



Effective from: 01. July 2025.

DS's quality assurance plan

The aim of the doctoral training is to enable doctoral students to plan and carry out primary and secondary research and to process the literature in an analytical and synthetic manner in order to continue their high-level scientific work. Another requirement is the acquisition and use of scientific methodological applications during research work. The doctoral student must demonstrate these skills and abilities by preparing and defending a dissertation. The subject topics are reviewed at least every three years.

are required to prepare a "Training and Research Plan" by October 15 (*March 15 in the mid-semester*). The research plan submitted by the doctoral students is reviewed by an expert committee established by the DI¹ Council. At the end of the academic year, PhD students, together with their supervisor, prepare a Partial Report on their academic and scientific progress (credits, publications, language exam, study trip abroad, etc.), which is also reviewed by the DI Council. Fourth-year students are required to prepare a Final Report by August 31 of the given year.

The condition for submitting the dissertation to a workplace or public debate is to meet a specified publication minimum. The public debate is led by a university professor. Two reviewers are invited for the workplace and public debate, of which at least one is always external. Of the two reviewers of the workplace debate, one is usually invited to review again, and the other is included as a member of the public debate committee. As a result, doctoral dissertations are usually graded by three reviewers during the procedure (workplace and public debate). The dissertation, the theses in Hungarian and English, the date and place of the workplace and public defenses, and the opinions of the opponents are published on the DI website and made accessible to everyone. Doctoral students and doctoral candidates are expected to participate in workplace and public debates regularly. In order to continuously raise the standard of the complex exam, CODS revises the curriculum of the complex exam subjects every 2 years .

Every year in November, on the occasion of Science Day, we organize a Scientific Forum and a Doctoral Conference in Hungarian and English. At the Scientific Forum, PhD students report on their scientific results related to their research field before a committee appointed by the DI Council. The materials of the most high-quality presentations are usually published by PhD students as scientific papers in domestic or foreign journals.

The suitability of DI lecturers is continuously monitored by CODS. DI lecturers may be lecturers and researchers with the title of habil. or equivalent scientific achievement, who – upon the recommendation of the head of DI – CODS considers suitable for a given period to perform teaching, research and thesis supervision tasks within the DI.

The CODS continuously evaluates the progress of PhD students in their doctoral training, as well as the performance of the doctoral student and the supervisor. The doctoral student is required to submit an interim report and publication list in electronic form to the DI every academic year, signed by the supervisor, which archives the student's annual reports. The CODS pays special attention to the scientific performance of PhD students required to initiate

¹ DI=DS (doctoral school)



the degree-granting procedure. The council of the doctoral school informs the Doctoral Council of Social Sciences about the results of the periodic qualification, and if necessary, makes a proposal to modify the supervisor or to reclassify the state-supported / state-scholarship doctoral student into a cost-reimbursed/self-funded training.

In order to monitor the educational activities of the DI, student reviews of teaching work must be carried out every semester. The aim of this is to contribute to raising the standard of education at the DI by getting to know the opinions of students, to increase the efficiency of the training, to give the DI management and teachers the opportunity to assess their work and to facilitate the elimination of discovered errors and deficiencies. The reviewer is a doctoral student who is a student at the DI and is participating in the training, the subject teacher of the DI is the subject teacher, the opinion is the evaluation of the doctoral student who is a student at the DI and is participating in the training on the standard and quality of the education provided at the DI. The anonymity of the reviewer must be preserved in the review procedure. The reviewer may not suffer any disadvantage for expressing his/her opinion, and the head of the DI guarantees this. Student reviews of teaching work cover:

- a) the level and quality of education;
- b) the curriculum taught;
- c) methods of education;
- d) the material and technical conditions of education;
- e) the relationship between teachers and students;
- f) other aspects that determine the quality of education.

student representative in coordination with the DI . The head of the DI and the dean are entitled to use the evaluation to raise the standard of education in the DI and to improve the teaching work of the educational organizational units of the Faculty. Every subject-responsible lecturer who has been evaluated has the right to view the aggregated results of the evaluations relating to him or her at the head of the DI. Based on the results of the questionnaire survey, the best lecturer participating in the PhD training can be awarded the Teacher of the Year award. The Doctoral School also awards a Gold/Silver/Bronze Commemorative Medal in recognition of outstanding work done for the benefit of the Doctoral School.

In connection with the DI's supervisor activities, it is mandatory to conduct a student evaluation of the supervisor's work each academic year . The purpose of the student evaluation of the supervisor's work is to contribute to the assessment of the DI's supervisor's work in addition to raising the standard of supervision in the DI with the aim of eliminating the identified errors and deficiencies.

DI takes the following principles into account in its operations:

- a) The principle of *professional control* and quality focus: the control of international and domestic scientific public opinion must be enforced throughout the entire process of doctoral training and degree acquisition.
- b) The principle of *publicity* : the main phases of the quality assurance system are widely public to the professional and scientific public, meaning that publicity must be enforced throughout the entire process of doctoral training and degree acquisition (opponents'



opinions are posted on the DI website before the public debate).

- c) All events of the degree-granting process are displayed on the DI website (dates of complex exams, workplace debates and public debates). The dissertations and thesis booklets submitted for public debates, as well as the opponents' opinions, are also available on the DI website. The dates of public debates are announced on the website of the National Doctoral Council and the dissertations and thesis booklets of those who have earned their degrees are uploaded .
- d) scientific *ethics* requirements: the relevant positions of the Scientific Ethics Committee of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences must be enforced during the development and operation of the quality management system.
- e) The principle of *feedback* : the stakeholders of the operation of the DI, i.e. the lecturers participating in the doctoral training, supervisors and members of the various bodies of the doctoral school, receive continuous feedback on the quality of their activities and have the opportunity to provide feedback on their experiences.
- f) Principle of intellectual property protection: the doctoral training is fully in line with the laws of the European Union and Hungary on the protection of intellectual property.
- g) The principle of enforcing *individual responsibility* : in doctoral training, it is clearly transparent who has what tasks and responsibilities.
- h) Principle of *documenting* processes : Documentation is prepared for all decision points related to doctoral training and degree acquisition, but at the same time, the DI strives to impose a minimal administrative burden on teachers and researchers participating in training and degree acquisition procedures by operating the quality management system.

Any scientific ethics issues that may arise must be dealt with in accordance with the provisions of the Code of Ethics of the University of Debrecen.

The registration of graduates is carried out by both the Secretary of the DI and the Administrator of the DI. Former doctoral students who have obtained a degree at the Doctoral School are also invited to the Scientific Forum, the Doctoral Student Conference, which is held annually. *An alumni meeting* is also connected to the scientific event. We intend to pay great attention to maintaining relations with graduates within the framework of *the alumni program* in the future.

Evaluation of the Doctoral School's quality assurance process based on Figure 1

- 1) We consider the continuous review and updating of training-related documents to be a basic task of quality assurance. The Regulations stipulate that the Operating Regulations (MSZ) and the training program are reviewed at least once a year by the DI Council (CODS) and updated in accordance with changes. The CODS reviews, evaluates and authorizes research topics before publishing them. At the same time, it also examines the suitability of the supervisors. Similarly, the CODS qualifies and evaluates the lecturers and subject programs participating in the doctoral training, and approves the DI sample curriculum.
- 2) Applicants submit applications for the published research topics (MSZ § 7 (5) par .), in which they formulate their research ideas and motivations (preliminary topic plan). The



admission committee is approved by the Doctoral Council of Social Sciences on the initiative of the CODS. The appointed admission committee evaluates the performance of the applicants in accordance with the principles set out in § 7 (4-7) of the Operating Regulations and makes a proposal for the admission of the applicants, which is approved by the DCOSS.

- 3) According to the Operating Regulations, the student compiles his/her individual training plan at the beginning of the training, which is approved by the head of the Department of Doctoral Studies in accordance with the principles set out in the Regulations. Based on this, the student must obtain the required study credits. Deviations from the plan are only possible with the permission of the head of the doctoral school. To develop the chosen topic, the student compiles a research plan in continuous consultation with his/her supervisor in accordance with the provisions of the MSZ. The research plan submitted by the doctoral students is reviewed by an expert committee established by the Council of the Department of Doctoral Studies, the doctoral student publicly “defends” his/her ideas formulated in the research plan and reflects on the opponents. Taking into account what was said in the discussion, he/she finalizes his/her research plan. Doctoral students in the 2nd, 3rd and 4th years report on their research results in the framework of a scientific presentation.

The student's training and research performance is evaluated by his/her supervisor in his/her report each semester. Upon termination of the studentship, the student summarizes his/her performance in a final report, which is certified by the supervisor's signature.

- 4) The condition for initiating the degree-granting procedure is the submission of the relevant application and its annexes to the Doctoral Council for Social Sciences. Applying for the degree-granting procedure also qualifies as applying for a complex examination, since the successful completion of the complex examination is a prerequisite for initiating the degree-granting procedure. Based on the application, and on the recommendation of the CODS, the DCOSS decides on the acceptance of the application.
- 5) In the application for the initiation of the degree-granting procedure, the doctoral student also applies for a complex examination. The prerequisite for applying for a complex examination is that the doctoral student has acquired at least 90 credits during the first three semesters of his/her training, and within this, has completed all training credits required by the CODS. Based on the application and the CODS's position, the DCOSS decides on the complex examination subjects and the composition of the complex examination committee. When composing the complex examination committee, the DCOSS takes into account the provisions of the DCOSS and DI regulations on conflict of interest. The complex examination must be completed in public. The complex examination committee consists of at least 3 members with an academic degree, at least one third of its members are external members, and its chairman may be a university professor, habilitated associate professor, habilitated college associate professor, professor emeritus or a lecturer or researcher with the title of Doctor of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. The prerequisite for admission to the complex examination is that the doctoral student's supervisor evaluates the doctoral student's performance in writing and recommends the commencement of the degree-granting procedure. The complex examination consists of two main parts. In the first, theoretical part, the members of the complex examination committee assess the doctoral student's proficiency in at least two examination subjects specified by the DCOSS. In the



second, dissertation part of the complex examination, the doctoral student reports on his/her progress, knowledge of the professional literature, research results, and also describes his/her research plans and publication schedule for the second two-year period of the doctoral training. The complex examination committee evaluates the two parts of the complex examination separately, according to a two-stage evaluation system. The complex examination is successful if both parts receive a "pass" rating from the complex examination committee. The doctoral student may repeat the failed complex examination once during the same examination period. The subject matter of the complex examination subjects and the literature requirements of the curriculum must be made available to the candidate and the examination committee by the subject supervisors. The student must receive the subject matter of the complex examination subjects and the literature to be processed no later than one month before the complex examination. The date of the complex examination must be published on the DI website. A report is drawn up on the complex examination.

- 6) The student can prove his/her research performance through his/her publication activities, the management of which is primarily the responsibility of the supervisors. The publication requirements are summarized in Section 14 of the DCOSS regulations. The DCOSS also checks their fulfillment when applying for a degree and when appointing the public debate committee.
- 7) The doctoral student obtains an absolatory certificate after successfully completing eight semesters or completing a minimum of 240 credits. The absolatory certificate is a document that the doctoral student has fulfilled the study and research obligations of the doctoral program. Based on the fulfillment of the study and research obligations, the DI issues the absolatory certificate to the doctoral students. The detailed procedure for issuing the absolatory certificate is determined by the doctoral councils in the scientific field. The acquisition of the absolatory certificate is confirmed in the electronic study system.
- 8) After the preliminary dissertation and thesis booklet have been compiled and the minimum publication requirement has been met, the DI Council (CODS) prescribes the conduct of a workplace debate. In DI, the conduct of a workplace debate is mandatory. The candidate's supervisor proposes the opponents for the workplace debate to the head of DI. If the supervisor and the head of DI cannot reach a consensus regarding the opponents, the CODS decides on the persons to be invited. The minimum requirement is that at least 5 colleagues with academic degrees and expertise in the given discipline participate in the workplace debate. Minutes must be drawn up of the workplace debate.
- 9) After consultation with the supervisor, the head of the DI makes a proposal for the committees of the public debates to the CODS, which, after its decision, submits them to the DCOSS for approval. Documents required for the approval of the public debate review committee:
 - a) the final doctoral dissertation and thesis booklets (Hungarian-English)
 - b) proof of language proficiency
 - c) professional CV
 - d) publication list



- e) uploading publications to the Hungarian Archives of Scientific Works (HTMW) and the iDEA Science Space
- f) list of publications in foreign and Hungarian languages certified by the library
- g) co-authorship statement for eligible publications
- h) Certificate
- i) Declaration included in the thesis

By issuing the Certificate, the supervisor and the head of the doctoral school unanimously declare that the candidate has fulfilled the training requirements and that his or her thesis, compiled based on independent research, meets both the content and formal requirements.

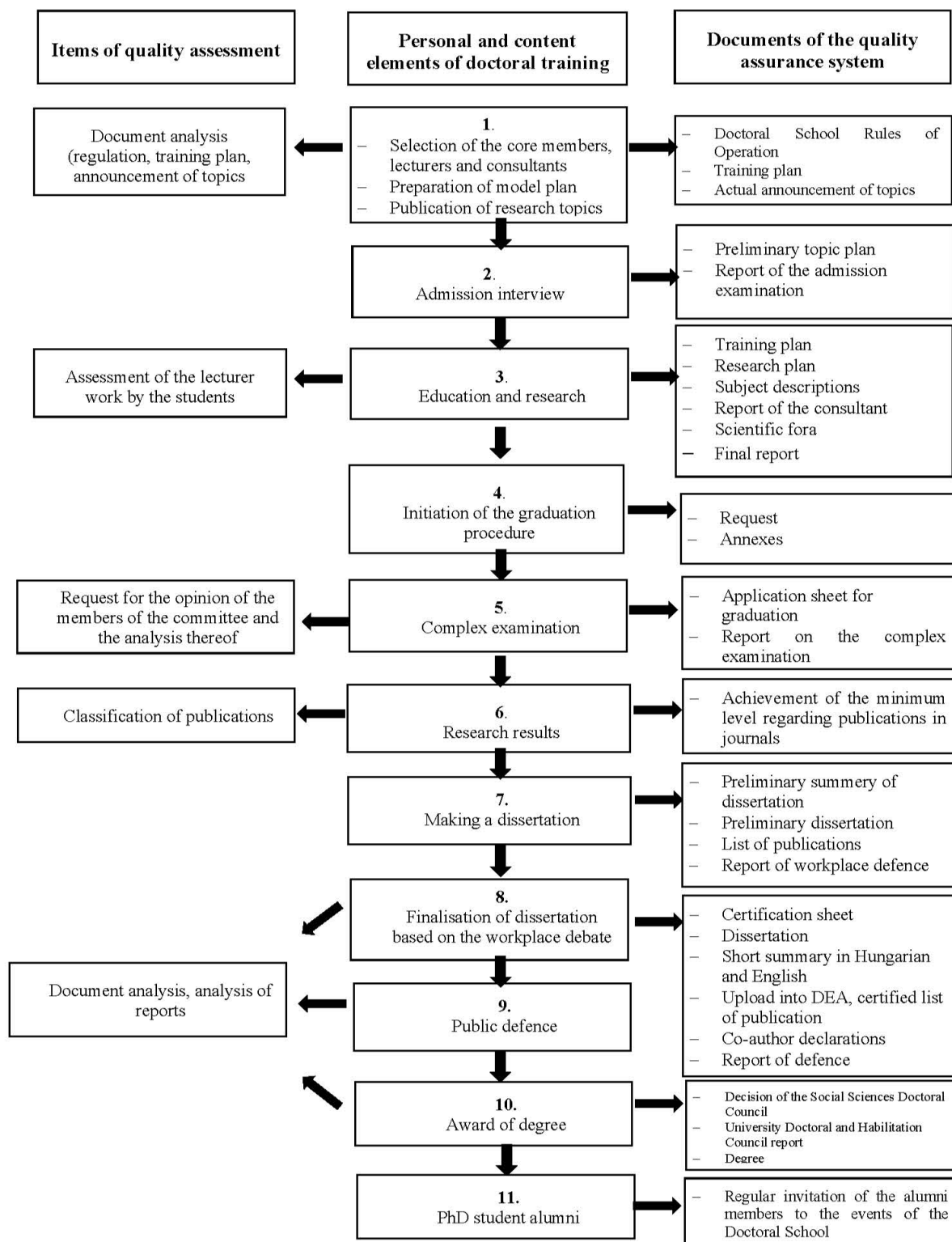
The opponents of the public debate are approved by the DCOSS based on the proposal of the DI and invited by its chairman. One of the opponents (external opponent) must come from an institution other than the one where the doctoral candidate completed his/her PhD studies. The chairman of the committee is proposed from among the university professors, professors emeritus of the Faculty and the regular members of the DI university professors. The members of the review committee must include at least two senior lecturers with external doctoral experience. When composing the committee, an effort must be made to ensure that one of its members is the opponent of the workplace debate. As a result, the committee, including the invited opponents, has at least three members who are familiar with the candidate's work at the level of a reviewer.

The chairman of the DCOSS sets the date of the debate, taking into account the opinions of the opponents and the candidate's responses, and invites the chairman, secretary and members of the committee. The dates of the defenses are published in the doktori.hu database, on the DI website, and the theses and dissertations in electronic form in the Archives of the University of Debrecen.

- 10) Based on the minutes of the successful defense, the DCOSS will once again review the fulfillment of the condition and, based on a secret ballot, make a proposal for the award of the doctoral title, on which the final decision will be made by the University Doctoral and Habilitation Council.



1 : Flowchart of the Doctoral School's quality assurance





The scientific appearance of the doctoral school

Before the integration process of the University of Debrecen, namely in 1993, in the new system of doctoral training, the University of Agricultural Sciences of Debrecen obtained accreditation recognition for PhD training and degree awarding in two disciplines – **Agricultural Science and Economic Science**. In agricultural science, the plant production and agroecology program was accredited, and in economic science, the agricultural economics program was accredited in 1994. The other doctoral programs of DATE were accredited later.

Dr. Zsolt Nemessályi, Professor Emeritus, led the organization of the new system of doctoral training at DATE as the scientific vice-rector, and was even the first head of the accredited agricultural economics program in economics between 1993 and 2000. The scientific standard was guaranteed by the domestic and international recognition and recognition of the university's agricultural economics activities. The program entitled "Agricultural Enterprises and the Economics of Rural Development" had 17 internal and 13 external participants, in addition to the cooperation of 9 foreign institutions. It follows that in the first 7-year period of the doctoral school, doctoral theses based on agricultural economics research and aimed at the development of agriculture and the countryside dominated. The first PhD degrees in economics were awarded in 1998.

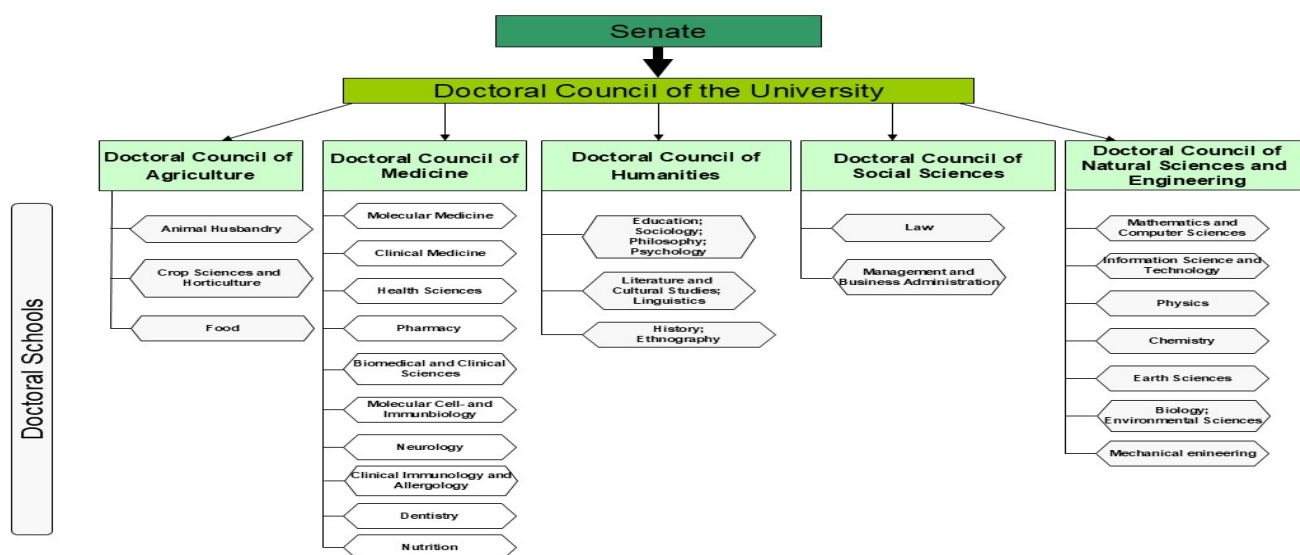
The organization of the doctoral program in agricultural economics into a doctoral school is linked to the name of Professor Dr. Gábor Szabó. The image of the school has been dominated by its multidisciplinary nature since 2000. The Multidisciplinary Doctoral School of Social and Agricultural Sciences took the name of Károly Ihrig in 2008. In 2010, the doctoral school was accredited in the discipline of Management and Organizational Sciences. Following the retirement of Gábor Szabó, the head of the "Doctoral School of Management and Organizational Sciences (formerly Károly Ihrig Doctoral School of Management and Organizational Sciences)" was Dr. Csaba Berde, a university professor, between 2012 and 2019 Dr. József Popp, then from 2019 Professor Dr. Péter Balogh, and from 1 June 2024 Professor Dr. András Nábrádi will perform the management duties.

The University of Debrecen (DE) has a University Doctoral and Habilitation Council (EDHT), which also supervises the training and procedures at the Doctoral School of Business and Organizational Sciences. The operation of the DI is directly supervised by the Doctoral Council of Social Sciences (DCOSS). The decision-making body of the DI is the Doctoral School Council (CODS). The voting members of the Doctoral School Council (CODS) are the head of the DI, the core members of the DI and the elected representative of the doctoral students. Members with the right to consult – at the request of the head of the DI – are the secretary of the DI, the heads of the institutes of the Faculty of Economics (GTK), the emeritus professors and the assistant of the DI. The heads of the programs or schools of the predecessor of the DI are perpetual honorary members of the DI Council and – if they are not core members – may participate in the meetings of the CODS with the right to consult.

The GSZDI, together with the Marton Géza Doctoral School of State and Law, belongs to the Doctoral Council for Social Sciences. The University Doctoral and Habilitation Council (EDHT) of the University of Debrecen coordinates the operation of five doctoral councils in scientific fields and a total of 24 doctoral schools. The structure of the doctoral schools operating at the University of Debrecen and the place of the GSZDI within them is shown in *Figure 2*.



Figure 2: The organizational structure of the doctoral schools operating at the University of Debrecen



Source: DE (2025)

The first study, “The scientific appearance of the doctoral school from 66 dissertations 1993-2010,” was prepared in 2011.

The second analyzes the “fruit” of nearly 20 years of doctoral training. The author, Professor Dr. János Borsos, processes 100 PhD dissertations prepared at the Ihrig Károly Doctoral School (and its predecessors) and summarizes them into 11 thematic groups. He has systematized the goals, new findings and practical results of the dissertation. The novel initiative of Professor Dr. János Borsos, through the integration and content analysis of the scientific products produced over the course of about two decades, provides a good overview of the DI’s activities and research results.

The third book presents the period and “performance” of the 25-year new system of doctoral training. It presents 130 PhD dissertations successfully defended in the doctoral school (until September 2018) organized into 11 thematic groups. It contains the recollections of the graduated PhD students and former doctoral school leaders and supervisors. We sought to answer the question of how much the doctoral school training served the careers of former students who had obtained a PhD degree in practice.



STUDENT REVIEWS OF TEACHING WORK

We would like to draw the attention of the dear reviewers to the fact that the questionnaire is handled anonymously, which is part of the Doctoral School's quality assurance system.

Name of the reviewed instructor:

Subject taught:

What percentage of classes were you present for?

☐0-20% ☐21-40% ☐41-60% ☐61-80% ☐81-100%

What percentage of classes were held?

☐0-20% ☐21-40% ☐41-60% ☐61-80% ☐81-100%

What percentage of the lessons did the subject teacher teach?

☐0-20% ☐21-40% ☐41-60% ☐61-80% ☐81-100%

Please rate the following questions and characteristic aspects on a scale of 1-5! (1 if not at all typical and 5 if very typical of the instructor or the subject taught. Please mark 0 if you cannot decide, have no opinion or if the question is not relevant.)

Question / Aspect	1	2	3	4	5	0
1. The instructor's preparation, professional credibility, and up-to-dateness:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. How do you rate the instructor's explanatory skills and logical reasoning: were the lessons engaging and interesting?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. How helpful is the instructor: what is his/her attitude towards student requests?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. To what extent did the given subject in the PhD training provide higher level knowledge than the subject with the same title or similar content completed during your previous studies?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. To what extent did the instructor address the research characteristics of the given field of study during the course of teaching the subject?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. To what extent did the instructor provide the necessary course materials (aids, notes, etc.) to complete the course?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Ability to meet requirements: if there was a written exam, to what extent were the questions asked in line with the submitted or marked curriculum?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Ability to meet requirements: in the oral exam, to what extent were the questions asked in line with the submitted or marked course material? (Was the instructor curious about what the student knew or rather what he or she did not know?)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. The general atmosphere of the oral exam: human, emotional factors.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. To what extent can the course material be utilized in the researcher's/educator's work?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. To what extent were the definition of the exam requirements, the assessment, and the grade received consistent?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. What is your general impression of the subject being reviewed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. What is your overall impression of the reviewed instructor?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Other comments and adCoDSions:

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