

Quality Assurance Plan of the Interdisciplinary Doctoral School

The plan builds upon the previously established quality assurance principles and procedures of the Interdisciplinary Doctoral School (IDI), follows the requirements and principles of the ESG 2015 standards, and draws on the operational experience accumulated in the doctoral school so far. On this basis, it aims to further develop the culture of quality and to implement innovative practice. Particular emphasis is placed on a **student-centered learning and teaching process**, the **high professional and methodological standards of the instructors**, the **enforcement of quality requirements**, and the **continuous monitoring of student and staff performance**.

1. Normative Framework

The IDI Quality Assurance Plan has been prepared with regard to the following laws, regulations, and guidelines:

- Act CCIV of 2011 on National Higher Education,
- Government Decree No. 387/2012 (XII. 19.) on Doctoral Schools, Doctoral Procedures, and Habilitation,
- The University of Pécs Quality Assurance Regulations, Quality Policy, and Quality Objectives for 2025,
- The Doctoral Regulations of the University of Pécs,
- The Operating Regulations of the BTDT,
- The resolutions of the Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB) and the National Doctoral Council (ODT),
- The IDI Organizational and Operational Regulations.

This plan does not repeat the quality assurance-related provisions of the above regulations; rather, it focuses on **specific procedures, solutions, and requirements** that serve as **special guarantees of quality** and are aimed at further development.

2. Organizational and Responsibility Framework

- The **primary actors** in internal quality assurance are the **program directors** and **specialized committees** of the IDI, under the control of the **IDI Head** and the **IDI Council**. Within the framework set out in this plan, programs may establish their own individual rules and solutions.
- In all its decisions, the **DIT** (Doctoral and Habilitation Council) takes quality assurance goals and principles into account. Each year, during the discussion of

the **self-assessment report** prepared by the IDI Head, it evaluates the implementation of these principles and decides on possible further actions.

- Every **leader, instructor, and supervisor** within the IDI is responsible for consistently meeting the quality and procedural requirements set out in laws and regulations, and for ensuring that students meet them in every phase of training and degree acquisition.
- Instructors and students of the IDI must report to the program or IDI Head any occurrences that contradict quality assurance objectives. The Head must act immediately on the basis of this information and feedback.

3. Quality Assurance Goals and Principles

The IDI aims to ensure the **continuous professional credibility, reliability, and transparency** of its activities, both among academic and student communities. The instructors and graduates of the IDI should be **recognized representatives** of their respective fields and research topics both in Hungary and abroad, receiving the **organizational, infrastructural, and personal support** of the IDI community.

To this end, in designing training programs, selecting students, organizing and evaluating research work, the IDI seeks to apply **international standards** appropriate to each academic discipline.

4. Quality Assurance Tasks in Doctoral Training

Topic Announcement

Program committees strive to announce topics that reflect current trends in the discipline, identify research gaps, align with student interests, and have adequate professional background within the IDI. Only topics with clear professional guarantees may be announced. The announcement process is **dynamic** and may be **reviewed before each admission cycle**.

Selection and Role of Supervisors

- The **supervisor** plays a key role in doctoral training; therefore, the IDI aims to ensure that supervisors are among the most competent experts in their fields, meet accreditation requirements for several years in advance, and are **highly motivated** and available to support students both academically and personally. Preferably, **no more than five students** should be supervised by one person.
- **External supervisors** may be appointed if the expertise required for a topic cannot otherwise be ensured. In justified cases, two supervisors may be appointed, including foreign experts. Therefore, co-supervision is possible in justifiable cases.
- The **selection and monitoring** of supervisors and topics fall under the authority of the program committee, with regular reporting to the DIT. Changes

in supervisor or topic may occur only to ensure stricter enforcement of quality requirements.

Admission to Doctoral Training

- Admission committees are established by the program committees, taking into account the research topics selected by applicants. Decisions are made based on a predefined set of criteria (aligned with the legal requirements) and, if necessary, after consultation with the prospective supervisor.
- The DIT allocates quotas for each program in advance, but these may be adjusted after the entrance examinations to ensure that **the most suitable and motivated applicants** are admitted, especially those with proven research or publication records.

Quality Assurance in Training

- Teaching follows the **approved curriculum** under the supervision of the program director.
- Course instructors are primarily **academics of the University of Pécs** with scientific qualifications and recognized scholarly achievements.
- Guest lecturers may be invited on the recommendation of the permanent faculty, with the program director ensuring that they meet professional expectations. Efforts are made to include as many **domestic and international experts** as possible.
- The DIT annually evaluates the performance of the teaching staff, ensuring that students are introduced to **the latest research developments** in their disciplines.
- The IDI's curriculum includes a **joint educational module**, providing students with interdisciplinary insights across the IDI's three scientific fields. Program directors jointly develop the annual syllabus, aiming to foster **interdisciplinary openness** and **methodological development**.
- Program directors regularly collect student feedback on courses and instructors, including **anonymous evaluations**. Course content and methods must be continuously updated to promote **interactivity** and **student engagement**.
- Instructors are responsible for **clearly defining expectations** and ensuring that assessment standards align with the academic support provided, ideally facilitating progress in students' own research topics.
- The IDI ensures access to **relevant academic sources, data, and documents** through university libraries and individual instructor support, and works to improve the **infrastructure** related to teaching and research.

Supporting and Monitoring Student Research and Publications

The ultimate goal of doctoral training is **a successful defense and a high-quality dissertation**.

- Each student must prepare a **research and publication plan** during the training phase, monitored by the supervisor and reported to the program director.
- Before the comprehensive examination, the student presents their **research results and planned dissertation structure**, with feedback from peers and instructors.
- Both during the training and dissertation phases, the IDI regularly organizes **conferences, workshops, and debates** to support scholarly communication and presentation skills.
- The IDI instructors share relevant information to help students engage with the **academic community** through personal communication, mailing lists, and the IDI website.
- Students are encouraged to participate in **research projects**, apply for **grants and scholarships**, and become active in academic life.
- Supervisors and students are expected to **co-author publications**. Manuscripts must be reviewed by the supervisor before submission.
- Supervisors and program directors are responsible for ensuring that students **meet publication requirements** before submitting the dissertation. Supervisors assist in selecting appropriate journals, guided by **preferred journal lists** based on recommendations of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.
- The IDI provides **financial and organizational support** for outstanding publications, and all students must **register their publications in the MTMT database**.

Defense Procedures

- The **workplace debate**, appointment of **pre-reviewers**, and organization of the **defense** are arranged by the program, ensuring the participation of **recognized experts**.
- Transparent organization of the workplace debate significantly contributes to the **final quality of the dissertation**.
- The supervisor ensures that the doctoral candidate finalizes the thesis based on feedback from the debate and reviews, and must approve submission for defense.
- The **selection of reviewers** is coordinated between the program committee and the supervisor, with formal submission by the program director to the BTDT.
- The candidate's written responses and defense presentation must be prepared in consultation with the supervisor.

- The IDI ensures appropriate **publicity of the defense**, inviting students, faculty, and relevant experts. Defenses may be held in **foreign languages** when international participation is justified.
- Online or hybrid defenses are supported by the IDI to promote **broader academic accessibility**.

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