

Rules of Organisation and Operation of the Doctoral School of History and Ethnology of the University of Debrecen

Preliminary note The regulations of the Doctoral School address only those areas which are not regulated by the regulations applicable to the academic field and by the regulations of the University, or which apply exclusively to this Doctoral School. The Doctoral Regulations of the University of Debrecen (for the periods before and after 1 September 2016) are available at: <https://unideb.hu/szabalyzatok>. The Doctoral Regulations for the Humanities of the University of Debrecen are available at: <https://btkphd.unideb.hu/node/134>.

1. The Doctoral School of History and Ethnology of the University of Debrecen (hereinafter: the Doctoral School, abbreviated as DI) operates within the Faculty of Humanities of the University of Debrecen. It is closely affiliated with the University's Institute of History (and its departments) and the Institute of Ethnology and Museology. Its place of operation is: 4032 Debrecen, Egyetem tér 1; postal address: 4002 Debrecen, P.O. Box 400; telephone: +36 52 512 900/22130; e-mail: barany.attila@arts.unideb.hu. Its current website is: <https://tndi.unideb.hu>. It has no separate seal, as it has no independent administration. Depending on their nature, its official documents are authenticated with the seal of either the Institute of History or the Institute of Ethnology and Museology. The official documents of the Doctoral School are administered by the administrative staff of these organisational units.

2. The national code of the Doctoral School is 50. It seeks to provide an opportunity to obtain a doctoral degree (PhD) in two major and closely related disciplines within the humanities.

3. The Doctoral School consists of two programmes: the History Programme and the Ethnology Programme. The number and content of the subprogrammes are determined by the Council of the Doctoral School upon the proposal of the programme directors. The current subprogrammes of the Doctoral School are as follows.

Within the History Programme:

- History of International Relations;
- History of Political Ideas and Institutions;
- Economy, Society and Lifestyles;
- Ancient History;
- Cultural History of Antiquity.

Within the Ethnology Programme:

- Cultural Ecology;
- Peoples, Regions and Cultures in Central Europe;
- Museology.

4. The principal governing body of the Doctoral School is the Council of the Doctoral School. Its members are:

a) the Head of the Doctoral School;

- b) the core members of the Doctoral School;
- c) the directors of the two programmes;
- d) the heads of the subprogrammes;
- e) the professors emeriti of the two organisational units;
- f) the Secretary of the Doctoral School.

Two student representatives elected by the doctoral students have the right to express an opinion on matters affecting students. The programme secretaries may likewise attend meetings of the Council in an advisory capacity. Depending on the agenda, the Council of the Doctoral School may also invite external members to attend in an advisory capacity.

5. The Council of the Doctoral School is convened by the Head of the Doctoral School.

6. The functions of the Council of the Doctoral School are: electing the Head of the Doctoral School; designating candidates for core membership; deciding on and overseeing matters concerning the operation and academic programme of the Doctoral School; maintaining the register of subprogrammes; establishing or discontinuing doctoral subprogrammes; deciding on the use of the financial allocation provided to the Doctoral School in the University budget; distributing between the two programmes the state-funded places allocated to the Doctoral School; and electing the persons who represent the Doctoral School on the Doctoral Council for the Humanities.

It decides on educational and academic matters arising in the course of doctoral training and the degree-awarding procedure. It performs the quality-assurance tasks of the Doctoral School. The Council of the Doctoral School determines the range of languages acceptable for admission to doctoral training and during the degree-awarding procedure (only languages used in academic life may be accepted), as well as the range of acceptable publications.

7. The Head of the Doctoral School may be elected from among the full-time university professors of the Institute of History or the Department of Ethnology. The term of office of the Head of the Doctoral School is five years and may be renewed more than once. The appointment terminates upon retirement or removal from office. The duties and powers of the Head of the Doctoral School are to ensure the high academic standards of the Doctoral School and of doctoral training. On the basis of proposals submitted by the programme directors, the Head proposes to the Doctoral Council for the Humanities the composition of admissions committees, the persons of supervisors, and the composition of committees for the complex examination and the public defence, and, where necessary, proposes changes to such committees. The Head informs the Doctoral Council for the Humanities of changes of programme and supervisor within the Doctoral School, exercises authorisation rights over the financial allocation provided to the Doctoral School in the budget, and bears financial and criminal liability in respect thereof.

8. The Head of the Doctoral School appoints a Secretary to assist in his or her work; the Secretary receives remuneration for this work in an amount determined by the Head of the Doctoral School. The administration of the programmes of the Doctoral School is assisted by programme secretaries, whose remuneration is determined by the Head of the Doctoral School upon the proposal of the programme directors.

a) On the basis of the current credit list, the heads of the subprogrammes of the two programmes compile the course offerings of their respective subprogrammes each semester; ensure that the courses announced are delivered; propose supervisors to the Head of the Doctoral School; give their opinion on any proposed change of topic by students; are authorised, in respect of announced courses, to certify completion in students' study records and in the electronic study record on behalf of any instructor of the subprogramme; and participate in organising and conducting the preliminary discussion of dissertations.

b) Supervisors shall direct, to the highest standard reasonably expected, the studies and research of the doctoral students under their supervision and their preparation for obtaining the doctoral degree.

9. The rules governing the financial management of the Doctoral School are determined by the Council of the Doctoral School; the Head of the Doctoral School is responsible for their implementation.

10. The conditions for the admission of doctoral students are laid down in the Doctoral Regulations of the BDT. Taking into account the number of state-funded places available and their allocation by the Doctoral Council for the Humanities of the University of Debrecen, the number of full-time PhD students in the two disciplines is adjusted to the number of graduating students participating in university education, the proportion of teaching staff involved in the programme, and the level of their academic qualifications. A degree specifically in the relevant discipline is not an absolute requirement for application and admission; all MA degrees compatible with the chosen field of research are accepted. Applicants select their topic from among the subprogrammes of the two programmes listed above and identify a supervisor from among our staff. Applicants choosing a specialised topic may be permitted to have an external co-supervisor (see the University regulations). Admission is based on an oral examination and a points-based assessment of the applicant's previous achievements. The assessment takes into account academic results achieved during university studies, academic achievement (including prizes won at the National Scientific Students' Associations Conference), language proficiency (a state-recognised intermediate-level language examination in one language is compulsory, while additional language proficiency is awarded points), published works, aptitude for independent academic research, the feasibility of the proposed dissertation, etc. The admissions committee may consist of the programme directors and subprogramme heads concerned, as well as core members of the Doctoral School.

11. The two programmes of the TNDI receive the share allocated to the School from the budget of the Faculty of Humanities in proportion to the number of students admitted. Financial coordination of the budget of the Doctoral School as a whole falls within the powers of the Head of the Doctoral School. The programme director is responsible for the financial management of the Ethnology Programme; financial management of the History Programme is the joint responsibility of the programme director and the Head of the TNDI.

a) As the Secretary of the Doctoral School serves both programmes, the Secretary's remuneration is borne by the two programmes.

b) The remuneration of the programme secretaries is borne by the budget of the programme concerned.

12. The plan of educational activities (curriculum) of the Doctoral School and the recognition of performance (the conditions for awarding credits) are approved by the Council of the Doctoral School. Admitted students participate in eight semesters of organised doctoral training.

a) Students admitted to the Doctoral School may be full-time students in state-funded or fee-paying training (with a training period of four academic years), or students following an individual training scheme. Admission to the latter requires, in addition to a nearly completed dissertation, evidence of outstanding academic achievement, substantial publication activity and, preferably, several years of academic and professional experience.

13. The Doctoral School continuously monitors the academic work of doctoral students. This monitoring includes a compulsory report by students to their supervisor each semester. Before any doctoral dissertation is submitted, a preliminary discussion must be held in accordance with the Faculty regulations; accordingly, at least five persons holding an academic degree (at least a PhD) must participate. During the discussion, the participants must state unequivocally whether they consider the dissertation suitable for public defence.

a) Within the programmes of the Doctoral School, and with the agreement of the Council of the Doctoral School, a doctoral student may change topic and supervisor in accordance with the regulations of the EDHT and the Doctoral Council for the Humanities.

b) Tasks completed during the semester must be documented in the doctoral student's electronic study record. A doctoral dissertation is the result of in-depth, independent research and is expected to contain original academic conclusions. The dissertation must meet the standards of the relevant academic discipline, must be of publishable quality, and certain parts of it - in the form of studies related to the subject of the dissertation - must already have been published. The dissertation must include references and a bibliography. The length limits and formal requirements are modified where the doctoral student prepares and defends the dissertation within the framework of a period of study abroad or an international inter-university agreement. In such cases, the rules of the partner institution also apply pursuant to the international agreement. The formal requirements for the dissertation and the procedure for obtaining the degree are set out in the Doctoral Regulations for the Humanities.

c) The deadline for submission of PhD students' annual reports is the last day of the examination period in both the autumn and spring semesters.

d) Students in both programmes of the Doctoral School must submit their reports to the programme secretaries by e-mail, in the form prescribed in the relevant form available on the TNDI website and digitally signed by all persons concerned.

e) The following provision applies to the course Teaching Practice: if the student does not teach in a class taught by the supervisor, the class must be recorded in Neptun, and the student - as an instructor commissioned by the institute/department - shall conduct the course throughout the semester. The supervisor monitors the student's teaching activity and preparation for classes and also recommends the grade to be awarded for the teaching credit; the grade is then entered by the Head of the Doctoral School or the programme director.

f) The supervisor is responsible for publications, conference organisation and conference presentations and, with the approval of the Head of the Doctoral School, enters the grades.

g) Attendance is compulsory at PhD defences, habilitation lectures, conferences and guest lectures organised by the Institute of History or the Institute of Ethnology and Museology which the two programmes recommend or prescribe for students. Attendance at these events is a prerequisite for acceptance of the semester. Instead of attendance at a conference recommended by the institute or department, attendance at another conference relevant to the PhD student's topic may be accepted upon presentation of appropriate evidence.

h) In the third semester, the Doctoral School requires students to obtain a publication credit on the basis of one published study in addition to any publication taken into account at the time of admission. The purpose of the publication is to prepare the 'dissertation component' of the complex examination.

i) With regard to publications and conference participation by students from outside Hungary, the Council of the TNDI has decided that, during the first two years of training, one compulsory publication must appear in Hungary (in a Hungarian academic journal accepted by committees of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, a volume of studies published in Hungary, etc.), and the student must participate in an academic conference in Hungary. Over the eight semesters of training, half of the compulsory publications and conference presentations must be in Hungary.

j) By the end of the teaching period of the fourth semester, students must submit a dissertation chapter of at least 50,000 characters from their prospective dissertation; any appendices and bibliography are excluded from this length. For the Ethnology Programme, the external member of the committee prepares a review of the chapter for the complex examination; for the History Programme, the supervisor also prepares a review. The reviewers must state whether the chapter meets the requirements for inclusion as part of the prospective dissertation. The presentation of the chapter, the reading and discussion of the review - that is, the defence of the chapter - constitutes the 'dissertation component' of the complex examination.

k) In accordance with the regulations of the BDT, the complex examinations of students of the Doctoral School are organised by the programme secretaries, and the procedure is likewise governed by the BDT regulations.

l) Chapters written at the end of the fourth semester and at the end of semesters 5-8 must be sent in PDF format not only to the supervisor but also to the programme secretaries. A chapter submitted at the end of semesters 5-8 is reviewed in writing, in addition to the supervisor, by an expert invited by the supervisor. Both the supervisor's and the invited expert's approval are required for the award of the credit. The invited expert may be an internal or external lecturer or researcher. The chapters and the reviews by the supervisor and the expert must be sent to the programme secretaries of the Doctoral School, who archive them.

m) Before the preliminary discussion, the student must submit the following documents, since both the preliminary-discussion committee and the public-defence committee must vote not only on their assessment of the doctoral candidate's dissertation but also on their opinion of the candidate's academic work:

A professional curriculum vitae containing evidence of fulfilment of the language requirements; a list of presentations delivered by the doctoral candidate at academic conferences or other professional events; conferences organised by the candidate or in whose organisation the candidate participated; scholarships and distinctions awarded to the candidate; academic placements or training (e.g. Erasmus); academic and higher-education assignments (participation in research projects, teaching classes, invited lectures); and the candidate's studies and, where applicable, reviews that are representative of his or her academic work.

At least four published studies on the subject of the dissertation must be attached in PDF format (or, in no more than one case, an editorial certificate concerning a peer-reviewed study, stating its date of publication and showing that it will have been published by the time of the defence). These four publications may not include reviews.

The theses of the dissertation must also be submitted so that it can be assessed whether they genuinely contain the most important information relating to the dissertation.

The preliminary discussion may not commence until the doctoral candidate has fulfilled all of the requirements. These requirements apply to all doctoral candidates who have carried out their activities under the new regulations in force since 2016.

n) The Doctoral School may delegate to the public defence a secretary without voting rights, who assists the chair in ensuring compliance with the formal requirements, arranges the venue and assists in drawing up the minutes.

14. Language requirements Admission to doctoral training at, and the award of a doctoral degree by, the Doctoral School of History and Ethnology require proficiency necessary for academic work in one of the following languages: English, Finnish, French, Dutch, Latin, German, Italian, Russian, Spanish (and, where justified, another language). Knowledge of Esperanto is not sufficient for admission to doctoral training.

Proficiency necessary for academic work may be certified by:

- a state-recognised, at least intermediate-level language examination (corresponding to level B2 of the Council of Europe's Common European Framework of Reference for Languages), comprising both oral and written skills (formerly a 'type C' examination), or an equivalent recognised foreign language examination;
- a degree in the language concerned or a qualification in specialised translation;
- a secondary-school leaving certificate or a Master's degree obtained in the language concerned;
- a certificate issued by the Foreign Language Centre of the Faculty of Humanities of the University of Debrecen.

In exceptional cases, upon application and with the prior authorisation of the doctoral council for the academic field, the admissions committee may also ascertain the language proficiency required for work in the academic field in the course of an admissions procedure conducted in the relevant language or languages necessary for academic work.

Effective date The above Rules enter into force on 1 September 2026.

Debrecen, 8 June 2026

Prof. Dr Attila Bárány

Head of the Doctoral School

Council of the Doctoral School of History and Ethnology

University of Debrecen