

Quality Assurance Plan of the Doctoral School of Humanities

Our mission and objectives

Our mission is to ensure the next generation of scientists, support research skills and professional advancement opportunities, and specifically increase the number of research professors. To achieve these goals, we have built up a team of young professors and a stable team of associate professors with the skills essential for preparing future doctoral students to successfully obtain their degrees. We have developed an admissions preparation program that helps guarantee that truly qualified candidates are admitted to the doctoral program. They will have already acquired a number of skills and abilities during the preparation process, leading them to the doctoral process.

The objectives of the Doctoral School are in line with those of the European Research Area, with an emphasis on increasing researcher mobility, skills, and career opportunities, and supporting the free dissemination of science and knowledge. The Doctoral School plays a key role in the IFT of the University of Debrecen. Among the institutional goals set out in the IFT are the following: the long-term provision of human resources for R&D&I, the strengthening of doctoral schools, the increase of intensive teacher and researcher participation, aimed at teachers and researchers who meet the full-membership requirements in the work of doctoral schools.

Basic principles of quality assurance

The main principles of quality management at the Doctoral School are the principles of professional control and quality focus; the principle of transparency (all events in the degree acquisition process are published on the Doctoral School's website); systematic data collection; the principle of compliance with scientific ethical requirements; the principle of feedback based on the PDCA principle; the principle of intellectual property protection; the principle of individual responsibility and the principle of process documentation.

In our doctoral school, the quality control of researcher training is carried out in accordance with the relevant regulations of the University of Debrecen. In the case of doctoral training, the cornerstones of this are: regulation of the basic content and formal requirements of doctoral (PhD) theses by field of science; a clear set of requirements for the quality and quantity of publications required for the degree, the publication of the rules and consistent monitoring of compliance; the involvement of independent, professionally recognized experts in the doctoral degree process (review procedure, doctoral comprehensive exam/complex exam, public debate); the evaluation of doctoral students at domestic and international conferences and the monitoring of the professional careers of alumni. Below, we discuss in detail the organizational conditions for quality assurance, the standards relating to the activities of doctoral students, thesis writers, supervisors, and instructors, and then the main directions of quality development.

Our doctoral school expects its core members, supervisors, and instructors to conduct high-quality research that is reflected in regular, documentable results and to possess the teaching and instructional skills necessary for doctoral training. The scientific research and teaching activities of the doctoral school's instructors are regularly evaluated by the program directors in

the doctoral school council in accordance with accepted academic standards. The quality of the doctoral instructors' activities can be documented by doctoral-student opinion polls, action minutes of dissertation discussions (workshop discussions and defenses) among teaching staff, semesterly written reports on joint supervisor-doctoral student work, and evaluation of the dissertations defended under their supervision.

The representative elected by the doctoral students for each program is a permanent member of the Doctoral School Council with advisory rights. Their task is to represent the quality expectations and interests of the doctoral students and to convey their questions and comments. The opinions of doctoral students and those who have already obtained a degree in the program are collected and analyzed using a questionnaire available on the Doctoral School's website.

The Doctoral School strives to contribute to the development of the professional and scientific preparedness of teachers participating in doctoral training by supporting their involvement in domestic and international scientific life and the cultivation of existing relationships.

Quality assurance of doctoral students' activities

In addition to the current university and faculty regulations governing the admission procedure, admission to the doctoral school is based on the usual objective criteria (previous scientific activity, publications, language skills, etc.) and an in-depth discussion with the applicant about their topic. During the doctoral admission procedure, applicants submit a topic proposal of up to ten pages to the admissions committee, which they "defend" during the admission interview, i.e., they demonstrate that they can engage in professional discourse and are familiar with the literature on the topic.

A doctoral student's semester can only be recognized if, during the given semester, they have completed high-quality written work in accordance with the Doctoral School's training plan, which has been discussed by the doctoral student community under the guidance of the instructors and deemed to be of acceptable quality. The expectations for self-funded doctoral students are the same as those for full-time doctoral students receiving scholarships. The performance of doctoral students is evaluated in a multi-stage, regulated system based on the criteria set out in the doctoral regulations and the training plan. Within the framework of the 360-degree evaluation model, feedback from supervisors, instructors, students, and reviewers together ensure an objective and transparent assessment of progress. Progress is evaluated in several stages: through mid-term supervisor reports, student self-evaluations, the evaluation of coursework and research seminar presentations, the fulfilment of publication and conference requirements, the evaluation of thesis papers and chapter defenses, and the comprehensive examination. This complex evaluation structure allows for the consistent application of training requirements and the continuous monitoring of the academic level of individual performance.

We encourage doctoral students to keep up with international research results in their field of study through special foreign language seminars and guest lectures included in the training plan. In addition, reading foreign-language literature is mandatory for all doctoral courses. Most scholarship doctoral candidates can spend at least one semester during the four three-year periods at a foreign university with ties to our school. Our doctoral students give at least one professional presentation per year on their research results. The doctoral school seeks opportunities for doctoral students to attend conferences in Hungary and abroad, where they can present their research results. The doctoral school has uniform expectations regarding research work in that, during their training, doctoral candidates must gradually learn to solve scientific problems independently, apply scientific research methods, strive to produce new scientific results, and report on these regularly in the form of scientific publications.

By the time they obtain their doctoral degree, doctoral candidates must have collected a minimum of five publications in high-quality domestic and international journals and/or peer-reviewed volumes. It is a fundamental requirement that the publications be published in journals appropriate to the respective scientific and research fields. When selecting acceptable journals for each field of science, we use the list of journals currently in force and published on the website of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences as a guideline¹, but we supplement this with provisions specifying the publication requirements for each program. In addition to the journals designated by the MTA's Scientific Committee for Philosophy, the Philosophy program also recommends the following journals: *Alföld*, *Elpis*, *Mindennapi Filozófia*, and *Nagyerdei Almanach*.

In the Educational Sciences program, at least two of the five publications must appear in a foreign-language journal listed in the MTA II. Class Pedagogical Scientific Committee journal list. The remaining publications may be placed in Hungarian-language journals accepted by the MTA Pedagogical Scientific Committee, and peer-reviewed book chapters in Hungarian and foreign languages are also acceptable. From 2023 onwards, in an ascending system, of the five publications, either (1) one must be published in a Scopus-indexed Q1-Q2 journal, or (2) two must be indexed in Scopus, in a Q3-Q4 journal, or (3) four must be published in the Central European Journal of Educational Research (CEJER) or the Hungarian Educational Research Journal (HERJ) or in other foreign-language journals. Additional publications may be placed in any of the journals listed by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences' Committee on Education or may be peer-reviewed book chapters or studies.

In the Psychology program, a minimum of 4-5 publications in professional journals is required. The number of publications is only a guideline; quality is the deciding factor in the evaluation of work. Among the publications, there must be at least one publication in an international journal (the list is available on the psycho.unideb.hu website), and one in a prominent Hungarian psychology journal (*Applied Psychology*; *Magyar Pszichológiai Szemle*; *Psychiatria Hungarica*; *Mentálhigiéné és Pszichoszomatika*), two in domestic professional journals (the list of Hungarian journals is available on the psycho.unideb.hu website) and one peer-reviewed publication (which may also be in an edited volume).

In addition to the journals designated by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences' Committee on Sociology, the Sociology program recommends the following publications: *Acta Social Analysis*, *Acta European and Regional Studies*, *Erdélyi Társadalom*, *Fórum Társadalomtudományi Szemle*, and *Acta Medicinæ et Sociologica*. The publication requirement for students starting their studies in the Sociology program in September 2022 is to publish one article in a foreign language journal indexed by Scopus or Web of Science. The remaining four studies may be published in Hungarian or in a foreign language as peer-reviewed book chapters or in any domestic or international journal designated by the Sociology Scientific Committee of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Section IX.

The following provision applies to all programs: journals other than those listed above may only be accepted on a case-by-case basis with the program director's permission; periodicals from the list of partner program journals may also be accepted when regarding interdisciplinary research.

¹ For the Philosophy program, the journal list of the Philosophy Committee of Section II of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences can be downloaded from https://mta.hu/data/dokumentumok/doktori_tanacs/II.%20Oszaly/FTB_folyoiratlista_20190328.pdf. For the Education program, the journal list of the MTA II. Class Pedagogical Scientific Committee is available at https://mta.hu/data/dokumentumok/doktori_tanacs/II.%20Oszaly/PEDTB_MTA%20II%20osztaly%20folyoiratlista_20190328.xlsx, while in the Sociology program, the journal list of the MTA IX. Class Sociology Committee is available at https://mta.hu/data/dokumentumok/doktori_tanacs/IX.%20Oszaly/2017/Szociologia%20Bizottsag.xlsx.

The degree requirements of the Doctoral School are approved by the doctoral council of the higher education institution.

The language levels required for degree completion (for languages "a" and "b") and the method of certification are specified in the Doctoral Regulations and its scientific field supplement. Our doctoral school stipulates that both languages "a" and "b" may be any living foreign language suitable for studying specialist literature, with one of the levels having to be achieved in English, German, French, Russian, Spanish, or Italian. If the Philosophy program also accepts ancient languages as "b" languages, and the Sociology doctoral program accepts the Lovari language, exceptions can be made. The Doctoral School does not recognize Esperanto as either an "a" or "b" language.

Furthermore, the doctoral council is responsible for ensuring that high-quality dissertations are produced in all disciplines accredited by the higher education institution. The publication requirements of the doctoral schools can be found on the www.doktori.hu website. Only those with a BA or MA in psychology or a high school diploma in psychology may apply for the comprehensive exam in psychology. Doctoral students who do not have a bachelor's degree in psychology must complete at least one course from the BA Psychology program during their six semesters of PhD study².

In addition, doctoral students must complete four additional courses in their work field. To do this, they must attend to the advertised courses (full-time or part-time) and, in consultation with their supervisor, indicate in advance what topics they need to study during a given semester. After consulting with the course instructor, they can attend classes and take exams.

After that, you can register for these courses in the Neptun system with zero credits (these do not count towards the 240 credits required for graduation). Of course, you must indicate to the institute which courses you have attended and for which you have received grades, as we only announce those courses in the given semester.

In addition to obtaining the required number of credits, admission to the comprehensive exam is conditional on the supervisor and program director deeming the doctoral student's academic work to be satisfactory. The exam is only successful if the doctoral student has made sufficient progress in developing their topic and is able to convincingly present the structure and expected results of their dissertation.

Doctoral students prepare for the doctoral comprehensive examination and the complex examination based on reading lists of specialist literature selected in accordance with their specialized field. The duration of the examination is at least half an hour per subject. The quality of the doctoral comprehensive examination and the complex examination is ensured by the relevant rules of the Doctoral Council of the University of Debrecen.

Prior to the submission of the dissertation, a preliminary discussion is held, during which researchers appointed by the program directors evaluate the thesis based on expert opinions. At the end of the discussion, a decision is made as to whether the thesis can be submitted in its current form, after minor revisions, or whether it requires substantial reworking. Minutes are taken of the discussion, which record the recommendations made by the expert council with an appendix of expert opinions. In the event of a thesis needing significant revision, the preliminary discussion is held again.

After the thesis has been submitted, the official reviewers will receive the dissertation and the thesis booklet in both printed and electronic form. The identity of the opponents will not be

² · General Psychology 1-3; Personality Psychology 1-3; Developmental Psychology 1-2; Social Psychology 1-3.

disclosed until the reviews have been completed. No later than one week before the defense, the members of the review committee receive the opponents' opinions in electronic form after following both reviews and the candidate's responses. When the public debate is announced, the dissertation and thesis booklet are made public on the www.doktori.hu website.

We monitor the quality of the Doctoral School and regularly evaluate the applicants, the ratio of admitted students who 1) have obtained their absolutorium, and 2) have obtained their doctoral (PhD) degree. Quality control of dissertations and public debates, of doctoral student scientific publications, and participation in university education and scientific public life is also conducted.

Quality assurance of thesis supervisors, thesis advisors, and teaching staff

In our doctoral school, supervisors may only supervise topics they have researched and of which record of that research exists. We expect supervisors to be active in scientific publication, participate in research grants, be involved in domestic and international professional organizations, and engage in science organization work. Program directors are responsible for the quality of the thesis topics. Where possible, we do not assign more than three thesis topics to a single supervisor. If, due to the interdisciplinary nature of the research topic, the work of the supervisor and the doctoral student is supported by a consultant, the supervisor registered as primary is still responsible for the doctoral student's progress.

Doctoral students carry out their research work in regular cooperation with their supervisor, which the supervisor must confirm with their signature at the end of each semester. The supervisor's research activity must ensure a high level of proficiency in the topic of the doctoral student they supervise. The Doctoral School encourages close research collaboration between the supervisor and the doctoral student, as well as the supervisor's support for the doctoral student's career (involvement in research work, participation in conferences, assistance with publication, and building scientific relationships). The quality of this cooperation is ensured by a written report prepared by the supervisor each semester on the joint work of the doctoral student and the supervisor. We ensure the mutual evaluation of the work of supervisors by holding oral reports by supervisors at the semesterly meetings of the programs. A prerequisite for a finished dissertation's submission is the supervisor's signature on the dissertation's first page.

The instructors of the Doctoral School are researchers with academic degrees who have been approved by the Doctoral School Council, the Doctoral Council of their scientific field, having been recommended by the program director. Their being fit for the task is based on the submitted topics of their doctoral courses and their publications. The doctoral course syllabus includes the title of the topic to be covered, a summary thereof, and the required and recommended reading lists for doctoral students. Starting in the fall semester of 2013, doctoral courses are graded on a five-point scale, which we introduced in an ascending system. The self-evaluation of the teaching work of the Doctoral School and the mutual evaluation of teaching work both take place at semesterly program meetings.

Each academic year, the HTDI prepares an evaluation report on its training activities, which is discussed by the Doctoral School Council and the Doctoral Council of the Faculty of Humanities. Effectiveness of teaching methods and services is regularly evaluated based on feedback from doctoral students and teachers. The reports prepared by the Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) are public and form the basis for development measures.

The Doctoral School applies a uniform, documented procedure for all complaints and conflicts, which ensures transparent and fair problem handling. The first step in the procedure is

consultation between the parties, which, if unsuccessful, is continued with the involvement of the program director and the doctoral student representative in order to develop proposed solutions. Intervention effectiveness are incessantly scrutinized, decisions documented, and feedback provided to the parties, allowing for further corrections and support for training progress.

The active participation of doctoral students in decision-making and decision-preparation processes is governed by the rules of the Doctoral School. The HTDI is represented in the Association of Hungarian PhD and DLA Candidates (DOSZ), with our doctoral student participating as a member of the executive committee in representing the interests of doctoral students nationally. The institutional doctoral student procedural self-government rules secure HTDI doctoral students' representation in university-level decision-making. Doctoral student representatives regularly participate in Doctoral School council meetings, where they can make suggestions and comment on issues related to training.

Protecting the integrity of higher education and academic life

The Doctoral School uses a number of tools to ensure the integrity and freedom of higher education and scientific life, as well as to combat abuse. The Doctoral School is an integral part of the University of Debrecen, so the relevant regulations and rules of procedure apply. The University's Code of Conduct is available not only in Hungarian but also in English, and it also boasts a separate Equal Opportunities Plan, Gender Equality Plan, and the Esélyháló Mentor Network. Furthermore, separate regulations to protect intellectual property rights have been drawn up, which are particularly important in the doctoral process (Guidelines and Rules on Research Contracts, Intellectual Property Management and Technology Transfer Activities).

Within the Doctoral School, a separate Research Ethics Committee operates to ensure the integrity of academic life.

Moreover, the Doctoral School requires doctoral students to submit a plagiarism statement. Theses are checked for plagiarism using software provided by the University, prior to submission and the workshop discussion to verify its professionalism and quality. Any scientific ethical issues that may arise shall be dealt with in accordance with the provisions of the University of Debrecen's Code of Ethics .

The Doctoral School supports the productive and creative use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools in research and scientific work. In accordance with the ethical principles of the American Psychological Association (APA), the use of AI is acceptable if it promotes creativity, productivity, or methodological innovation. At the same time, the personal intellectual contribution of the doctoral student is essential. It is unethical to use AI to generate the text of a dissertation, build a database, or analyze data in place of the student's own work. Instructors and advisors regularly draw attention to this distinction and emphasize the importance of maintaining scientific integrity throughout the doctoral program.

Basic directions for quality improvement

One of the main directions of continuous quality improvement is the regular review and modernization of the academic content of doctoral programs, as well as the updating of announced and selected topics. This involves not only the introduction of new main and specialised colleges and practical training, but also the continuous development of existing curricula and the incorporation of educational offerings that reflect the latest research results of cooperating domestic and foreign universities, research institutes and visiting lecturers.

Another main direction of quality development is the organization of doctoral students and supervisors into research teams, in which, in addition to joint research work, there is an opportunity to discuss each other's results and studies. A particularly important tool for quality assurance is the formation of interdisciplinary research teams in specific subject areas.

The third main direction of quality improvement is the continuous development of the infrastructure supporting education and research. This primarily involves the creation of research rooms for doctoral students, the expansion of foreign-language scientific encyclopedias and journals in the institute's libraries, the increase in subscriptions to online journal databases, the continuous development of the Sándor Karácsony and Árpád Kiss Collections, and the constant modernization of the computer park equipped with internet access, printing facilities, and internet communication tools. To that end, we have taken a significant step forward in developing an online portfolio system for doctoral students, to which we provide access for both teachers and students.

Appendices:

Appendix 1

Structure of student and teacher surveys, data collection, and analysis

The Doctoral School of Humanities consciously involves internal and external stakeholders in the development and continuous improvement of its training program. Internal stakeholders, such as core members, supervisors, and instructors, evaluate the implementation of the training program at meetings held twice per semester and participate in the development of the training program by determining the learning outcomes of the courses, continuously updating the course syllabi, reviewing the methods, and incorporating new research trends and methodological developments. External stakeholders include international and domestic research institutes, guest lecturers invited from other doctoral schools, and reviewers of research grants, journals, and international conferences, who contribute to keeping the program up to date with their active feedback. Student and external feedback are incorporated into the development of the training program through formal evaluation, ensuring relevance, quality, and the achievement of learning objectives.

The Doctoral School measures the performance of doctoral students, instructors, and Doctoral School committees in the following ways:

Doctoral students evaluate the work of the Doctoral School and the instructors

- Satisfaction survey for doctoral students
- Alumni follow-up, questionnaire and alumni opinions
- Course evaluation forms sent out via the Neptun system (evaluation of courses and teaching)

Doctoral students evaluate their own work

- Mid-year report
- Scholarship reports
- Memos of supervisor consultations (signed by the supervisor and doctoral student, in PDF format)

Doctoral administration on doctoral students' performance

Doctoral instructors evaluate their work

- Memoranda of faculty meetings (at the beginning and end of each semester)
- Self-evaluation of supervisors' effectiveness (evaluation of questionnaires and responses)

Teachers evaluate the work of doctoral students (feedback from reviewers, supervisors)

- Admission process and evaluation
- Evaluation of main college thesis
- Supervisor evaluation
- Complex exam evaluation
- Evaluation of thesis
- Chapter defense evaluation
- Workshop discussion evaluations
- Public debate evaluations

A quality assurance committee operates within the Doctoral School in accordance with ESG requirements. The committee evaluates the results of data collection each semester and reports on its findings at program director and faculty meetings.

Appendix

Appendix 2

Measuring doctoral students' needs and satisfaction

The Doctoral School conducts regular surveys of doctoral students' needs and satisfaction using a comprehensive annual questionnaire (entitled Questionnaire for Doctoral Students). The purpose of the questionnaire is to evaluate the quality and conditions of doctoral training, as well as the quality of support provided by supervisors and instructors, based on student feedback. Responses are anonymous and voluntary, thus ensuring honest opinions.

The questionnaire covers the status of students, their form of financing, and their affiliation with the doctoral program. The conditions of the program are evaluated on a scale of 1 to 5, with special attention paid to administration, IT services, library facilities, and information provision. Students can also describe any problems they have with the operation of the Doctoral School in writing.

The effectiveness of the courses is evaluated in a separate table, which includes theoretical seminars, research practices, foreign language courses, and research group work. The questionnaire examines in detail the quality of supervisor cooperation, including consultation opportunities, publication support, and facilitation of conference participation. Students evaluate whether their supervisors are professionally competent, recognized as researchers, and provide regular feedback.

The frequency and duration of consultations are also assessed, as well as whether consultation times are agreed in advance. The existence of joint publications and their appearance in international databases are also included in the questions. The questionnaire provides an opportunity for textual feedback on the positive aspects of supervisor cooperation and those that need improvement.

At the end of the questionnaire, students can express their opinion on whether they would choose their current supervisor again if they were to start over. The collected responses are systematically analysed by the Doctoral School, which then formulates quality improvement recommendations based on them. The feedback is incorporated into the development of the training structure and support system. The questionnaire is thus not only a tool for measuring satisfaction, but also a basis for the continuous improvement of training.

Appendix 3

Information collection and management activities of the Doctoral School

The management of the Doctoral School pays special attention to the regular and structured collection of information related to doctoral students, which serves the continuous improvement of the quality of training. Information is collected on several levels: data obtained during the admission process (application, examination, enrolment) help to fine-tune the selection system. The satisfaction measurement tools used during the training, such as the OMHV questionnaire and focus group discussions, provide an opportunity for a deeper understanding of student experiences.

The effectiveness of the courses and the quality of the training environment are evaluated based on student feedback, which is analyzed by the Doctoral School and turned into development proposals. Monitoring student progress—from enrollment to degree completion—allows for the identification of dropout points and targeted interventions. The proportion of students applying for the comprehensive exam, obtaining their absolutorium, and participating in the dissertation defense is also an important indicator of the effectiveness of the training.

The work of instructors and supervisors is evaluated systematically, with particular emphasis on research activity, publication performance, and the quality of cooperation with students. Data collected on the work of thesis writers and supervisors contributes to the optimization of the training structure. The Doctoral School incorporates information on the employment and career paths of degree holders into its long-term training strategy, for example with the help of the Graduate Career Tracking System (DPR).

Continuous data collection enables the Doctoral School to respond to changing scientific, methodological, and labour market expectations. Data analysis leads to targeted measures that improve the effectiveness of training and student satisfaction. Course content, consultation opportunities, and publication support modified based on feedback directly contribute to the professional development of doctoral students.

Information gathering not only serves to support current students, but also to lay the foundations for future training directions. Regular data collection ensures transparency, accountability, and the fulfilment of quality assurance objectives. The Doctoral School is thus able to adapt dynamically to the challenges of doctoral training while maintaining its academic standards and social relevance.

Appendix 4

Ensuring that doctoral students have access to information in Hungarian and English

The Doctoral School of Humanities (HTDI) pays special attention to ensuring that all doctoral students, regardless of whether they are enrolled in Hungarian or English-language programs, have access to up-to-date, accurate, and accessible information about their training, administrative matters, and academic opportunities.

Academic administration is carried out by linguistically skilled staff organized on several levels. The Secretary of the Doctoral Council of Humanities (Lilla Szakályné Lantai) is responsible for admissions, complex examinations, degree award procedures, scholarship registration, and the appointment of committees and official communications. The Secretary of the Doctoral School also manages the doktori.hu website, keeps statistical records, and checks the text consistency of dissertations.

Each academic program has a separate coordinator (Csók Cintia, Marosi Edit, Lilla Szakályné Lantai, Klára Zeke), while doctoral students participating in English-language programs are assisted by a separate coordinator (Anett Hrabéczy) and designated mentor instructors (Dr. Csilla Csukonyi, Dr. Ilona Dabney-Fekete, Dr. Gábor Erdei, Dr. István Szekrényes).

Electronic administration has become part of everyday life: the Doctoral School uses up-to-date mailing lists to send notifications to instructors and doctoral students, through which it sends out information about the program, deadlines, conference and publication opportunities in Hungarian and English. Signed, scanned documents are also accepted by email. All regulations and forms are also available in English at the Secretariat of the Doctoral Council of Humanities and on its website.

The University of Debrecen's digital learning management system (elearning.unideb.hu) and the Neptun system provide group communication related to courses and the communication of administrative data (enrollment, deactivation, course registration, self-cost payment, etc.) in both Hungarian and English.

Appendix 5

HTDI Mentoring Program for Foreign Doctoral Students

The Doctoral School of Humanities (HTDI) is committed to supporting the integration and professional development of foreign doctoral students. To this end, it operates a mentoring program in which Hungarian students help international doctoral students integrate into academic, research, and community life.

The aim of the program

The aim of the mentoring program is to provide personal support to students who are unfamiliar with the local environment, especially international students, by facilitating their cultural integration, understanding of the university system, and involvement in the academic community. Strengthening intercultural relations between international and domestic students and providing mental and social support play a prominent role in the mentoring program, which is essential for adapting to a new environment.

Operation and activities

As part of the program, each newly enrolled foreign doctoral student is assigned a Hungarian student as a mentor. Mentors are senior doctoral students who are familiar with the university's operations, internal rules, student and faculty rights and obligations, and regulations related to research processes. The coordinator of the mentoring program forms pairs based on research area and language skills, and the pairs maintain regular contact both in person and online. A closed online community space (e.g., Facebook group) is available to participants, where events and information relevant to the group are shared.

Mentors assist with administrative matters, understanding the academic system, and participating in community events.

HTDI organizes annual trips to Hungarian historical sites (e.g., Eger, Sárospatak), where students can learn about Hungarian culture and history. In addition, we also provide opportunities for international students to introduce their own countries and cultures to the community, thereby strengthening mutual understanding and intercultural relations.

The mentoring program also offers language support and research consultation.

Sharing experiences and disseminating information and opportunities related to scholarships, conference participation, and publishing also play an important role.

Mental and social support is also a priority area. Programs are organized for participants to showcase their own countries, their experiences with education, and their national cuisines. Group discussions are held regularly, with the primary goal of developing time management and understanding of the host culture. Another objective is to incorporate a board game developed by members of the CHERD research group to promote academic and social integration.

Contact and further information

For further information about the mentoring program, please contact the HTDI coordinators or visit the official website of the Doctoral School.

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