

University of Debrecen Faculties
Faculty of Science and Technology

Juhász-Nagy Pál Doctoral School

Rules of operation

Debrecen
2025

Table of contents

Background	4
Definitions	5
1. Organization of the Doctoral School	8
<i>Identification data of the Doctoral School</i>	8
<i>Head of the doctoral school</i>	8
<i>Doctoral school programs</i>	8
<i>The Doctoral School Council</i>	8
<i>Doctoral School Forum</i>	9
<i>The Doctoral School's registration system, administration, and areas</i>	10
2. The role of the Doctoral School in the admission process	10
<i>Admission procedure</i>	10
<i>Admission requirements</i>	10
<i>Documents required for application</i>	11
<i>Scoring of the doctoral admission procedure</i>	11
<i>Announcement of topics and subject areas</i>	12
<i>Appointment and work of admission committees</i>	12
<i>Topics covered in the entrance examination, scoring system</i>	13
3. Educational work at the Doctoral School	13
<i>Curriculum and subjects</i>	13
<i>Academic requirements, credits, and supervisor workload</i>	13
<i>Fulfilling academic obligations</i>	14
<i>Interruption of studies, partial studies abroad</i>	15
<i>Absolutorium for doctoral students enrolled before August 31, 2016</i>	15
<i>Complex examination for doctoral students enrolled after September 1, 2016</i>	16
<i>Conditions for submitting a doctoral dissertation</i>	17
4. The tasks of the Doctoral School in relation to the research activities of doctoral students	17
<i>System of periodic reporting</i>	17
<i>Application activities of the Doctoral School</i>	17
5. Organization of the degree awarding process	18
<i>Conditions for obtaining a doctoral degree</i>	18
<i>Requirements for applying for a degree</i>	18
<i>Other provisions</i>	18
<i>The comprehensive examination</i>	18
<i>Independent scientific work</i>	19
<i>Proposal for reviewers and review committee</i>	19
6. Electronic registration of doctoral theses and dissertations	20

7. Obligations of PhD students	20
8. Management of the Doctoral School	20
9. Participation of the Doctoral School in the habilitation procedure	20

Background

(1) In compiling the operating regulations of the Faculty of Science and Technology, Pál Juhász-Nagy Doctoral School of the University of Debrecen, we took into account the following laws and regulations:

- Act CCIV of 2011 on national higher education (hereinafter: Nftv.) ;
- Government Decree 137/2008. (V.16) on state-recognized language examinations certifying foreign language proficiency and the recognition in Hungary of foreign language examination certificates issued abroad certifying foreign language proficiency;
- Government Decree 50/2008. (III.14) on the financing of higher education institutions based on training, scientific purposes and maintenance standards;
- Government Decree 51/2007. (III.26.) on the allowances of students participating in higher education and certain fees payable by them;
- Government Decree 387/2012. (XII.19.) on doctoral schools, the rules of doctoral procedures and habilitation;
- Government Decree 423/2012. (XII. 19.) on the higher education admission procedure;
- Government Decree 87/2015. (IV.9.) on the implementation of certain provisions of Act CCIV of 2011 on national higher education;
- Act C of 2001 on the recognition of foreign certificates and diplomas;

(2) In drawing up its rules of procedure, the Doctoral School also took into account:

- The position statement of the Hungarian Higher Education Accreditation Committee (hereinafter: MAB) on the establishment and operation of doctoral schools (Appendix 4 to the MAB Rules of Procedure);
- the DE Organizational and Operational Regulations (hereinafter referred to as SZMSZ) and other regulations related to doctoral training and degree acquisition attached thereto.

Definitions

The Faculty of Science and Technology, Juhász-Nagy Pál Doctoral School, University of Debrecen uses the following definitions in relation to doctoral training and degree awarding:

- Doctoral Council: a body established by the Senate for the organization of doctoral training and the awarding of degrees, which has decision-making authority with regard to doctoral training, in particular with regard to admission to training, the initiation of the degree awarding procedure, and the awarding of degrees;
- Doctoral school: an educational organization operating at the university with the approval of the Senate, encompassing various organizational units of the university, in which training is provided to prepare students for the award of an academic degree. Academic and other research groups supported by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences or research institutes outside the institution may also participate in the doctoral school;
- Core member: a person with an academic degree who is engaged in continuous, high-level academic activity in the field of science or research of the doctoral school and who is employed full-time at the University of Debrecen, in an employment relationship or civil service relationship, who has designated the University of Debrecen for the determination of budgetary support pursuant to Section 26 (3) of the Nftv. With the approval of the doctoral council, a full member may also be a Professor Emeritus of the University of Debrecen, pursuant to Section 32 (1) of the Nftv. Furthermore, a person with an academic degree in the field of the doctoral school who is employed full-time in an employment relationship or as a civil servant at a research institute conducting continuous, high-level scientific activity in the field of the doctoral school or in its area of research and holds the title of Doctor of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (MTA) may also be a full member. A full member can be employed full-time at a research institute or as a public servant, and who holds the title of Doctor of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences as a scientific advisor or research professor, provided that the University has concluded a relevant agreement with the research institute. Core members must meet the above conditions for at least 5 years and undertake to also perform supervisory activities in the doctoral school. Only those who have supervised at least one (or two in the case of co-supervision) doctoral candidates who have obtained a doctoral degree may become core members;
- Head of the doctoral school: a professor at the University of Debrecen responsible for the academic standards and educational work of the school, who is a full or corresponding member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, holds a doctorate or a doctorate in science (hereinafter referred to as an academic doctorate);
- Doctoral School Council: a body that assists the head of the doctoral school in his or her work, meets regularly, is elected by the core members of the doctoral school, and whose members are appointed and dismissed by the doctoral council of the scientific field;

- The instructors of the doctoral school: instructors and researchers with academic degrees who, upon the recommendation of the head of the doctoral school, are deemed suitable by the doctoral council of the scientific field to perform teaching, research, and thesis supervision tasks within the framework of the doctoral school;
- Doctoral program: an educational and research organization operating within doctoral schools, subject to the conditions set out in the doctoral regulations and with the approval of the doctoral council of the scientific field;
- Doctoral student: a student enrolled in a doctoral program who has the rights and obligations specified in the legislation governing higher education;
- Doctoral student status: the legal relationship between the doctoral student and the higher education institution, the content of which is determined by the rights and obligations of the doctoral student and the institution as defined in the legislation governing higher education. Student status is certified by the issuance and validation of a university student ID card;
- State doctoral scholarship: financial support available to doctoral students who are Hungarian citizens participating in organized doctoral training on a full-time basis, as well as to foreign students who are treated in the same way as Hungarian students on the basis of legislation or international agreements;
- Doctoral training: training, research, and reporting activities conducted within the framework of individual or group preparation tailored to the specific characteristics of the field of science and the needs of doctoral students. Those who have obtained a master's degree are eligible to participate in doctoral training. Doctoral students enrolled before August 31, 2016 must earn at least 180 credits in doctoral training, and the training period is 6 semesters. Doctoral students enrolled after September 1, 2016, must earn at least 240 credits in doctoral training, and the training period is 8 semesters;
- Doctoral topic: a subfield of research that is suitable for the doctoral student to learn the application of scientific methods under the supervision of the supervisor, to achieve evaluable scientific results, and to provide evidence of this in the form of scientific publications, scientific presentations, and then a doctoral dissertation (work, creation).
- Doctoral topic supervisor: an instructor or researcher with an academic degree whose topic announcement has been approved by the doctoral school council and who, on this basis, responsibly supervises and assists the doctoral student working on the topic in their studies, research work, and preparation for obtaining their degree.

- Study point (credit): a unit of measurement for work completed in doctoral training for the acquisition of knowledge, fulfillment of subject requirements, research work, and teaching tasks;
- Partial training abroad: part of doctoral training in which the doctoral student participates in a work program related to their doctoral topic, approved by their supervisor, which ensures the validity of the given study period in the university's doctoral training program. The doctoral school council, or in its absence, the doctoral council of the scientific field, is authorized to decide on the acceptance of the work program for partial training abroad;
- Doctoral candidate: a person undergoing the procedure for obtaining a doctoral degree. If the doctoral student begins the degree procedure within the training period, he or she is a doctoral candidate in addition to being a student;
- Doctoral candidate status: the legal relationship between the doctoral candidate and the higher education institution, the content of which is determined by the rights and obligations of the doctoral candidate and the institution as defined in the legislation on higher education. Doctoral candidate status is established upon acceptance of the application for the doctoral degree procedure;
- Doctoral degree procedure: a series of activities aimed at obtaining a doctoral degree, based on doctoral training in terms of content, but independent of it in terms of law and procedure;
- Complex examination: for doctoral students enrolled after September 1, 2016, an exam to be taken at the end of the fourth semester of doctoral training, as a conclusion to the training and research phase of the program and as a prerequisite for beginning the research and dissertation phase, which measures and evaluates academic and research progress;
- Doctoral examination: for doctoral students enrolled before August 31, 2016, part of the procedure for obtaining a doctoral degree, a summary and review of the knowledge acquired by the person participating in the doctoral procedure in their field of study;
- Doctoral dissertation: a written work, creation, or thesis prepared by the doctoral candidate, with which the doctoral candidate demonstrates, during the doctoral degree procedure, that they are capable of independently solving scientific tasks that meet the requirements of the degree; the dissertation may be written in Hungarian or English or in another language justified by the topic of the thesis;
- Doctoral theses: a summary work prepared for the scientific community based on the doctoral dissertation, presenting the scientific achievements of the doctoral candidate,

on the basis of which he or she demonstrates during the degree award procedure that he or she is prepared to obtain the scientific degree. Theses are written in Hungarian and English (or another language appropriate to the specific field of study);

- Doctoral degree: a degree that can be awarded by the university's doctoral council and can be obtained through participation in organized university training or individual preparation as part of the doctoral degree awarding process.

1. Organization of the Doctoral School

Identification data of the Doctoral School

Institution/operation address: University of Debrecen, Faculty of Science and Technology

Field of science: Natural sciences

Disciplines: Biological sciences, Environmental sciences

Name of the doctoral degree to be awarded: Doctorate (Ph.D.)

The program is based on the master's programs listed on the website www.doktori.hu.

Name of the doctoral school: Juhász-Nagy Pál Doctoral School

Year of accreditation: 200 (based on the legal predecessors in 1993)

Postal address: H-4032 Debrecen, Egyetem tér 1.

Head of the doctoral school

Dr. Attila Molnár V., university professor

Phone: 00 36 52 512 900/62637

E-mail: mva@science.unideb.hu

Doctoral school programs

Applied Ecology Program (Dr. Tibor Magura)

Biodiversity and Climate Change Program (Dr. Tamás Székely)

Botany Program (Dr. Attila Molnár V.)

Evolutionary and Diversity Biology Program (Dr. Zoltán Barta)

Fermentation Biotechnology and Biochemical Engineering Program (Dr. Levente Karaffa)

Functional and Restoration Ecology Program (Dr. Péter Török)

Hydrobiology Program (Dr. István Grigorszky)

Plant Biology and Biotechnology Program (Dr. Gábor Vasas)

Quantitative and Terrestrial Ecology Program (Dr. Edina Kunderát-Simon)

The Doctoral School Council

The Doctoral School Council decides annually on the educational programs to be announced, the appointments of supervisors, and thus the right to announce doctoral topics, and publishes them in a professionally justified manner.

The Doctoral School Council (DIT) approves supervisors each year at the same time as the topics are announced.

The tasks and powers of the Doctoral School Council are defined by the university and faculty doctoral regulations.

Additional tasks of the Doctoral School Council:

- Announces scientific topics;
- Appoints supervisors;
- Evaluates the preparedness, professional suitability, and topic selection of applicants;
- Determines the range of foreign languages accepted by the Doctoral School;
- Designates the main and secondary subjects for the comprehensive examination;
- Arranges for the preliminary discussion

Decides on:

- The composition of the doctoral admissions committee;
- By degree applicants:
 - o The composition of the comprehensive examination committee,
 - o The comprehensive examination subjects;
- Applications for tuition fee exemptions, discounts, cost reimbursement, and installment payment discounts;
- Approval of study trips abroad.

The secretary of the Doctoral School assists the school director in performing the administrative tasks of the Doctoral School. The duties of the secretary are determined by the council and/or director of the Doctoral School.

The supervisor is responsible for guiding the doctoral candidate's studies and research. The supervisor's duties are as follows:

- Announcing the doctoral topic;
- Certifying the completion of research tasks by signing the doctoral candidate's record book every semester;
- Reporting annually in writing to the head of the Doctoral School on the doctoral candidate's results;
- Assists the doctoral candidate in writing scientific publications and preparing the doctoral dissertation,
- Supports the candidate in obtaining foreign scholarships;
- Makes proposals for the doctoral candidate's training and research plan and is responsible for its quality and implementation;

Doctoral School Forum

The Doctoral School has two forums.

- All instructors and students of the Doctoral School may participate in the full Doctoral School Forum.
 - o Functions: general information, exchange of information, discussion of major topics.

- Frequency: annually or as needed.
- The scientific forum consists of core members and representatives of PhD students.
 - Topics: election of members of the Doctoral School Council, discussion of regulations and applications, proposals for the co-opting or dismissal of teaching members of the Doctoral School.

The Doctoral School's registration system, administration, and areas

- Registration of members, instructors, researchers, and supervisors of the Doctoral School;
- Registration of students, doctoral students, and doctoral candidates;
- Performing administrative tasks related to the issuance of certificates of completion;
- Handling matters related to the degree awarding process;
- Registering the materials of correspondence doctoral students;
- Archiving current affairs, reports, and other correspondence;
- Computerization of the entire registration system;
- Computerized registration and correspondence are handled by the departmental administration.

2. The role of the Doctoral School in the admission process

Hungarian and foreign citizens who have obtained a master's degree and a certificate of professional qualification from a domestic or foreign university, or a certificate of university-level education and professional qualification equivalent to that, or will obtain it in the semester of the admission event and have at least one state-recognized secondary school "C" type or equivalent language exam.

If the applicant is a Hungarian citizen and is not a student or employee of the University of Debrecen, they must attach a certificate of good conduct not older than 3 months to the application form. Foreign citizens may substitute the certificate of good conduct with an official state statement of their clean criminal record. Further conditions and details of the application and admission procedure are specified in the regulations of the respective academic fields.

Admission procedure

Applications for doctoral programs are accepted each year according to the deadlines and conditions announced by the Faculty of Natural Sciences and Technology.

Admission requirements

- For applicants with foreign degrees, recognition of the university degree level by the Hungarian Equivalence and Information Center (MEIK);
- At least one state-recognized secondary level "C" type language exam;
- Outstanding professional performance;

- Clean criminal record;
- In the case of application for correspondence training: a workplace that provides sufficient guarantees for demanding academic work, and the applicant already works in a position that facilitates academic work.

Documents required for application

- Completed application form;
- The following numbered attachments to the application form:
 1. A brief description and justification of the research topic;
 2. Letter of recommendation from the planned supervisor(s);
 3. Professional CV;
 4. List of publications certifying scientific work;
 5. Copy of university diploma;
 6. Copies of documents certifying foreign language proficiency;
 7. Certificate of good conduct (except for DE graduates and employees);
 8. In the case of an application for fee-based training, the following must also be attached from the workplace:
 - Consent to continue studies;
 - A statement confirming that the conditions for research will be provided;
 - Whether it undertakes to finance the tuition fees specified in the regulations;
 - If the employer does not undertake to cover the costs, a statement from the applicant or another guarantor confirming that they will cover the costs of the program.
 9. Proof of payment of the application fee.

Scoring of the doctoral admission procedure

The uniform admission scoring system consists of 100 points, which are divided into 3 categories.

In the first category, the admissions committee will evaluate the candidate's professional knowledge, their plans for research to be conducted during doctoral studies, and the justification for those plans. This assessment can be conducted through an oral exam and/or a written application based on a research plan. A maximum of 40 points can be earned.

The second category evaluates the candidate's previous academic achievements. This could be an indicator derived from the cumulative GPA of completed semesters and/or an evaluation of the degree earned in university/master's studies. A maximum of 30 points can be earned.

The third category is used to evaluate the scientific "background," with points awarded based on documented products (publications, student research papers, etc.). The scoring criteria are the same as those outlined in 2. c) of Section II in the DE Talent UD Program Regulations with products that can be recognized with performance credits. A maximum of 30 points can be

earned. The scoring is determined by the doctoral admissions committee based on the following categories:

20–30 points:

- First-authored peer-reviewed journal publication ("in extenso")
- OTDK award-winning presentation, 1st–3rd place
- National design competition, 1st–3rd prize (or the purchase of the design)
- Certified domestic or international artistic, professional competition achievements

10–20 points:

- First-authored peer-reviewed journal publication
- First-authored, non-local, and non-TDK presentation, poster
- OTDK presentation (and/or paper), not awarded
- National design competition, not awarded

0–10 points:

- Not first authorship, not a TDK presentation, poster
- Presentation at a local, student (non-TDK) conference
- Displaying the certificates at a public exhibition
- Certified concert performance

The requirement for admission is an intermediate C-type language exam, for which points cannot be earned. Performance on language exams beyond this level can be rewarded with extra points. An intermediate C-level language exam is worth 3 points, while an advanced A or B-level exam is worth 5 points.

Announcement of topics and subject areas

The topics and subject areas are announced and the list of supervisors is published each year on the website www.doktori.hu.

Appointment and work of admission committees

- The Admission Committee is appointed by the Doctoral School Council.
- After the admission interviews, the Doctoral School Council compiles a ranking of applicants and, based on the framework, prepares its recommendation for the Doctoral Council of the Scientific Field, which decides on admissions.
- First-year doctoral students are welcomed by the school management in the first days of September, who provide them with information and introduce them to the departments; they explain their tasks, inform them on details regarding the preparation of training and research plans, and place the doctoral students.
- The supervisors discuss and assign the doctoral students' mid-term and annual tasks, help them compile their training and research plans, and initiate their studies, language learning, and research work.

Topics covered in the entrance examination, scoring system

In the admission procedure, the admissions committee awards points in the following four categories:

- Professional intelligence (max. 50 points). The candidate must attach a research plan to their application form, which will serve as the starting point for the admission interview. In the admission interview based on the research plan, the candidate must demonstrate that they understand the problem posed by their planned dissertation, have at least a basic knowledge of the literature on the subject, and possess the basic professional knowledge necessary to process it. During the admission interview, the review committee also assesses the candidate's skills that are necessary prerequisites for successful creative work, as well as their commitment to academic work;
- Diploma (max. 20 points; with honors/excellent 20, very good/excellent 15, good 10). The candidate must have a university degree.
- Previous academic work (max. 30 points). During the evaluation, the Admissions Committee will award points in particular for the number of publications, OTDK theses, teaching assistant activities, partial training abroad, and other scientific activities.

The admissions committee will evaluate the applicants' performance, rank them based on their scores, and recommend or not recommend their admission.

3. Educational work at the Doctoral School

Curriculum and subjects

The Doctoral School Council approves the doctoral school's training curriculum, the designation of subjects, the number of credits, and the schedule of lectures. These must be continuously updated.

Academic requirements, credits, and supervisor workload

The unit of measurement for academic requirements is the academic point (credit). In the doctoral training, credits are the unit of measurement for the academic, teaching, and research work required to fulfill the obligations of doctoral students. Doctoral students enrolled before August 31, 2016, are required to complete 30 ± 3 credits per semester, for a total of 180 credits over the entire six-semester program. One credit can be earned by completing 30 hours of work. Doctoral students enrolled after September 1, 2016, are required to complete 30 ± 3 credits per semester, 120 credits per phase during the first four semesters of "training and research" and

the second four semesters of "research and dissertation" of the doctoral program, for a total of 240 credits. One credit can be earned by completing 30 hours of work. If a doctoral student fails to earn the required number of credits in a given semester through their own fault, the doctoral council of the academic field will decide to suspend the payment of the doctoral scholarship. If the doctoral student fails to make up for their shortcomings within one year, the doctoral council of the field of science may decide to terminate their student status.

Doctoral students can earn **academic (training) credits** by studying and passing exams. Generally, 1 credit can be earned per semester by attending one hour of lectures per week and passing an exam. For doctoral students enrolled before August 31, 2016, the number of compulsory study (training) credits to be completed during the six semesters of doctoral training is 36. For doctoral students enrolled after September 1, 2016, the number of compulsory study (training) credits is 12-20. The Doctoral School Council may determine the number of compulsory study (training) credits to be earned in a semester. The completion of credits is certified by the lecturer listed in the course index on the basis of the exam, thesis, report, etc. required for the course taken. Credits can only be assigned to courses that are graded on a five-point or three-point scale.

During their training, doctoral students earn most of the required credits (115-168 credits for doctoral students enrolled before August 31, 2016, and 180-228 credits for doctoral students enrolled after September 1, 2016) as **research credits**. 1 credit = 30 working hours. The completion of credits is certified by the supervisor in the index. The supervisor is required to certify the continuous completion of research work each semester by signing the course with the appropriate code number and credit value in Neptun. Research work does not need to be graded or evaluated.

Teaching credits may be awarded for teaching activities performed by doctoral students, as decided by the doctoral school council. A maximum of 45 credits may be earned from these activities during the six semesters of doctoral training for doctoral students enrolled before August 31, 2016, and a maximum of 40 credits for doctoral students enrolled after September 1, 2016. 1 credit = 1-2 hours of teaching activity per week for one semester, depending on the nature of the task. The teaching task and its credit value must be included in the index. The completion of the task is certified by the head of the organizational unit responsible for the given teaching module.

Fulfilling academic obligations

- The Doctoral School shall inform admitted students of the courses available in the Doctoral School's curriculum and their credit values, on the basis of which students shall prepare a four-semester curriculum, which is part of the "Training Plan";
- Examinations may be oral or written. The method and time of the examination shall be determined by the course coordinator. In consultation with the course instructor, the

head of the Doctoral School may allow the doctoral student to take the examination at a different time than that determined by the course coordinator;

- An insufficient (1) grade may be retaken once within a semester. If the student has not met the requirements of the subject, or has not appeared for the examination, or has not passed the examination, they must be required to retake the subject. A given subject may be retaken once;
- The supervisor shall certify the completion or non-completion of the research work in the index every semester with an entry and signature;
- Doctoral students may attend lectures and classes at other higher education institutions if recommended by their supervisor and the head of the Doctoral School. The courses attended may be recorded in the student's record book and the student may take exams if the host institution allows it;
- Doctoral students with scholarships from other universities may be transferred to the Doctoral School on a case-by-case basis.

Interruption of studies, partial studies abroad

(1) The chair of the doctoral council of the scientific field may authorize the interruption of studies up to three times, but for a maximum of three years in total, on the basis of appropriate reasons (e.g., employment for research or teaching purposes, pregnancy, illness, etc.) and upon the recommendation of the supervisor. The request must be accepted the first time. No state scholarship may be paid during the interruption of the student's legal relationship.

Requests for interruption of studies must be submitted to the chair of the doctoral council of the scientific field, who will decide on their acceptance after considering the opinions of the head of the doctoral school and the supervisor.

(2) Doctoral students may participate in partial training abroad. Doctoral students may participate in partial training on the basis of a work program approved by their supervisor, which ensures the validity of the given study period in the university's doctoral training program. The duration of the partial training abroad shall be counted towards the duration of the doctoral training, the student's legal status shall not be suspended, and the state scholarship shall be paid. We support partial training abroad for all doctoral students, for a total of no more than 4 semesters during the 6 semesters. The doctoral council shall decide on the crediting of credits or documented performance earned by doctoral students at other universities or during study abroad, subject to the prior approval of the supervisor.

Absolutorium for doctoral students enrolled before August 31, 2016

Doctoral students enrolled before August 31, 2016 may obtain an absolutorium after successfully completing six semesters. The absolutorium is a document certifying that the

doctoral student has fulfilled all the academic requirements of the doctoral program. The absolutorium may be issued after completion of the third year.

Complex examination for doctoral students enrolled after September 1, 2016

For doctoral students enrolled after September 1, 2016, the complex examination must be completed during the doctoral program, at the end of the fourth semester, as the conclusion of the "training and research phase" of the program and as a prerequisite for beginning the "research and dissertation phase." It measures and evaluates academic and research progress. The prerequisite for admission to the comprehensive examination is the acquisition of at least 90 credits in the "training and research phase" of the doctoral program (first four semesters) and all "training credits" required by the doctoral school's training plan (except for those preparing for a doctoral degree individually). You must apply for the comprehensive exam in writing (see DE Doctoral Regulations, Appendix 4). Since successful completion of the comprehensive exam allows the student to enter the "research and dissertation phase" of the doctoral program, applying for the comprehensive exam also constitutes applying for the degree program.

The comprehensive examination must be taken publicly before a committee appointed by the doctoral council of the scientific field. The examination committee shall consist of at least three members, at least one-third of whom shall not be employed by the institution operating the doctoral school. The chair of the examination committee shall be a university professor or professor emeritus or a lecturer or researcher holding a doctorate from the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. All members of the examination committee hold academic degrees. The supervisor of the doctoral candidate may not be a member of the examination committee. Prior to the comprehensive examination, the supervisor shall evaluate the doctoral candidate's performance in writing and state whether he or she recommends that the candidate be admitted to the degree program.

The comprehensive examination consists of two main parts: one part assesses the candidate's theoretical knowledge ("theoretical part"), while the other part assesses the candidate's academic progress ("dissertation part").

In the theoretical part of the comprehensive examination, the examinee takes an exam in at least two subjects/topics, the list of which is included in the doctoral school's training plan. The theoretical exam may also include a written part. The subjects of the comprehensive examination are listed in the Training Plan of the Juhász-Nagy Pál Doctoral School. The list of examination subjects and their topics are determined by the doctoral school council.

In the second part of the comprehensive exam, the examinee gives a presentation on their knowledge of the literature, reports on their research results, and presents their research plan for the second phase of their doctoral training, as well as the schedule for completing their dissertation and publishing their results. The supervisor must be given the opportunity to be present during this part of the examination and to evaluate the candidate.

The examination committee evaluates the theoretical and dissertation parts of the examination separately. A written evaluation of the comprehensive examination is also prepared. The

comprehensive examination is successful if the majority of the committee members consider both parts of the examination to be successful.

If the theoretical part of the exam is failed, the examinee may retake the exam once during the given exam period in the subject(s) that were not passed. If the dissertation part of the exam is failed, it cannot be retaken during the given exam period. Doctoral students may only enroll in the fifth semester of the doctoral program after successfully completing the comprehensive exam.

Conditions for submitting a doctoral dissertation

An important tool for quality assurance is that candidates must have a sufficient number and quality of publications by the time of their defense. The Doctoral School Council requires that candidates publish a sufficient number of studies with an impact factor related to their topic in order to be admitted to the defense. In addition, candidates must demonstrate their independent scientific work by participating in domestic and international conferences. The suitability of publications as a condition for admission to the defense is assessed by the Doctoral School Council for all candidates. The condition for submitting the dissertation is the publication of two publications with impact factor. A prerequisite for submitting the dissertation is an internal defense, during which the preliminary opponents must declare whether the manuscript and its public defense meet the PhD level.

4. The tasks of the Doctoral School in relation to the research activities of doctoral students

System of periodic reporting

- Doctoral students must finalize their research plans by February 10 (the Doctoral School provides assistance within an organized framework) and submit them to the Doctoral School Council for approval. The Doctoral School Council reviews and comments on the plans (topic, title, methodological recommendations, etc.) and approves them;
- Doctoral students are required to submit regular periodic reports. In the first year, reports are submitted at the end of the first year, and thereafter every six months.

Application activities of the Doctoral School

The Doctoral School may engage in application activities. Applications may be submitted for research tasks and research and equipment procurement grants.

5. Organization of the degree awarding process

Conditions for obtaining a doctoral degree

- For students enrolled before August 31, 2016, passing the doctoral comprehensive examination; for students enrolled after September 1, 2016, passing the complex examination;
- Documented independent scientific work;
- Submission and defense of the dissertation in a public debate.

Requirements for applying for a degree

1) For participants in organized training:

- Recommendation of the Doctoral School Council;

2) for individual candidates:

- Recommendation of the Doctoral School Council;
- Successful preliminary defense of the dissertation;

Other provisions

The doctoral candidate's legal relationship shall terminate upon completion of the degree acquisition procedure, or if the doctoral candidate has not submitted his or her doctoral dissertation within two years of the date of establishment of the legal relationship. In the latter case, the chair of the doctoral council of the scientific field shall notify the person concerned in writing of the termination of the legal relationship, and the procedural fee shall not be refunded. In the case of correspondence and individual training students, a preliminary discussion must be held before the thesis is finalized, which shall be organized by the Doctoral School Council. The public discussion of the thesis may only take place after a successful comprehensive examination. When forming the examination and review committees, special attention must be paid to avoiding conflicts of interest. After the completion of the degree award procedure, the Doctoral School shall archive a copy of the application form for the doctoral degree.

The comprehensive examination

- For students enrolled before August 31, 2016, the doctoral comprehensive examination is a form of assessment of the doctoral candidate's knowledge in their broader field of research. For students enrolled after September 1, 2016, the comprehensive exam is the form of assessment, so these students do not take a doctoral comprehensive exam.
- The comprehensive exam (or oral exam) is a summary, overview oral exam consisting of one main subject and one secondary subject, which must be taken publicly before a committee. The comprehensive exam must be announced publicly at least one week before the exam.

- The chair and members of the complex examination committee, as well as the substitute members and the subjects of the complex examination, shall be appointed by the Doctoral School Council.
- The complex examination committee shall consist of at least three members with academic degrees. The chair of the committee shall be a senior lecturer (preferably a professor) or professor emeritus of the university who is professionally competent in the field. At least one member of the comprehensive examination committee shall be an external expert who is not employed by the university. The candidate's supervisor may not be a member of the comprehensive examination committee. The composition of the committee shall be communicated to the candidate. The candidate may raise an objection to the composition of the committee in writing to the doctoral council of the scientific field within 8 days, but only on the grounds of bias or conflict of interest. The comprehensive examination may be held if at least three members of the committee are present. The topics of the comprehensive examination are determined by the Doctoral School Council.
- The topics are public and must be made available to the candidate at least one month before the scheduled comprehensive examination. A person who is a close relative of the doctoral candidate or who cannot be expected to judge the matter objectively for other reasons may not be a member of the committee.

Independent scientific work

Candidates must prove their scientific work by submitting publications that have been reviewed and published in scientific journals or volumes at the time of submitting their thesis. The requirements of the profession in terms of the place and number of articles published are determined by the Doctoral School Council. Where the use of scientometrics is justified, its results shall also be taken into account.

Proposal for reviewers and review committee

The Doctoral School Council shall propose the chair and members of the review committee, as well as the two reviewers. An appropriate number of external experts shall be included among the members of the review committee. Reserve experts shall also be appointed for each task (deputy chair, deputy opponent, deputy member) so that the defense can proceed without interruption in the event of their absence. The review committee consists of the chair, the official reviewers, and three or four additional members. The chair of the committee is a senior lecturer or professor emeritus at the university, and all members of the committee hold academic degrees. The reviewer who rejects the dissertation is also a member of the committee. The candidate may raise an objection in writing to the doctoral council of the scientific field within eight days of the composition of the review committee, but only in cases of conflict of interest or bias.

The seven-member (minimum five members) evaluation committee consists of a chair, two official evaluators, and four additional members. One member of the evaluation committee performs the duties of secretary. Only senior lecturers and/or researchers with an academic degree may be members of the committee. Persons who are close relatives of the doctoral candidate or who cannot be expected to evaluate the case objectively for other reasons may not be members of the committee.

6. Electronic registration of doctoral theses and dissertations

Following the amendment of the doctoral decree in spring 2007, the task of publishing doctoral dissertations and theses electronically was transferred from the ministry to the universities.

7. Obligations of PhD students

Correspondence and individual students at the Doctoral School pay tuition fees. After obtaining their absolutorium, students of the Doctoral School are required to submit their index to the secretary of the Doctoral School for copying, in order to ensure that the necessary records are made.

Doctoral School students are required to provide their supervisor and secretary with a copy or electronic version of the posted announcement of their comprehensive exams and thesis defense.

Before defending their thesis, Doctoral School students are required to submit a list of their publications and independent references to the secretary of the Doctoral School for uploading to the website.

When submitting a doctoral dissertation, the doctoral candidate must provide the secretary with the electronic form of the dissertation and the thesis booklets in Hungarian and English. The head of the school shall certify compliance with this obligation to the Faculty Doctoral Council. The secretary shall retain the aforementioned materials and forward them to the designated university website.

8. Management of the Doctoral School

The doctoral school's income consists of subsidies for enrolled PhD students, funds generated as a result of the doctoral school's grant applications, and other subsidies.

9. Participation of the Doctoral School in the habilitation procedure

The Doctoral School Council develops proposals for the conditions of the habilitation procedure in the fields of biology and environmental science. At the request of higher habilitation councils, it reviews the applications of candidates for habilitation.

The requirements for applicants submitting a habilitation application are as follows:

- Have an independent professional profile;
- Publish regularly in international journals in their field (with a number of publications in international refereed journals exceeding 50% of the current MTA doctoral requirement);
- Depending on their specific field of expertise, have independent, authoritative references to their work exceeding 50% of the current MTA doctoral requirements;
- Have at least 5 years of university teaching experience and at least 4 semesters of successful courses at the University of Debrecen;
- Have documented scientific and professional public activities.

Date: 10 October 2025