

Semmelweis University

Doctoral School

FRAMEWORK FOR THE ESG-BASED OPERATION OF DOCTORAL EDUCATION BASED ON THE

EUROPEAN STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES
(ESG:2015)

WITH THE CONSIDERATION OF THE MAB ACCREDITATION SELF-EVALUATION
CRITERIA

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Part 1: Standards for Internal Quality Assurance of the Institution

General Introduction

ESG 1.1 Quality Assurance Policy

Standard:

Institutions shall have a publicly available quality assurance policy that forms part of their strategic management. This policy shall be developed and implemented by internal stakeholders (i.e. students, academic staff, and non-academic staff) through appropriate structures and processes, with the involvement of external stakeholders (users, employers, partners).

The Semmelweis University is committed to quality assurance, quality management and quality development. To this end, it operates a Quality Management System (QMS) within the University's Integrated Management System (IMS), within which the definition and maintenance of the quality policy are ensured.

The University's current quality policy also meets the expectations set out in Section 5.2 ("Policy") of the ISO 9001:2015 standard.

The quality policy is publicly available and can be accessed directly on the University's website under the "Documents" menu. In addition, the Senate has adopted sectoral policies, including the quality policy of Semmelweis University formulated in accordance with the ESG standards.

In alignment with the University's quality policy, the Doctoral School (hereinafter: DS) ensures that its staff are familiar with the policy and communicates it to the main stakeholders.

The mission and vision articulated in the quality policy are closely aligned with the objectives of the European Research Area (ERA) and reflect the goals set out in the University's Institutional Development Plan. They also provide the framework for the quality assurance activities of the Doctoral School.

In order to strengthen quality awareness and develop a quality culture, quality-related topics are discussed regularly, but at least once a year, during meetings, consultations and sessions of the University Doctoral Council (UDC), and they also appear similarly at the level of divisions and programmes.

To bring the quality policy into practice, the Doctoral School aligns itself with the University's strategic quality objectives and contributes to their implementation. These quality objectives are broken down and linked to indicators; their implementation and effectiveness are evaluated annually.

The Doctoral School involves key stakeholders in the definition and implementation of the annual quality objectives.

The Doctoral School monitors the main stakeholders and their needs, and takes these into account during operational planning and when considering development activities. The identification and interpretation of the main stakeholders are carried out consistently both at the level of the Doctoral School and at the level of the divisions.

The Doctoral School takes part in the operation of the Integrated Management System (IMS) of Semmelweis University and regards its operational frameworks and regulations as binding. In line with this, in the areas of Education and Research (and, where relevant, Patient Care), it complies with the applicable legislation and takes into account relevant guidelines, protocols and methodological requirements. These expectations influencing the operation are reviewed regularly, but at least once a year, to ensure continued compliance.

Within the IMS framework of the University, processes and operations in higher education are regulated by ESG 2015 - Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area; in the field of research by various GxP principles; and in general operations by the ISO 9001:2015 standard.

The University's highest decision-making body regarding quality matters is the Quality Development Council (QDC), in which the Chair of the University Doctoral Council is a voting member. The President of the Doctoral Students' Union is a standing invited participant. The decision-preparatory and advisory body of the QDC is the Quality Development and Quality Evaluation Committee (QDQC).

The principal body responsible for quality-related matters within the Doctoral School is the Evaluation and Quality Control Committee (EQCC).

The tasks of the Evaluation and Quality Control Committee include:

- a) based on the recommendations of the Doctoral Divisions (DTs), the scientific field classification of doctoral students and supervisors is reviewed and evaluated;
- b) evaluating scientific performance related to the award of the doctoral degree;
- c) reviewing and/or appointing the members of the complex examination committee and the defence committee (based on submitted proposals);
- d) conducting quality control activities covering all functions of the doctoral divisions;
- e) preparing decisions regarding applications for the recognition (nostrification) of PhD diplomas;
- f) providing opinions on proposals for new training programmes submitted by the Doctoral Councils.

Stakeholders (Interested Parties)

In the operation of doctoral education, the identification and consideration of stakeholder expectations constitute a fundamental element of quality assurance. The operational framework addresses these aspects in a structured manner, ensuring a balance between institutional objectives, the interests of doctoral candidates, and external expectations. The consideration of stakeholder needs within doctoral education is carried out in accordance with the provisions set out in the Doctoral Regulations and through the application of the ESG-based operational framework, thereby ensuring transparent, quality-oriented and continuously improvable processes.

ESG 1.2 Design and Approval of Programmes

Standard:

Institutions shall have processes in place for the design and approval of their study programmes. Programmes shall be designed in such a way that they achieve their intended objectives, including the expected learning outcomes. The qualification awarded upon completion of the programme shall be clearly defined and communicated, with explicit reference to the appropriate level of the national qualifications framework and, consequently, to the Qualifications Framework of the European Higher Education Area.

In doctoral education, the term “training programme” does not refer to a single course, nor merely to a curriculum. Instead, it represents the structured professional and academic framework of doctoral training, which defines:

- the objectives of the training,
- the competences to be acquired,
- the academic and research components, and
- the requirements for completion and assessment.

This is a **programme level concept**, not an operational one (i.e. not a single course or syllabus).

Objectives of the Training

The objective of doctoral education is to train highly qualified professionals capable of conducting independent, high level scientific research; producing new scientific results; presenting them at an international level; and contributing to scientific advancement while supporting academic, clinical, or innovation oriented career pathways. The objectives of the doctoral training programmes are aligned with the University’s goals of research excellence, internationalisation and talent development as set out in its Institutional Development Plan.

Competences to Be Acquired

The training programme aims to develop the doctoral candidates’ scientific, methodological and transversal competences, with particular emphasis on the planning

and implementation of independent research, critical thinking, scientific communication, and ethical and responsible research conduct.

Competence development is achieved throughout both the training and research phases, through the integration of coursework, research activities, and supervision provided by the academic advisor.

Study and Research Components

The study and research components of the training programme constitute an interconnected and coherent system in which structured academic elements (courses, seminars, skills-development activities) support the research activity, while the outcomes of the research provide feedback to the training process as a whole.

The proportion and content of the study and research components are adapted to the specific characteristics of the doctoral programmes and divisions, within the framework of the Doctoral Regulations.

Requirements and System of Assessment

The requirements and system for the completion and assessment of the training programme are implemented at multiple levels, aligned with the different stages of doctoral training, ensuring the monitoring of doctoral candidates' progress, the provision of feedback, and the identification of improvement opportunities.

The assessment mechanisms are based on the formal requirements set out in the Doctoral Regulations, complemented by the quality assurance and self-evaluation tools of the operational framework.

Competence, Attitude and Autonomy Dimensions of Doctoral Training

Knowledge and Professional Competences

The aim of the training programme is to ensure that doctoral candidates acquire high-level theoretical and methodological knowledge related to their field of study, and that they are able to apply this knowledge independently when formulating and answering new scientific questions. Knowledge development is achieved through the integration of structured study components and individual research activities.

Researcher Attitude and Scientific Conduct

A key objective of the training programme is to develop a responsible, ethical and reflective researcher attitude, which includes the consistent application of the principles of scientific integrity, critical thinking, self-reflection, and respect for the norms of the scientific community. The development of researcher attitude takes place through supervisory support, engagement in research communities, and the provision of regular feedback.

Autonomy and Responsibility in the Research Process

Throughout doctoral training, the research autonomy of doctoral candidates increases progressively, manifesting in the formulation of individual research questions, methodological decision-making, and the interpretation of research results. The strengthening of autonomy is accompanied by an increased level of scientific and

ethical responsibility, which is reflected in the transparency, documentation, and accountability of the research activity.

Communication, Collaboration and Social Responsibility

The training programme supports the development of doctoral candidates' scientific communication and collaboration competences, including participation in the international scientific community, engagement in interdisciplinary cooperation, and the responsible societal dissemination and utilisation of research results.

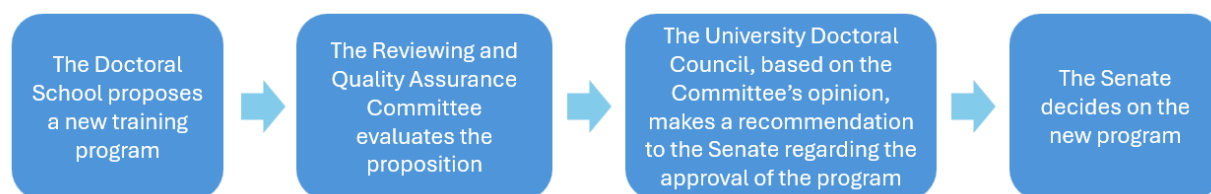
The development of these competences contributes to the doctoral candidates' long-term professional autonomy and the conscious shaping of their career paths.

The Relationship Between Attitude, Autonomy and Assessment

The development of doctoral candidates' attitudes, autonomy and sense of responsibility does not appear as an independent assessment criterion; rather, it functions as a qualitative dimension permeating the entire doctoral training process. It is reflected indirectly in the evaluation of academic and research performance.

The formal procedures for the approval and modification of training programmes are defined in the Doctoral Regulations; the present operational framework sets out the criteria for the regular professional and quality assurance review of the programmes. The Doctoral School lays down the conditions for launching a new training programme in the Doctoral Regulations (DR).

The process for the approval of training programmes is likewise regulated in the Doctoral Regulations. A simplified diagram of the process is shown below:



In order to ensure that the training programs of the Doctoral School are aligned with the directions of domestic and international research within the respective scientific fields, with the objectives and strategy of Semmelweis University, and with the mission and vision of the Doctoral School, the topic is addressed at regular intervals—at least once a year—during the annual reporting period as an agenda item at the EDT meeting.

At the request of the head of the Doctoral School, the divisions review the current training program with regard to its relevance and adequacy, based on the following criteria:

- ✓ Development, new trends, and research results in the scientific field at the national level
- ✓ Development, new trends, and research results in the scientific field at the international level

- ✓ Feasibility assessment and risks of new research directions
- ✓ New research methodologies and research-technology opportunities
- ✓ Compliance with the goals and principles of the European Higher Education Area
- ✓ Current goals and strategy of Semmelweis University
- ✓ Examination of compliance with the mission and vision of the University and the Doctoral School
- ✓ Impact assessment of the expectations and needs of key stakeholders (students, internal staff, research partners), with special regard to labor market, enrollment, and graduate tracking trends

The Doctoral School includes a summary of the above in its annual report.

Other procedures and documents closely related to the training programs—such as the training plan and courses, teaching materials, and examination requirements (exam topics, compulsory and recommended literature)—are reviewed by the Doctoral School at the level of each section at least once a year, and a summary of this review is prepared in the annual report.

ESG 1.3 Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment

Standard:

Institutions should ensure that their training programs are delivered in a way that encourages students to take an active role in creating the learning process. Student assessment should reflect this approach.

The Doctoral School develops its training programs in cooperation with the students. Through continuous communication and information exchange, it ensures that students' needs, progress, and academic performance are supported. To this end, the Doctoral School works closely with the Doctoral Students' Union.

Flexible learning pathways for students are ensured. Applicants may decide whether to choose the traditional, classical form of study (state-funded or self-financed) or to pursue their degree as individual doctoral candidates.

In order to support students' successful academic progress, the Doctoral School provides a variety of teaching and pedagogical approaches and methods.

Teaching formats may include:

- ✓ Face-to-face (in-person) instruction
- ✓ Online instruction
- ✓ E-learning frameworks
- ✓ Individual or group-based settings

Instructors take into account the scope of the knowledge, skills, and competencies to be delivered, and, in light of these—as well as their own preferred and well-established pedagogical methods—decide on the form of instruction that is most beneficial for students.

In order to ensure the appropriate selection of teaching methods, the teaching community takes into account current educational trends, the opportunities, capacities, and good practices of the Doctoral School and its respective Sections, as well as students' expectations.

The following main teaching methods may be applied within the Doctoral School:

- ✓ Courses
- ✓ Lectures
- ✓ Explanation
- ✓ Narration
- ✓ Student presentations, reports, and assignment preparation
- ✓ Discussion
- ✓ Debate
- ✓ Structuring
- ✓ Questioning
- ✓ Demonstration
- ✓ Practice and the involvement of students in teaching activities
- ✓ Project-based learning
- ✓ Cooperative teaching methods
- ✓ Simulation, role play, and games
- ✓ Feedback and assessment of student performance

Instructors take into account the specific characteristics of the knowledge to be delivered, their own familiarity with teaching methodologies, and on this basis decide on the most appropriate method to apply. Instructors continuously develop their own methodological expertise.

The Doctoral School regularly evaluates pedagogical and teaching methodologies, at least once a year during the annual reporting period.

The Centre for Educational Development, Methodology and Organization of Semmelweis University is continuously available and supports the dissemination of best pedagogical practices and teaching methodologies:

<https://semmelweis.hu/oktatasmodszertan/en/>

The Doctoral School regulates the adequacy of academic assessment and examines its effectiveness.

In the course of assessment, the following are ensured for instructors:

- ✓ Instructors become familiar with and correctly apply various testing and examination methods, and receive support in developing their related competencies.
- ✓ The criteria and methods of assessment, as well as the criteria for examination methods, are defined in advance and made publicly available.
- ✓ Students receive feedback during the assessment process.
- ✓ Students are informed about the procedures for appeals and complaints related to the given academic assessment.

The Doctoral School regulates the intensity of communication and the effectiveness of cooperation between supervisors and doctoral students.

Criteria are defined for the adequacy of the supervisor-student relationship and for the regularity of cooperation, which at a minimum include the following elements:

- ✓ Frequency and forms of communication
- ✓ Frameworks for responses (timeframe and format)
- ✓ Criteria for the student's reporting obligations
- ✓ Frameworks for evaluating cooperation
- ✓ Evaluation of the effectiveness of cooperation (adequacy, problems, etc.)

In supervising the student's academic and research activities, the supervisor may involve the supportive work of other colleagues in operational matters. The student is informed of this fact, as well as of the tasks and responsibilities of the assisting person(s).

ESG 1.4 Student Admission, Progression, Recognition and Certification

Standard:

Institutions consistently apply their regulations—defined in advance and made publicly available—that cover the entire student life cycle, including, for example, student admission, progression, recognition of studies, and the awarding of qualifications.

Detailed rules governing student admission, progression, and the awarding of doctoral degrees are set out in the Doctoral Regulations; the present framework describes the quality assurance support and transparency of these processes.

Student Admission

The framework for student admission is defined in the Doctoral Regulations. Prospective applicants may also obtain information directly from the Doctoral School's website.

The Doctoral School provides the necessary information for prospective applicants and candidates in an admission guide, which includes the following:

- ✓ The rules of the admission procedure
- ✓ Admission requirements
- ✓ Relevant referenced sections of the Doctoral Regulations
- ✓ The application form / online platform
- ✓ Expectations placed on applicants during the admission and application process (a checklist of required tasks)

Student Progression

Following the admission procedure, students—now enrolled as doctoral candidates—become familiar with the rules governing their academic progression.

The Doctoral School ensures students have access to the Doctoral Regulations, which define the conditions for progression (training framework, credits, examinations, etc.). On the training sub-website, under the section “For Students,” the following are presented: forms of training, key deadlines, fee structures, training requirements, and student services.

The examination, assessment, and progression requirements are also detailed on the training sub-website.

The operational framework and internal regulations required for instructors and students are accessible at: <https://semmelweis.hu/phd/en/documents/doctoral-division-regulations/>

In English: <https://semmelweis.hu/phd/en/dokumentumtar-en/>

Teaching Activities of Doctoral Students

The involvement of doctoral students in teaching activities is regulated by the Doctoral Regulations. Students are informed of the framework and expectations related to their teaching activities.

The doctoral student's supervisor oversees the teaching activity and, prior to involving the student in teaching, verifies at least the following:

- ✓ The doctoral student's teaching competencies (e.g. ability to present the material, adequate presentation skills, ability to perform as a lecturer, ability to adhere to time limits, etc.).
- ✓ The student's thorough understanding of the objectives of the teaching activity, the subject matter to be taught, and the target audience, as well as their ability to answer students' questions.
- ✓ The student's ability to report to the supervisor on their teaching activities.
- ✓ The student's ability to formulate development proposals based on their teaching experience.

To this end, the supervisor or a person designated by the supervisor attends a trial teaching session and, taking its outcome into account, assigns the doctoral student teaching duties.

Completion and Conclusion of Studies

The process of completing studies operates within regulated frameworks in the Doctoral School. Students receive the documents certifying the completion of their studies in compliance with relevant legislation and internal regulations. The regularity and compliance of the process are supervised by the Doctoral Office.

ESG 1.5 Teachers

Standard:

Institutions should ensure that their teaching staff possess appropriate competencies. They should apply fair and transparent procedures for the recruitment and continuous professional development of their teaching staff.

The Doctoral School is familiar with the relevant legislation, current recommendations, and internal regulations. Accordingly, it complies with the expectations, knowledge requirements, and operational frameworks related to teaching staff in the following areas.

Core Members of the Doctoral School

Eligibility for becoming a core member is defined by the conditions laid down in the Doctoral Regulations. The current core members and emeritus core members are published by the Doctoral School and updated as necessary on the <https://doktori.hu/> website.

Section Heads, Program Directors, Supervisors, Co supervisors, and Instructors

The responsibilities of these roles are detailed in the Doctoral Regulations.

The Doctoral School of Semmelweis University is responsible for the quality of its teaching staff and for ensuring conditions that support effective teaching performance. The quality of these conditions is ensured by taking the following aspects into account:

- ✓ Provision and development of educational infrastructure
- ✓ Ensuring a balanced distribution of teaching workload
- ✓ Supporting the personal, professional, and research development of instructors
- ✓ Supporting instructors' research activities (conference participation, publications, grant applications, etc.)
- ✓ Promoting the pedagogical competencies of instructors
- ✓ Evaluation of and feedback on instructors' teaching activities
- ✓ Supporting the development of teaching and research networks (both national and international)

ESG 1.6 Learning Resources and Student Support

Standard:

Institutions should have adequate financial resources for learning and teaching activities, and should provide appropriate and easily accessible learning support conditions and student services.

In line with the quality requirements of Semmelweis University, doctoral training carefully examines the quantitative and qualitative conditions of the educational infrastructure, as well as access opportunities for instructors, researchers, and students. The Doctoral School continuously reviews these conditions and, within its capacities, develops them further.

Provision of Educational Conditions

The availability of teaching facilities and classrooms is ensured through the following planning, organizational processes, and activities:

- ✓ The allocation of teaching facilities is supervised by the administrative staff of the Doctoral School following needs assessments (prior to semesters and course launches) to ensure effective implementation. In the Neptun system, the classroom in which the course is actually delivered is displayed alongside the respective course.
- ✓ During the planning phase, consideration is given to the location, room capacity, availability of equipment and furnishings appropriate to the type of course, and students' travel time to the venue.

Offices and the space, equipment, and materials required for the activities of instructors and researchers are provided as follows:

- ✓ The organizational units belonging to the faculties participating in the training of the Doctoral School ensure the necessary and sufficient availability of appropriate working environments for instructors and researchers, while the Doctoral School continuously seeks resources to optimise the provision of suitable working environments and working conditions.

Semmelweis University provides the following conditions in a unified manner for instructors, researchers, and students to support scholarly activities, access to library services and databases, and the availability of IT resources.

Services of the University Central Library: <https://lib.semmelweis.hu/>

The University Library supports its stakeholders by providing access to a wide range of professional literature, databases, and research support services.

In a unique manner within Hungary, the Central Library is available to students and researchers of Semmelweis University 24 hours a day, every day of the year.

For instructors, researchers, and students of the University, the Directorate of IT (for instructors and researchers) and the Central Library (for students) provide VPN services, enabling members of the university community to access the scholarly infrastructure managed by the Central Library from anywhere.

The Central Library currently subscribes to 35 different databases and more than 8,500 professional and interdisciplinary journals, from which more than 1,500,000 downloads are made annually via its network.

In order to support the publication process, the Library also provides several services:

- Support for Open Access publishing (financial and methodological):
https://lib.semmelweis.hu/open_access_support
- Methodological guide to publishing:
https://lib.semmelweis.hu/publication_guide (accessible only from the Semmelweis University network)
- Training in the use of literature search systems:
<https://lib.semmelweis.hu/education>

Provision of Equipment, Facilities, and Laboratory Conditions

For operational laboratories, the head of the respective laboratory or organizational unit ensures appropriate operating conditions for research equipment and instruments at all times, taking into account the requirements set out in ISO 9001:2015 - Resources for monitoring and measurement, which state:

“The organization shall determine and provide the resources needed to ensure valid and reliable results when monitoring or measuring is used to verify the conformity of products and services to requirements.

The organization shall ensure that the resources provided:

- a) are suitable for the specific type of monitoring and measurement activities being undertaken;
- b) are maintained to ensure their continued fitness for their purpose.

The organization shall retain appropriate documented information as evidence of the fitness for purpose of the monitoring and measurement resources.”

To ensure measurement traceability, the following measures are applied:

“When measurement traceability is a requirement, or is considered by the organization to be an essential part of providing confidence in the validity of measurement results, measuring equipment shall be:

- a) calibrated or verified, or both, at specified intervals, or prior to use, against measurement standards traceable to international or national measurement standards; where no such standards exist, the basis used for calibration or verification shall be retained as documented information;
- b) identified in order to determine their status;
- c) safeguarded from adjustments, damage, or deterioration that would invalidate the calibration status and subsequent measurement results.

The organization shall determine whether the prior measurement results were adversely affected when a measuring instrument is found to be unfit for its intended purpose, and shall take appropriate action where necessary.”

In addition to the above, the specific regulations applicable to medical devices are also complied with.

Furthermore, the requirements of Good Laboratory Practice (GLP) are taken into account during operation.

Academic Administration Relevant to Students

Important information related to student administration can be found on the doctoral training website:

<https://semmelweis.hu/phd/en>

The Doctoral School ensures that its own sub-website is kept up to date. This is achieved by publishing current information in a timely manner as it becomes due. In the event of changes to processes or regulatory frameworks, the person responsible for editing the Doctoral School's sub-website reviews the published information and updates it as necessary. This task is carried out at the time of relevance, but at least on a quarterly basis.

The supervision of the sub-website is reviewed annually by the Doctoral Office through its appointed representative(s). The results of this supervision are reported in the annual report.

Students can find the most essential information under the "For Students" tab, as well as in the "Documents" section.

For general information related to the doctoral training as a whole, the Doctoral Office is available to provide assistance, while the individual Sections' own administrative units support students and interested parties in handling specific questions.

Key contact details (contact persons, e-mail addresses, telephone numbers) are available on the website.

Students' Opportunities for Participation in International Academic Life

Students can obtain information about their mobility opportunities on the University's website:

<https://semmelweis.hu/mobilitas/en/student-mobility/>

Opportunities for Doctoral Students in the Event of Academic or Social Difficulties

General Student Services

Information on student services is available at:

<https://semmelweis.hu/phd/en/for-students/student-services/>

The Doctoral Office is continuously available to assist with major student administrative matters. Information on office hours and key contact details can be found at:

<https://semmelweis.hu/phd/en/doctoral-office-hours/>

To support doctoral students' language learning, interested students can find relevant information at the following page:

<https://semmelweis.hu/szaknyelv/oktatas/phd-hallgatoknak/>

General information on assistance related to student accommodation in dormitories is available at:

<https://semmelweis.hu/kollegiumok/kollegiumok/>

Information specifically for participants in doctoral training can be found at:

<https://semmelweis.hu/selye/en/>

The Doctoral School provides housing support through dormitory accommodation.

Information on sports and recreational opportunities is available to students at:

<https://semmelweis.hu/sportkozpont/en/>

Student and life-management counselling services are available at:

<https://semmelweis.hu/magtud/en/health/student-counselling/>

In case of professional issues arising during the training, students may also contact the Research Management Working Group.

In cases of slow academic progress in the PhD program or stagnation in research topics, the student, the supervisor, or both may book an individual consultation. By specifying the nature of the issue, they may consult with the staff members of the Working Group:

<https://semmelweis.hu/kmmcs/en/>

Coaching

Students of the Doctoral School have the opportunity to participate in free coaching. The coaching service is provided by the Doctoral School's Research Management Working Group, subject to available capacity:

<https://semmelweis.hu/kmmcs/en/our-services/coaching/>

Support for Students' Social Circumstances

The Doctoral Regulations include provisions related to opportunities for improving students' social circumstances.

Grant and scholarship opportunities:

<https://semmelweis.hu/phd/en/for-students/schools-of-phd-studies-calendar/>

ESG 1.7 Information Management

Standard:

Institutions should collect, analyze, and use relevant information for the effective management of their study programs and other activities.

In accordance with the provisions set out in the chapter on information management, the Doctoral School collects and analyzes the most important data related to training, and uses these data in evaluation processes and for development purposes.

The following information is considered significant:

- ✓ Key performance indicators;
- ✓ Student composition;
- ✓ Student progression, success rates, and dropout rates;
- ✓ Student satisfaction with their training programs;
- ✓ Available learning support services and student counselling;
- ✓ Career paths and professional trajectories of graduates.

When defining performance indicators, the Doctoral School takes into account the objectives, strategic directions, and quality goals of Semmelweis University, as well as its own institutional objectives. Data related to these indicators are collected, analyzed, and their trends are evaluated in the annual report.

Each academic year, the Doctoral School examines the number of applicants, the admission rate, the composition of admitted students, dropout rates, the number of students who have completed the comprehensive examination, the number of degree recipients, grants and scholarships awarded to students, and the number and quality of publications related to doctoral dissertations. Student feedback is evaluated by the Doctoral School and the results are incorporated into development activities. Conditions supporting teaching and learning are reviewed and evaluated annually. Reports are prepared on student counselling activities, and a summary is published in the annual report.

ESG 1.8 Public Information

Standard:

Institutions should publish clear, accurate, objective, up-to-date, and easily accessible information about their activities, including their study programs.

Semmelweis University maintains a dedicated sub-website for the Doctoral School:
<https://semmelweis.hu/phd/en/>

This sub-website publishes all major information that may be relevant to prospective applicants, students, graduates, staff members, instructors, and other stakeholders.

The platform provides, among others, the following up-to-date information:

- General information
- Information on Sections
- Information on programs
- Lists of instructors, topic proposers, and supervisors
- Information related to training and examinations
- News and other announcements
- Applicable regulations and standard forms
- Annual reports and decisions

ESG 1.9 Continuous Monitoring and Periodic Evaluation of Study Programs

Standard:

Institutions should continuously monitor and periodically review their study programs to ensure that they achieve their stated objectives and meet the needs of students and society. These evaluations should lead to the ongoing improvement of the programs. The measures planned or taken as a result must be communicated to all stakeholders.

The Doctoral School regularly reviews its training program, at least once a year during the annual reporting period.

In relation to the training program, the following aspects are evaluated:

- ✓ The content of the program in light of the latest research in the given field of science, ensuring that the program remains up to date;
- ✓ Changes in societal needs;
- ✓ Students' workload, academic progression, and completion of studies;
- ✓ The effectiveness of student assessment procedures;
- ✓ Students' expectations, needs, and satisfaction with the program;
- ✓ The learning environment and support services, and their adequacy in relation to the objectives of the program.

The programs are regularly reviewed and, where necessary, modified with the involvement of students and other stakeholders. The collected information is analyzed, and the program is updated accordingly to ensure its relevance. Revised program descriptions are published on the doctoral training sub website.

Risk Based Thinking

Risk based operation in doctoral training does not imply the introduction of new requirements, but rather the conscious monitoring of the processes laid down in the Doctoral Regulations, in line with the principles of the ESG. The operational framework supports the early identification of risks, a preventive approach, and continuous improvement based on the PDCA logic.

Annual Reporting Aspects

The annual reporting system operates on two levels: at the level of the Doctoral School and the Sections, taking into account ESG and IFT based considerations.

ESG 1.10 Regular External Quality Assurance

Standard:

Institutions shall be subject to regular external quality assurance in accordance with the ESG.

At Semmelweis University, within the framework of the Integrated Management System, the processes of education, research, and patient care have been subject to continuous external quality assurance supervision since 2008.

In line with the University's three core functions—education, research, and patient care—and in compliance with relevant legislation, guidelines, and professional requirements, the following standards and frameworks are applied:

In the field of higher education:

- ✓ ESG Standards
- ✓ Accreditation requirements of the Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB)
- ✓ World Federation for Medical Education (WFME)

In the field of research:

- ✓ Good Research Practice (GRP)
- ✓ Good Clinical Practice (GCP)
- ✓ Good Laboratory Practice (GLP)
- ✓ Other GxP standards, where applicable to the given research activity

In patient care:

- ✓ Hungarian Healthcare Service Standards (MEES 2.0)
- ✓ BELLA standards

In addition to these core activities, and in order to ensure a fully integrated and coherent institutional operation, Semmelweis University also applies management framework systems.

The University operates in accordance with the following standards:

- ✓ MSZ EN ISO 9001:2015
- ✓ MSZ EN ISO 50001:2019
- ✓ MSZ EN ISO 14001:2015

Information on the results of the University's current external certification processes and on valid certificates is available on the following public website:

<https://semmelweis.hu/az-egyetemrol/semmelweis-egyetem-minosegiranyitasi-rendszer/>

Information on the institutional accreditation of the University and the accreditation outcomes of the Doctoral School can be accessed and verified on the website of the Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB):
<https://www.mab.hu/>

Part 2: Standards of External Quality Assurance Activities

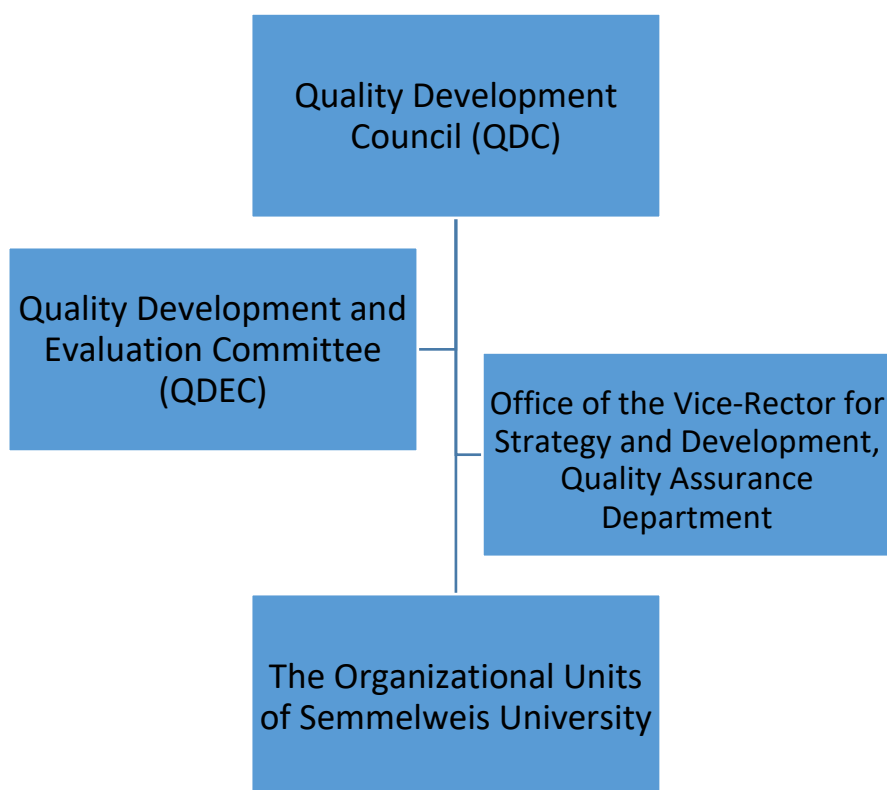
ESG 2.1 Consideration of Internal Quality Assurance

Standard:

External quality assurance should take into account the effectiveness of internal quality assurance, as described in Part 1 of the ESG.

The development of Semmelweis University's Internal Quality Assurance System takes into account the applicable legal regulations and other external requirements in force at any given time that may influence its lawful and professional operation.

Semmelweis University's Internal Quality Assurance System is implemented within the following framework:



The Quality Development Council

Within the framework of operating in accordance with its core activities, the responsibility for introducing and evaluating measures ensuring the quality of educational and research activities at the University lies with the Rector, while their oversight is the responsibility of the Senate. The effective coordination and support of these tasks are provided by the Quality Development Council (hereinafter referred to as the QDC). In this capacity, the QDC has consultative, advisory, decision-preparatory, and evaluative powers.

Scope of Responsibilities of the Quality Development and Quality Evaluation Committee

- ✓ Preparation of measures ensuring coherence between the University's mission statement, the strategic concept defined in the institutional development plan, the tasks specified in the Deed of Foundation, and quality assurance, quality control, and quality evaluation activities;
- ✓ Preparation for the continuous modernization of the quality assurance system and formulation of proposals regarding the optimal organizational structure required for the performance of core activities;
- ✓ Development of human resources, definition of requirements for academic and research staff, and elaboration of proposals for performance-based evaluation;
- ✓ Examination of the quality of postgraduate specialist training programmes and higher-level vocational training programmes launched within the University's institutional competence;
- ✓ Assessment of the availability of human and material resources and the summarization of the outcomes of educational and research activities;
- ✓ Definition of institutional quality objectives.

The Quality Assurance Department

The Quality Assurance Department continuously develops and operates the quality assurance system across all organizational units of the University. To this end, it conducts regular inspections and organizes training programmes. The compliance of organizational units is examined annually within the framework of internal audits.

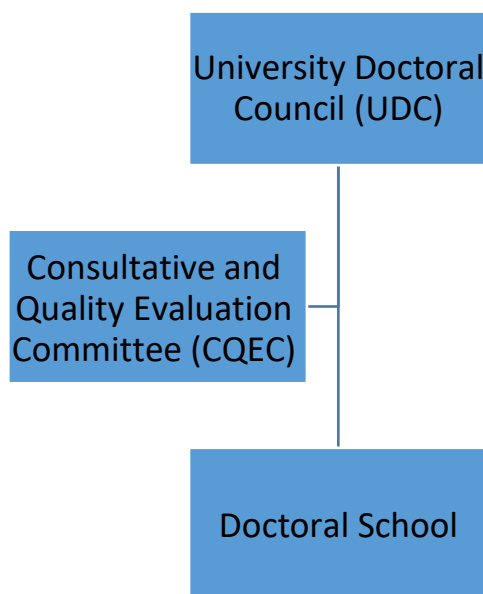
The operation and responsibilities of the Quality Assurance Department are available on the following subpage:

<https://semmelweis.hu/minoseg/>

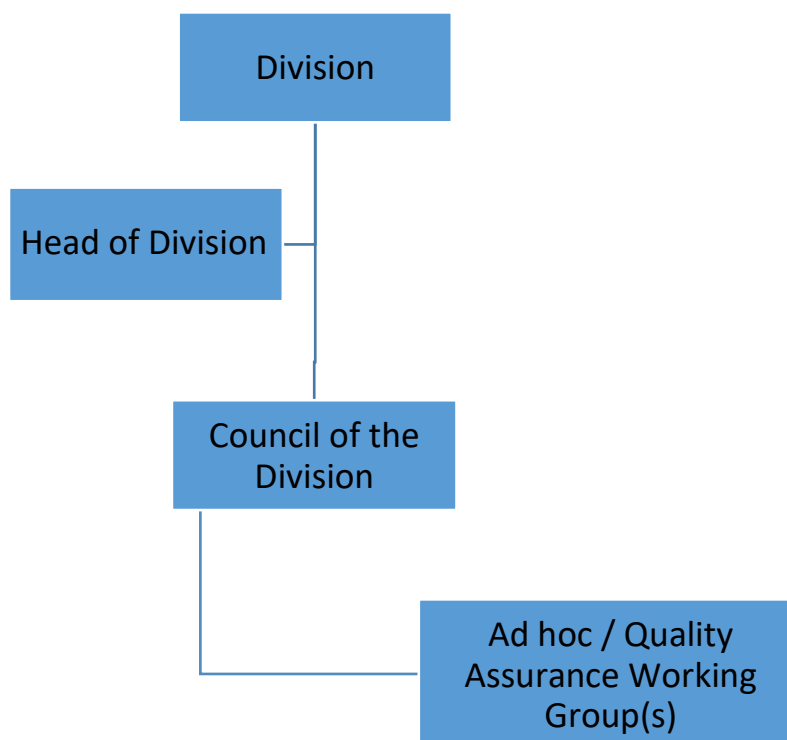
The page is accessible exclusively via the University's intranet.

The Internal Quality Assurance System of the Doctoral School

The quality assurance framework for doctoral education and the awarding of doctoral degrees is presented in a dedicated document.



A Tagozatok minőségirányítással kapcsolatos felépítése



Framework of External Quality Assurance

The Doctoral School of Semmelweis University complies with the requirements of the Hungarian Accreditation Committee (HAC). The continuous maintenance of HAC accreditation ensures that the visiting committee is familiar with and takes into account the University's external and internal environment, its operational framework, performance, development directions, as well as the quality assurance and quality development achievements accomplished since the previous accreditation period.

Since 2008, Semmelweis University has also been subject to a continuous external certification process. The contracted certification partner is familiar with the higher education environment and, during the annual external audits, formulates findings and development recommendations, and issues a certificate accordingly.

The familiarity of external quality assurance partners with the university environment and institutional operations ensures that the University receives recommendations, development proposals, and corrective actions that take into account its specific opportunities and constraints, thereby supporting the possibility of continuous improvement (PDCA cycle).