedness, proficiency in selecting and applying appropriate research methods, clarity of argumentation, and command of academic writing conventions—including proper use of sources.

7. The applicant ensures that the submitted proposal is original work and accepts full responsibility for ensuring that it does not infringe third-party copyrights, disclose confidential information, or contain material subject to publication restrictions under the laws of the Republic of Lithuania.

8. The proposal must follow the template provided at www.vilniustech.lt (available in Lithuanian and English). It must concisely present the research relevance, scientific novelty, problem statement, literature review, aim and objectives, practical significance, methodology, and expected results.

9. The scientific research proposal must include the dissertation topic supervisor's evaluation.

10. The members of the scientific field committee evaluate the research proposal.

CHAPTER III GUIDELINES FOR THE INTERVIEW AND QUESTIONS

It is essential to concentrate on each applicant's academic and research qualifications and to avoid questions that may be perceived as biased or discriminatory. The interview process should be conducted fairly and impartially; all applicants must be given the same core questions and any, if

necessary, follow-up questions to ensure that every candidate has an equal opportunity to demonstrate their scholarly potential.

11. All applicants' submitted documents should be reviewed before the motivational interview begins.

12. At the beginning of the scientific committee meeting, all candidates who are present, both in person and participating remotely, along with their prospective supervisors, should be invited. The committee chair introduces the members of the specific field committee, outlines the meeting procedure in Lithuanian (and also in English if there are foreign candidates), and informs that candidates and their supervisors will be invited for the interview individually (with up to 20 minutes allotted to each candidate).

13. Questions asked during the motivational interview should include: scientific qualifications and research experience; understanding of the selected topic problem; details related to the research proposal or paper; content of publications and the applicant's contribution; the applicant's preparation and motivation for doctoral studies; long-term scientific or academic plans.

14. Evaluate the candidate's scientific potential, and communication skills in Lithuanian (and English), including the ability to clearly express thoughts, argue, and present ideas.

Recommended questions to ask during the interview

15. What motivated you to pursue doctoral studies at VILNIUS TECH?

16. Could you describe your scientific qualifications and research experience?

17. Which research methods do you intend to employ in your study?

18. How do you plan to contribute to your scientific field both during and after your doctoral studies?

19. If applicable, could you please introduce/describe a research project you have worked on, your role in it, and what you learned from the experience?

20. Doctoral regulations require a research internship abroad (the cumulative duration over the entire period of doctoral studies should be no less than 3 months). Have you identified a host institution or country, and what factors influenced your choice?

21. The doctoral regulations require that doctoral students must engage in on-campus research activities for at least 20 hours per week. How do you intend to meet this requirement?

22. What are your long-term career objectives once you have completed your doctorate?

Questions to avoid during the interview

23. Avoid the question groups relating to the candidate's private life (such as marital status, religious affiliation, or political convictions).

24. Avoid the question groups that could be considered discriminatory (on the grounds of race, gender, ethnicity, age, or disability).

25. Avoid the question groups concerning the candidate's health issues.

Avoid any question groups that are not directly related to the candidate's academic or scientific qualifications, research experience