UNU Rules Governing Postgraduate Education at UNU Resource Nexus

SUMMARY SHEET

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1 Definitions

In these Rules:

1. "UNU" means the United Nations University.

2. "UNU Resource Nexus" means the United Nations University Institute for Integrated Management of Material Fluxes and of Resources.

3. "TU Dresden" means the Technische Universität Dresden.

4. "Joint PhD" means the Joint Doctor of Philosophy Degree in a Nexus Approach to the Sustainable Management of Environmental Resources between UNU and TU Dresden.

5. "JJDRP" means the Joint Junior Doctoral Researcher Programme in a Nexus Approach to the Sustainable Management of Environmental Resources between UNU and TU Dresden.

6. "GBJPE" means the Governance Board for Joint Postgraduate Education established between UNU and TU Dresden.

7. "GBJPE Sub-committee" means a sub-committee established for each Participating Faculty which serves to review matters related to Doctoral Candidates in accordance with the Supplemental Agreement.

8. UNU Resource Nexus Academic Committee means the UNU Resource Nexus body of qualified experts that advises on academic standards and reviews postgraduate programmes at UNU Resource Nexus. It is composed of the UNU Resource Nexus Director, Head of Research, and Head of Education.

9. Participating Faculties means any faculty within TU Dresden that hosts a doctoral candidates.

10. "Doctoral Candidate" means a person taking part in the Joint PhD or JJDRP.

11. "Credit" means one credit unit based on a study load of thirty (30) hours of work.

12. "Dissertation" means a cumulative, structured piece of academic writing based on original research comprising a framework paper and a number of publications. The framework paper ties the publications together by presenting the overarching thematic context, research aim, objectives and methods.

13. "Supplemental Agreement" means the agreement between UNU and TU Dresden on Collaboration in Postgraduate Education.

2 Citation

These Rules are made pursuant to Section 23 of the UNU Programmes and Awards Statute and may be cited as the "UNU Rules governing Postgraduate Education at UNU Resource Nexus".

3 Applicability

Doctoral Candidates taking part in the Joint PhD and JJDRP shall be responsible for complying with these Rules as well as policies, guidelines and other issuances which may be issued from time to time by UNU or UNU Resource Nexus. Doctoral Candidates shall familiarize themselves with other general information documents including, but not limited to, the applicable examination procedures issued by TU Dresden. UNU reserves the right to change rules, policies, guidelines, and other issuances whenever such action is deemed appropriate or necessary.

4 Joint Doctor of Philosophy in a Nexus Approach to the Sustainable Management of Environmental Resources (Joint PhD)

1) The Joint Doctor of Philosophy in a Nexus Approach to the Sustainable Management of Environmental Resources (Joint PhD) is offered by UNU and TU Dresden.

2) These Rules complement the Doctoral Regulations ("Promotionsordnung") of the Faculty of Environmental Sciences of TU Dresden for the Joint PhD.

3) Doctoral Candidates shall familiarize themselves with other general information documents including, but not limited to, the TU Dresden Doctoral Regulations for the Joint PhD.

4.1 Academic Degree

4) The terminal degree offered in the Joint PhD shall be a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in a Nexus Approach to the Sustainable Management of Environmental Resources.

5) The academic degree is only awarded when a minimum of 210 credit points, including the Dissertation, has been earned, comprising a minimum of 25 course credits and 185 dissertation credits.

4.2 Admission Requirements

Academic Qualifications

6) A strong academic record, holding a Master's degree in an academic field related to environmental resource management, with an equivalent grade of 2.5 or better according to the German grading system.

Professional Experience and Research Background

7) Prior experience in conducting research, preferably transdisciplinary or interdisciplinary (e.g., research-oriented Master's thesis, research projects, or consultancy work) research related to the chosen research topic.

8) A demonstrated academic and/or professional interest in at least one of the following areas: Sustainability and sustainable development; Development cooperation; The Resource Nexus.

Language Proficiency

9) Fluency in English (written and spoken) is required.

4.3 Selection

10) The UNU Resource Nexus Academic Committee decides on the selection of Joint PhD Doctoral Candidates based on the review and recommendation by the relevant GBJPE Sub-committee.

4.4 Curriculum

11) The curriculum of the Joint PhD shall be as follows:

Semester	Course	Credits	Credits per semester
1	Resource Nexus I: Conceptual Foundations	5	
	Resource Nexus II: In practice	5	
	Dissertation	20	30
2	Resource Nexus III: Implementation and case studies	4	
	Advancing the Resource Nexus approach in the UN system	2	
	Dissertation	24	30
3	Advancing the Resource Nexus approach in the UN system	2	
	Dissertation	28	30
4	Advancing the Resource Nexus approach	2	
	Dissertation	28	30
5	Advancing the Resource Nexus approach in the UN system	2	
	Dissertation	28	30
6	Advancing the Resource Nexus approach in the UN system	2	
	Dissertation	28	30
7	Resource Nexus III: Implementation and case studies	1	

	Dissertation	29	30
		Grand Total:	210

4.5 PhD Dissertation

12) Doctoral Candidates must submit a (paper-based) Dissertation in English.

13) The Dissertation shall follow the doctoral examination procedures issued by the TU Dresden Faculty of Environmental Sciences.

14) The oral defence is hosted at UNU Resource Nexus and it is subject to the TU Dresden Doctoral Regulations referred to in paragraphs 2 and 3 of Rule 4 above.

15) A copy of the Dissertation shall be lodged with the competent office at UNU Resource Nexus.

4.6 Completion of the Joint PhD Programme

16) Doctoral Candidates who have successfully completed the Joint PhD receive a PhD degree certificate in English with a German translation stating the award of the academic degree. The degree certificate shall be jointly signed by the Rector of UNU, the Rector of TU Dresden, the Director of UNU Resource Nexus, and the Dean of the Faculty of Environmental Sciences at TU Dresden, and it shall be marked with the seals of TU Dresden and UNU.

5 Joint Junior Doctoral Researcher Programme in a Nexus Approach to the Sustainable Management of Environmental Resources (JJDRP)

17) The JJDRP is a postgraduate credit-bearing programme offered by UNU to Doctoral Candidates supervised or co-supervised by UNU Resource Nexus supervisors. The curriculum comprises several modules presented over a period of six semesters, concurrently with the doctoral research studies for the Dissertation. The curriculum introduces Doctoral Candidates to the Resource Nexus approach and its relevance to the UN system.

5.1 Certificate

18) The certificate offered for the JJDRP shall be a UNU Certificate in a Nexus Approach to the Sustainable Management of Environmental Resources.

19) The certificate may be awarded when a minimum of 25 credit points has been earned.

5.2 Eligibility and Admission Requirements

20) Only Doctoral Candidates of the JJDRP Programme shall be eligible to take part in the Programme.

21) The UNU Resource Nexus Academic Committee decides on the selection of JJDPR Candidates based on the review and recommendation by the relevant GBJPE Sub-committee.

5.3 Curriculum

22) The curriculum of the JJDRP shall be as follows:

Semester	Course	Credits	Credits per semester
1	Resource Nexus I: Conceptual Foundations	5	
	Resource Nexus II: In practice	5	
2	Resource Nexus III: Implementation and case studies	4	
	Advancing the Resource Nexus approach in the UN system	2	
3	Advancing the Resource Nexus approach in the UN system	2	
4	Advancing the Resource Nexus approach in the UN system	2	

5	Advancing the Resource Nexus approach in the UN system	2
6	Advancing the Resource Nexus approach in the UN system	2
7	Resource Nexus III: Implementation and case studies	1
		Grand Total: 25

6 Module descriptions

6.1 Resource Nexus I: Conceptual Foundations

Duration	Semester
Module level:	Doctoral
Description:	This course introduces the learner to the conceptual foundations of the Resource Nexus approach to the sustainable and integrated management of environmental resources, covering the following topics: • the triple planetary crisis; • natural and environmental resources; • the sustainable and integrated management of environmental resources; • the role of systems analysis and modelling; • key and derived environmental resources, their interdependencies and interconnections; • the relationship in advancing the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); and • review of scientific literature to establish the state-of-the-art knowledge about the Resource Nexus approach on a specific topic.
Assessment:	Credit points are awarded upon passing the module assignment(s).
Credits	5

6.2 Resource Nexus II: In practice

Duration	Semester
Module level:	Doctoral
Description:	This course covers practical application of the Resource Nexus approach, covering the following topics: • the Resource Nexus approach in different sectors, such as the textile, construction, food, agriculture or electronics sector; • examples of specific resource groupings and their systemic interdependencies and interconnections; • achieving impact with the implementation of the Resource Nexus approach by following the theory of change framework; • how to deal with actors and stakeholders involved in the Resource Nexus approach; and • development of an introductory chapter for a research study that applies the Resource Nexus approach.
Assessment:	Credit points are awarded upon passing the module assignment(s).
Credits	5

6.3 Resource Nexus III: Implementation and case studies

Duration	Multiple semesters
Module level:	Doctoral

Description:	This course equips the learner with the knowledge and skills for implementing the Resource Nexus approach, covering the following: • apply methods and tools for the Resource Nexus approach in research and practice; and • develop, implement and communicate the candidate's Resource Nexus researc results and potential impacts.
Assessment:	Credit points are awarded upon passing the module assignment(s).
Credits	5

6.4 Advancing the Resource Nexus approach in the UN system

Duration	Multiple semesters
Module level:	Doctoral
Description:	This course introduces the learner to the UN system, how the Resource Nexus relates to the UN and how to engage with stakeholder organizations, such as UN entities, international organizations, research institutes and universities, covering the following: • initiate, establish and develop partnerships, particularly with the UN, Member States and other stakeholder organizations; • communicate the Resource Nexus approach and research findings to the scientific and professional community of UN Member States, e.g., through conference presentations, popular media articles and policy briefs; • advocate the Resource Nexus approach, e.g., through social media and news items; and • develop and present education and capacity development material about the Resource Nexus.
Assessment:	Credit points are awarded upon passing the module assignment(s).
Credits	10

6.5 Dissertation

Duration	7 semesters
Module level:	Doctoral
Description:	Refer to Definition 12 of these Rules and the doctoral regulations of the Faculty of Environmental Sciences.
Assessment:	The Dissertation examination follows the doctoral regulations of the Faculty of Environmental Sciences.
Credits	175

7 Academic Conduct

23) Doctoral Candidates shall be individually responsible for their actions whether acting alone or in a group. Doctoral Candidates shall make responsible decisions concerning their academic conduct.

24) Doctoral Candidates will be expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing offences, and to take responsibility for their actions. The concept of integrity will include, but not be limited to, probity, impartiality, fairness, honesty and truthfulness in all matters affecting their work and status.

7.1 Misconduct

25) In these Rules, "misconduct" means conduct on the part of a Doctoral Candidate which impairs the reasonable freedom of other persons to pursue their studies, research, duties or lawful activities, whether or not on the premises of the UNU. Misconduct extends to conduct on the part of a Doctoral Candidates which

is detrimental to the proper order or good conduct of the UNU or is adverse to its academic standing or standing as an institution established under the auspices of the United Nations.

26) Without limiting the generality of this Rule 7.1, a Doctoral Candidate shall be guilty of misconduct if they engage in any of the following actions:

a) Plagiarism, including self-plagiarism and assignments generated by artificial intelligence software;

b) Misrepresenting their work;

c) Co-operation or collaboration in contravention of the rules set by the module instructor;

d) Unauthorized aids or assistance as defined by the module instructor;

e) Unauthorized resubmission of work;

f) Impersonating another individual or entering into an arrangement with another to be impersonated;

g) Obtaining, distributing, or receiving any confidential academic material without the express consent of the instructor;

h) Theft of intellectual property;

i) Forging a signature to certify completion of a module assignment or a recommendation;

j) Academic or admission fraud;

k) Altering, falsifying or withholding a relevant document or record kept by the University;

l) Making unwarranted and unsubstantiated allegations concerning the conduct or reputation of members of the UNU personnel;

m) Misconduct in research including breach of ethics in conducting research, including the falsification of data;

n) Hoarding or damaging library materials;

o) Disruptive, dangerous, aggressive or threatening behaviour, including by electronic means;

p) Misuse of UNU resources, equipment or supplies, including, but not limited to, computers and network, keys, records, permits, letterhead;

q) Disruption or obstruction of any teaching activity, examination, official meeting or other proceeding of or within the UNU;

r) Disruption or obstruction to any UNU personnel in the performance of their duties;

s) Unauthorized use of equipment, material or a facility or service;

t) Entering any part of the UNU premises to which the Doctoral Candidate knows, or ought reasonably to know, that entry is prohibited;

u) Failing to pay any fee or debt for which the Doctoral Candidate is personally responsible to the UNU on the date on which payment falls due.

8 General Procedures Regarding Disciplinary Action

27) Doctoral Candidates who violate Section 7 will be subject to a range of disciplinary actions ranging from a warning to expulsion from the University.

28) Fairness will be fundamental when dealing with Doctoral Candidates. Doctoral Candidates shall be informed of policies, procedures or guidelines that may affect their academic progress or their conduct, and may question whether decisions are consistent with those policies, procedures or guidelines.

8.1 Procedural Fairness

29) The procedures for handling offences shall reflect the UNU's commitment to fairness.

30) Every Doctoral Candidate shall be entitled to:

a) A presumption of innocence unless the contrary is established beyond reasonable doubt;

b) Be made aware of the case against them;

c) Have matters addressed fairly and expeditiously;

d) Be accompanied by a support person to any meeting with administrators and to any hearing;

e) Have matters heard by those who are not sitting in judgment of their own actions or decisions;

f) Know, respond to and seek clarification of evidence presented by witnesses; and

g) Decisions based on the balance of probabilities with consideration given to consistency and UNU precedent.

31) University personnel may not investigate a matter in which they have a material interest or in which any potential conflict of interest may arise. In the event of a conflict of interest, the most senior UNU staff member at UNU-FLORES not involved in the case shall replace the individual found to have a conflict of interest and shall take the necessary action to implement a reasonable remedy.

8.2 Summary Powers Relating to Misconduct

32) Where it appears to an instructor or to a person (whether or not a member of the University personnel) conducting an activity on behalf of the University that a Doctoral Candidate is guilty of misconduct, the instructor or the person in question may exclude the Doctoral Candidate from that activity for the duration of the activity only if the Doctoral Candidate's participation is deemed an obstruction to the proper enjoyment of the activity by other Doctoral Candidates.

33) The exclusion of a Doctoral Candidate from an activity of the University must be accompanied by a charge of academic misconduct.

8.3 Charges of Misconduct

34) An instructor or a person (whether or not a member of the UNU personnel) conducting an activity on behalf of the UNU may charge a Doctoral Candidate with misconduct either on their own initiative or on the complaint in writing of a third person but shall in every case first give the Doctoral Candidate an opportunity of making any representation.

35) A charge of misconduct shall be:

a) In writing, specifying the time and place of the alleged misconduct, giving relevant particulars;

b) Signed by the instructor or person making the charge, and dated; and

c) Lodged with the UNU Resource Nexus Academic Committee.

36) The fact that a charge has been preferred against a Doctoral Candidate shall not be entered on any formal record kept by the UNU with respect to the Doctoral Candidate until the charge has been finally disposed of in accordance with these Rules, and then only if it results in the imposition of a penalty on the Doctoral Candidate.

37) If the Doctoral Candidate is found guilty of misconduct, the charge and the nature of the offence may be entered on the Doctoral Candidate's academic record.

38) Every decision after a hearing shall be recorded in writing and shall be transmitted to the UNU Resource Nexus Academic Committee.

8.4 Retention in Security of Documents

39) Where misconduct has been alleged, any documents considered relevant to the allegation shall be retained in security until the matter has been finally determined.

40) If the Doctoral Candidate in a case is found not guilty by the UNU, all records of the case, including the reports of all hearings, shall be expunged from the files of the UNU within a period of six (6) months.

8.5 Procedure for Hearing Charges

First Hearing

41) Charges of misconduct shall be heard in the first instance by the UNU Resource Nexus Academic Committee, unless the penalties available to the UNU Resource Nexus Academic Committee are inadequate, in which case, the case may be referred to the Director of UNU Resource Nexus.

42) At the first hearing the following shall be present:

a) A representative of UNU Resource Nexus;

b) The person who has laid the charge;

c) The Doctoral Candidate;

d) Any relevant witnesses;

e) A third-party independent observer.

43) The independent observer shall be an academic staff member appointed by the UNU Resource Nexus Academic Committee. The person laying the charge and the Doctoral Candidate may also bring to the hearing an adviser.

44) At the first hearing, the person who has laid the charge shall present evidence in support of the charge against the Doctoral Candidate. The Doctoral Candidate shall be given the opportunity to respond and, if they wish, to present evidence refuting the charge.

45) The function of the independent observer shall be to observe the proceedings impartially, and in the event of an appeal to the judgment of the UNU Resource Nexus Academic Committee, be prepared to testify as to the procedures followed.

46) After hearing the Doctoral Candidate, the UNU Resource Nexus Academic Committee may either dismiss the charge or, if there is clear and convincing evidence that the Doctoral Candidate is guilty of misconduct, find the Doctoral Candidate guilty. If the Doctoral Candidate is found guilty, the UNU Resource Nexus Academic Committee may:

a) Issue a reprimand to the Doctoral Candidate and/or,

b) Decide that the marks awarded, in whole or in part, for any examination, essay or other assessment be set aside and a mark of zero (0) used in its place.

47) If the Doctoral Candidate fails to attend the first hearing without a compelling excuse, the hearing may proceed in their absence.

48) If the issue is not resolved to the satisfaction of both parties, a written request may be made to the Directo of UNU Resource Nexus, informing them of the need for a further hearing. This shall be the final appeal.

Second Hearing

49) If the decision of the UNU Resource Nexus Academic Committee in the first hearing is appealed by either party, the charge(s) of misconduct shall be heard by the Director of UNU Resource Nexus.

50) At the second hearing the following shall be present:

- Director of UNU Resource Nexus;
- The person who has laid the charge;
- The Doctoral Candidate;
- The independent observer present at the first hearing;
- A representative of the UNU Resource Nexus Academic Committee;
- Any relevant witnesses.

51) Both the person laying the charge and the Doctoral Candidate may also bring to the hearing an adviser.

52) At the second hearing, the person who has laid the charge shall present evidence in support of the charge against the Doctoral Candidate. The Doctoral Candidate shall be given the opportunity to respond and, if they wish, to present evidence refuting the charge.

53) The independent observer from the first hearing shall serve as the independent observer at the second hearing. The function of the independent observer shall be to observe the proceedings impartially and, if queried, be prepared to testify as to the procedures followed.

54) After the hearing, the Director of UNU Resource Nexus may either dismiss the charge or, if there is clear and convincing evidence that the Doctoral Candidate is guilty of misconduct, find the student guilty. If the Doctoral Candidate is found guilty, the Director of UNU Resource Nexus may impose a penalty from the list specified in Rule 56 below.

55) If the Doctoral Candidate fails to attend the second hearing without a compelling excuse, the hearing may proceed in their absence.

56) If the Director of UNU Resource Nexus finds the complaint proved, they may impose a penalty from the list below:

    a) That the Doctoral Candidate be excluded from the University either permanently or for such periods as it shall determine;

    b) That the Doctoral Candidate's participation in the Joint PhD or JJDRP be terminated;

    c) That the marks awarded, in whole or in part, for any examination, essay or other assessment be set aside and a mark of zero (0) used in its place;

    d) That restitution be made for any property removed or damaged by the Doctoral Candidate;

    e) That the admission of a Doctoral Candidate to a degree of the University be withheld pending the settlement of any outstanding obligation to the University;

    f) That the Doctoral Candidate be expelled from residential accommodation provided by the University, if any;

    g) That the Doctoral Candidate be reprimanded; or

    h) That any combination of the foregoing penalties be imposed.

57) Every decision of the Director of UNU Resource Nexus shall be recorded in writing and shall be transmitted to the Rector. Upon receipt of such decisions, the Rector will review the process followed and the decision taken by the Director of UNU Resource Nexus. In exceptional cases, the Rector may task an inquiry committee to look into the matter and recommend an alternative course of action. The Rector shall decide the composition of the inquiry committee and shall appoint its members. The inquiry committee shall decide its rules of procedure.

58) If the charge of misconduct is determined to be unfounded, all records of the case, including the reports of all hearings, shall be expunged from the files of the University within a period of six (6) months.

9 Student Complaints Procedure

59) The UNU seeks to maintain the highest standards of integrity and fairness in its relationship with Doctoral Candidate. It recognizes that Doctoral Candidate need a clear framework within which to resolve problems they may encounter within the UNU. The Doctoral Candidate complaint procedure outlined here aims to ensure that Doctoral Candidate have accessible, consistent, and efficient procedures for the resolution of Doctoral Candidate complaints.

60) These procedures reflect the UNU's devolved structure and ensure that there is appropriate local and central responsibility for resolving Doctoral Candidate complaints.

61) Doctoral Candidate who lodge a complaint or appeal in accordance with these procedures will not be victimized or discriminated against.

62) The UNU will monitor and review complaints made under these procedures in order to continually improve its processes, while respecting the confidentiality of individuals.

9.1 Scope and Applicability

63) Students taking part in Joint PhD and JJDRP may use these procedures for courses and activities of the UNU.

64) Complaints must be made within thirty (30) days from the event's occurrence. Complaints made outside this period will not normally be considered unless the Doctoral Candidate can demonstrate reasonable grounds why the complaint was not made earlier.

65) All Doctoral Candidate complaints and grievances will be handled in a serious, sensitive, confidential and timely manner and discussed only with those persons relevant to the case or who can provide specialist advice.

66) The complaints procedure may be used for both individual and collective concerns relating to:

a) Academic facilities;

b) Academic services;

c) Student support services;

d) Administrative services;

e) An alleged action or inaction by the UNU or a member of its personnel, including harassment;

f) Teaching and supervision;

g) Assessment of academic work.

67) Harassment is any improper and unwelcome conduct that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause offence or humiliation to another person. Harassment may take the form of words, gestures or actions which tend to annoy, alarm, abuse, demean, intimidate, belittle, humiliate or embarrass another or which create an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment. Harassment normally implies a series of incidents. Disagreement on academic performance is normally not considered harassment.

68) Sexual harassment is understood as any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favour, verbal or physical conduct or gesture of a sexual nature, or any other behaviour of a sexual nature that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause offence or humiliation to another, when such conduct interferes with work or studies, is made a condition of advancement or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work or study environment. While typically involving a pattern of behaviour, it can take the form of a single incident. Sexual harassment may occur between persons of the opposite or same sex. Both males and females can be either the victims or the offenders.

69) In the event that a charge is brought against a member of the University personnel, it will be dealt with separately, at the discretion of the University, through the relevant University procedures. However, every effort will be made to resolve the Doctoral Candidate's specific complaint through the Doctoral Candidate complaints procedure.

70) Doctoral Candidate seeking advice or further information on the complaints procedure may wish to consult:

a) Their academic adviser and/or thesis supervisor;

b) The UNU Resource Nexus Head of Education; or

c) The UNU Resource Nexus Academic Committee.

9.2 Handling of Complaints

71) The Doctoral Candidate complaints procedure is divided into two stages, which must be followed sequentially: the informal stage and the formal stage.

72) For matters of a very grave nature, the Doctoral Candidate may proceed directly to the formal complaint stage.

73) The informal stage of the procedure is designed to provide Doctoral Candidate with an opportunity to resolve concerns informally within their academic programme.

74) In general, the person who or office which is the subject of a complaint have a right to know what is being claimed and who is making a complaint. There may be exceptions to this rule, for instance in the initial stages of harassment claims.

75) If the Doctoral Candidate is concerned to protect their anonymity, the Doctoral Candidate may wish to designate a third party to speak to a member of the UNU Resource Nexus Academic Committee or the Director of UNU Resource Nexus on the Doctoral Candidate's behalf.

76) Records of all complaints, applications for the review of decisions, and the outcomes of the complaint process will be retained for a period of five (5) years. These records will be kept strictly confidential and filed separately from the Doctoral Candidate or personnel file. Parties to the complaint will normally be allowed supervised access to these records.

9.3 Informal Procedure

77) Doctoral Candidate are encouraged to raise their complaints directly with the person or office concerned. This should be done as soon as possible and normally within a few days (normally within 14 days) of the problem arising.

78) If this initial discussion does not satisfactorily resolve the matter, the Doctoral Candidate should ask to discuss it informally with the UNU Resource Nexus Head of Education as soon as possible and normally within a few days of the problem arising.

79) At any time the student may seek advice from one of the following:

    a) the UNU Resource Nexus Academic Programme Director;

    b) their supervisor; or

    c) a member of the UNU Resource Nexus Academic Board.

80) If the Doctoral Candidate is not satisfied with the response to their complaint, the Doctoral Candidate may proceed to the formal complaint stage. The formal complaint procedures should be initiated as soon as possible, normally within ten (10) days following the outcome of the informal complaint stage.

81) Subject to Rule 72, Doctoral Candidate may initiate a formal complaint procedure only when the mechanisms provided for in the informal procedure have been exhausted.

9.4 Formal Procedure

82) In order to lodge a formal complaint, the Doctoral Candidate must submit their complaint in writing, either in hard copy or electronically, to the UNU Resource Nexus Academic Committee.

83) The University should be provided with the information necessary to consider all aspects of the complaint. The complaint must be specific and comprehensively documented. The Doctoral Candidate should present full details, including their name and address, any relevant documentation, and dates, locations and witnesses as appropriate. Details of any previous unsuccessful attempts at informal resolution should also be included.

84) Doctoral Candidate may expect to receive an acknowledgement from the UNU Resource Nexus Academic Committee of their written complaint within five (5) working days from receipt. The University aims to resolve most complaints within thirty (30) working days. Doctoral Candidate will be informed if there is likely to be any delay in the process.

First Hearing

85) Doctoral Candidate complaints shall be heard in the first instance by the UNU Resource Nexus Academic Committee.

86) At the first hearing the following shall be present:

    a) A representative of the UNU Resource Nexus Academic Committee;

    b) The person who is presenting the complaint;

    c) The accused (if any);

    d) Any relevant witnesses;

    e) A third-party independent observer.

87) The independent observer shall be a faculty member appointed by the UNU Resource Nexus Academic Committee. Both the Doctoral Candidate presenting the complaint and the accused may bring to the hearing an adviser.

88) At the first hearing, the Doctoral Candidate shall present evidence in support of the complaint. The accused shall be given the opportunity to respond and, if he or she wishes, to present evidence refuting the charge.

89) The function of the independent observer shall be to observe the proceedings impartially, and in the event of an appeal to the judgment of the UNU Resource Nexus Academic Committee, be prepared to testify as to the procedures followed.

90) After hearing the Doctoral Candidate and the accused, the UNU Resource Nexus Academic Committee may either dismiss the complaint or, if there is clear and convincing evidence that the complaint is founded, take the necessary action to implement a reasonable remedy.

91) If the accused fails to attend the first hearing without a compelling excuse, the hearing may proceed in their absence.

92) If the issue is not resolved to the satisfaction of both the Doctoral Candidate and the accused, either may submit a written request to the Director of UNU Resource Nexus, informing them of the need for a further hearing. This shall be the final appeal.

Second Hearing

93) If the decision of the UNU Resource Nexus Academic Committee in the first hearing is appealed by either party, the appeal shall be heard by the Director of UNU Resource Nexus.

94) At the second hearing the following shall be present:

a) Director of UNU Resource Nexus;

b) The Doctoral Candidate issuing the original complaint;

c) The accused (if any);

d) The independent observer present at the first hearing;

e) A representative of the UNU Resource Nexus; and,

f) Any relevant witnesses.

95) Both the parties may also bring to the hearing an adviser.

96) At the second hearing, the Doctoral Candidate that has filed the complaint shall present supporting evidence. The accused shall be given the opportunity to respond and, if he or she wishes, to present evidence refuting the charge.

97) The independent observer from the first hearing shall serve as the independent observer at the second hearing. The function of the independent observer shall be to observe the proceedings impartially and, if queried, be prepared to testify as to the procedures followed.

98) After the hearing, the Director of UNU Resource Nexus may either dismiss the appeal or take the necessary action to implement a reasonable remedy.

99) If the accused fails to attend the second hearing without a compelling excuse, the hearing may proceed in his or her absence.

100) Every decision of the Director of UNU Resource Nexus shall be recorded in writing and shall be transmitted to the Rector. Upon receipt of such decisions, the Rector will review the process followed and the decision taken by the Director of UNU Resource Nexus. In exceptional cases, the Rector may task an inquiry committee to look into the matter and recommend an alternative course of action. The Rector shall decide the composition of the inquiry committee and shall appoint its members. The inquiry committee shall decide its rules of procedure.

101) The University shall inform the Doctoral Candidate in writing of the outcome of the complaint review process and shall state the reasons upon which it is based.

Retention in Security of Documents

102) Any documents considered relevant to the investigation shall be retained in security until the matter has been finally determined.

103) If the complaint is determined to be unfounded, all records of the case, including the reports of all hearings, shall be expunged from the files of the University within a period of six (6) months.

10 Final Provisions

10.1 Amendments

104) Amendments to these Rules shall be made pursuant to Section 23 of the UNU Postgraduate Programmes and Awards Statute.

105) These Rules shall be valid for the duration of this Joint PhD programme with TU Dresden. In the case of an amendment to these Rules, Doctoral Candidates will continue to adhere to the Rules in place at the time of their enrolment. Doctoral Candidates who wish to adopt amended Rules must first submit a signed written request to the UNU Resource Nexus Academic Committee.

10.2 Announcement

106) The UNU Resource Nexus Academic Committee shall ensure proper announcement of these Rules, as provided by the Rector and of all amendments to these Rules and any policies, guidelines and other such issuances pursuant thereto.

107) Up-to-date digital versions of the Rules, policies, guidelines and other such issuances will be made available on the University website.

10.3 Unforeseen Circumstances

108) With regard to these Rules, the Director of UNU Resource Nexus shall decide on any matter not provided for therein.

10.4 Hardship and Force Majeure

109) Upon consultation with the UNU Resource Nexus Academic Committee, the Director of UNU Resource Nexus or the Rector may decide to deviate from these Rules, if strict adherence to these Rules would result in undue hardship for a Doctoral Candidate, under the following circumstances:

a) Illness of the Doctoral Candidate concerned;

b) Physical, sensory or other impairments of the Doctoral Candidate concerned;

c) Pregnancy of the Doctoral Candidate concerned;

d) Special family circumstances; or

e) Other personal circumstances, not mentioned in paragraphs a) to d) above which would lead to manifestly unreasonable results. Other personal circumstances not covered in paragraphs a) to b) above, which, in the judgment of the Director of UNU Resource Nexus or Rector, would result in clearly unreasonable or inequitable outcomes for the Doctoral Candidate.

110) If unforeseen and exceptional circumstances occur beyond the control of the Doctoral Candidate and/or UNU Resource Nexus, and are solely the result of force majeure, such as crises or war, humanitarian emergencies, geopolitical tensions, or the outbreak and containment of contagious diseases (e.g., epidemics or pandemics), that prevent students from fulfilling examination or other requirements stated in these Rules, in consultation with the UNU Resource Nexus Academic Committee, the Director of UNU Resource Nexus or the Rector may deviate from these Rules and prescribe or provide appropriate alternatives.

10.5 Coming into Force

111) These Rules shall take effect on 06 December 2025.