

Study Programme for the Doctoral School at the Graduate School for Social Research, Polish Academy of Sciences

The Doctoral School has an international profile. The main language of instruction is English. Some courses may be offered in other languages, as necessary. A doctoral thesis may be written and defended in either English or Polish.

The Aim and Three Pillars of the Study Programme

Candidates who have been admitted to the Doctoral School become researchers and work in the academic community of the institutes which co-found the Doctoral School within the GSSR. The aim of the study programme is:

- (a) to consolidate and deepen the theoretical and methodological knowledge in the discipline concerned,
- (b) to broaden the candidates' cognitive horizons and support them in making an informed choice when selecting a research topic for their doctoral thesis,
- (c) to help candidates to be open to other perspectives,
- (d) to develop the ability to conduct independent research that can be useful in science and other sectors,

as well as:

- (e) to develop the ability to combine scientific theories and methods with practical research in a selected field,
- (f) to gain experience in research, including the design of a research project, conducting fieldwork, engaging in teamwork, preparing publications and participating in scholarly debates,
- (g) to prepare a doctoral thesis.

The work on the doctoral thesis and related publications is an integral part of the study programme, which also includes three main types of activities, namely:

1. mandatory courses in a selected academic discipline,
2. optional courses,
3. participation in the activities of a selected research team, understood as a unit (*zakład*), laboratory (*pracownia*) or another organisational unit within the institute concerned.

The mandatory courses in a discipline are also available as optional courses for doctoral students from other disciplines. Moreover, there is a pool of optional courses available to all doctoral students, as well as the possibility for doctoral students to attend selected courses in other academic centres.

Doctoral students are required to participate in the work of at least one research team in one of the doctoral school's co-founding institutes. This may include participation in seminars, conferences, symposiums, summer schools related to a particular topic as well as work on research projects and

publications. In agreement with their supervisor, doctoral students have the option to take part in the work of another research team (or teams) in the co-founding institutes.

Supervisor and Research Team

Academic supervision of the preparation of the doctoral thesis is carried out by a supervisor or supervisors, or a supervisor and support supervisor (in the remainder of this document ‘supervisor’ may also refer to a supervisor and support supervisor). Taking into account the recommendations of the Selection Committee, the Board of the doctoral school recommends a supervisor for each admitted candidate within the shortest possible time after the end of the recruitment. The Scientific Council of the institute competent for the discipline concerned approves the supervisor by adopting a relevant resolution no later than during the third month following the start of the study programme. Together with the doctoral student, the supervisor chooses the research team to serve as the doctoral student’s core environment and guides the student’s academic progress, co-deciding on his/her *individual study programme*. In the case of doctoral students who hold a master’s degree in a field other than the discipline of their doctoral thesis, the supervisor also specifies which courses specific to the discipline of the doctoral thesis to be taken by the doctoral student as part of the *individual study programme*.

Individual Study Programme

Each doctoral student follows an *individual study programme*.

The *individual study programme* should be designed in such a way that doctoral students can acquire the necessary methodological skills and theoretical knowledge to achieve the aforementioned learning objectives. These skills and knowledge will be acquired through participation in the courses and research work of the Institute, writing and presenting texts publicly and undertaking other activities. After the completion of the four-year programme, in addition to the completion of the doctoral student’s own research, the doctoral student will also have gained an insight into various aspects of work undertaken by the research group, such as: research concept development and implementation at various stages, writing a grant application and administering grants, preparing publications, organising scholarly events, alongside important “soft skills” necessary for teamwork.

The doctoral student cooperates with his/her supervisor in order to agree on the *individual study programme* for each academic year. The *individual study programme* for an academic year specifies the mandatory courses to be taken by the doctoral student during the academic year, as well as other courses to be taken, together with the mode of such courses. The *individual study programme* also specifies the research team for the doctoral student to participate in, as well as conferences and other events that the doctoral student plans to attend, other activities planned for the academic year, including the research activities to be undertaken, the publications and sections of the doctoral thesis to be prepared. The *individual study programme* may also include non-academic activities, in particular for non-governmental organisations, commercial companies or public administration, or activities linked to participation in public debates that are in some way related to the doctoral student’s area of academic interest.

As required by Article 202(1) of the Act of 20 July 2018 – “*The Law on Higher Education and Science*” (Polish Official Journal of 2018, items 1668, 2024 and 2245, hereinafter referred to as “the Law”) doctoral students prepare their *individual research proposal* in cooperation with the supervisor, within 12 months from the commencement of the study programme.

Each year, doctoral students present a report on their actual achievements in the academic year, documenting them with the required attachments, alongside a written opinion by the supervisor.

Components of the Individual Study Programme

1) Mandatory Courses

In order for a course to be considered completed, students must pass the final exam. During the first two years of study, doctoral students are required to complete all courses from the list of mandatory courses for the discipline of their doctoral thesis.

Topics of mandatory courses for disciplines covered by the study programme, listed in the language of instruction (with Polish in brackets):

Philosophy

Major Theories and Concepts in Contemporary Humanities (*Główne teorie i pojęcia we współczesnej humanistyce*)

Interpreting and constructing – working with a philosophical text (*Czytanie i pisanie tekstów filozoficznych*)

The Human in the 20th Century Philosophical Anthropology (*Wybrane koncepcje w dwudziestowiecznej antropologii filozoficznej*)

Philosophy in the Process of Making Concepts (*Filozofia jako proces tworzenia pojęć*)

Sociology

Sociological theories: the tradition and current ideas (*Teorie socjologiczne: tradycja i współczesne idee*)

Quantitative methods of data analysis: statistical theory and good practices (*Metody ilościowej analizy danych: statystyka i dobre praktyki jej stosowania*)

Approaches to Qualitative Methods in Research Practice (*Zastosowania metod jakościowych w praktyce badawczej*)

Empirical Research in the Social Sciences: Design, Implementation and Write-up (Part I) (*Badania empiryczne w naukach społecznych: projektowanie i zastosowanie (cz. I)*)

Reading and Writing in the Social Sciences (Part II) (*Czytanie i pisanie tekstów w naukach społecznych (cz. II)*)

Psychology

Methodology and ethical issues of psychological studies (*Metodologia i etyka badań psychologicznych*)

Advanced statistical analysis (*Zaawansowane analizy statystyczne*)

Psychology in modules: Cognitive Psychology, Personality Psychology and Individual Differences, and Neurophysiological Basis of Behaviours (*Psychologia ogólna w modułach: psychologia poznawcza, psychologia osobowości i różnic indywidualnych oraz neurofizjologiczne podstawy zachowania*)

Social Psychology (*Psychologia społeczna*)

Political Science and Administration

Contemporary Political History of the Central-Eastern Europe (*Najnowsza historia polityczna Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej*)

Quantitative methods of data analysis: statistical theory and good practices (*Metody ilościowej analizy danych: statystyka i dobre praktyki jej stosowania*)

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Successful completion of a mandatory course is graded on the following scale:

- very good (5),
- good (4),
- fair (3),
- fail (2).

A fail means that the student gets no credit for the course.

2) Optional Courses

Optional courses are available to all doctoral students. They can be followed in two modes: “for credit” (according to the grading scale for mandatory courses) or “without credit”. Students opting for a course “without credit” are nevertheless required to attend the course regularly and taken an active part in it. Courses are selected mainly on the basis of the doctoral students’ interests and upon their initiative. However, participation in courses must be recorded in the *individual study programme* for the academic year concerned. In justified cases, in particular where a doctoral student has completed a course outside the discipline of his/her thesis, the supervisor may require a doctoral student to complete specific courses in the discipline of his/her thesis and to include them in the student’s *individual study programme*.

All mandatory courses for a discipline are optional for doctoral students from other disciplines. It is possible to also attend other courses, such as those offered in the GSSR 1-year pre-PhD program in Sociology (this 1-year GSSR program is suspended in 2022/2023).

Courses pursued outside GSSR

Students may also take courses in other academic institutions, whether in Poland or elsewhere. Participation in such courses must be included in the *individual study programme* for the academic year concerned.

3) Work on Doctoral Thesis and Research Team Activities

The *individual study programme* includes the doctoral student’s activities within the selected research team, as well as planned participation in conferences, seminars, symposiums, summer schools and other scholarly events, in particular involving the presentation of the doctoral student’s own work. The individual study programme presents the work on the doctoral student’s scientific

publications and their outcomes, as well as teaching activities and involvement in the organisation of scientific events in and outside the School.

The *individual study programme* may include the doctoral students' activities for the benefit of other sectors (business, central and local government administration, and non-governmental organisations), including participation in public debates, provided that such activities are related to the doctoral student's academic interests.

Work on the Doctoral Thesis

The *individual study programme* for an academic year specifies the research activities for that year as well as the planned parts of the doctoral thesis and related publications.

In the first year of study, the doctoral student prepares his/her *individual research proposal* in cooperation with his/her supervisor. The *research proposal* is a literature-based research project which argues for the need to undertake the proposed research, describes the theoretical framework, proposed methodology and coverage, as well as the schedule of activities to be taken with a view to submitting the finished thesis. The project should have form comparable to a project applying for NCN research funds in a competition.

In subsequent years, the *individual study programme* specifies and updates the intended activities.

The doctoral student's progress between the beginning of his/her training at the School and June of the second year of the training is subjected to interim evaluation referred to in Article 202 of the Act. Moreover, the Evaluation Committee assesses the student's progress after each year of training.

Annual evaluation of doctoral students' work

The progress of the doctoral student's academic work and the preparation of the dissertation is evaluated on continuous basis. The details of the evaluation, including required documentation that students must submit during their doctoral studies at GSSR are provided in the PhD Handbook, available at

gssr.edu.pl/doctoral-school/pphd-programme-in-philosophy-and-sociology/pprogramme-handbook/