

## UNIVERSITY OF SZEGED, DOCTORAL SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS QUALITY ASSURANCE PLAN

The Quality Assurance Plan is based primarily on the following documents: the Regulations Governing the Doctoral Training Programs and the Awarding of the Doctoral Degree at the University of Szeged (SZTE); the Quality Assurance Guidelines for Doctoral Training and the Awarding of the Doctoral Degree at the University of Szeged; the Rules of Procedure of the SZTE Doctoral School of Economics; the Training Plan of the SZTE Doctoral School of Economics.

### I. GENERAL PART

#### 1. Objectives and principles of quality assurance

1.1 The overall objectives of the quality assurance system of the Doctoral School of Economics (DSE)

(in accordance with the quality assurance requirements of the SZTE):

- a) To ensure and improve the continuous high quality of doctoral education,
- b) to enhance the professional development of students and faculty and their satisfaction with doctoral education,
- c) the promotion of the benefits of internationalisation and digitalisation.

1. 2. In line with the principles and values of quality assurance at the University of Szeged, the DSE attaches great importance to the following *principles* in its operations, thus contributing to the achievement of the quality assurance objectives:

- a) *Openness, transparency and continuous documentation.* Information on doctoral training is accessible to those involved in the training, transparency of processes is ensured by rules and protocols, and documentation is produced on all decision points in doctoral training and is accessible to those involved in the decision.
- b) *A student-oriented perspective.* The Doctoral School shall design its rules and processes in such a way as to promote the professional development and progress of students and their satisfaction with the training.
- c) *Ensuring equal opportunities and equal treatment.* The Doctoral School expects its staff, students and all other persons who come into contact with the training to respect human dignity, ensure equal opportunities and comply with the prohibition of discrimination. The doctoral school develops its processes, communication and decisions in this spirit.
- d) *Academic excellence and social impact.* The doctoral school sees the strengthening of academic autonomy, critical thinking, initiative and creativity as core values. Doctoral theses are required to achieve new scientific results. It is essential that the choice of topics and the results of the research contribute to the formulation of answers to socio-economic questions, i.e. that, where this requirement is meaningful, they have a socio-economic impact.

- e) *Meeting scientific requirements and protecting intellectual property.* The Doctoral School will strive to ensure full respect and enforcement of scientific ethical requirements in all its training, research, administrative and management activities. In its work, it shall apply the resolutions of the Scientific Ethics Committee of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. It shall establish rules to ensure ethical practices in scientific research and publication. Doctoral training and research, as well as administrative and management activities at the DSE shall at all times be in accordance with European and national provisions on the protection of intellectual property.
- f) *Benchmarking.* The Doctoral School continuously monitors the experiences of other doctoral programmes in Hungary and abroad, and strives to establish and maintain professional relations and cooperation, and to adapt good practices.

1.3 The achievement of the above objectives and the safeguarding of the principles can be guaranteed by the current personnel and infrastructural conditions of the DSE, as well as by the well-developed and properly enforced regulations (primarily the Rules of Procedure and the Training Plan) and the procedures based on them, which are based on the requirements and guidelines of the National Doctoral Council, the Hungarian Accreditation Committee and the SZTE.

## **2. Roles and responsibilities for quality assurance**

2.1 The Head of the Doctoral School is responsible for the quality assurance of the Doctoral School. The quality assurance work is coordinated and monitored by the Doctoral School Council (DSC). The DSC is assisted by the Quality Assurance Officer, the Secretary of the Doctoral School, the Administrator, the responsible staff of the Office of the Dean of the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration, the responsible staff of the Office for Studies, Educational Organisation and International Offices, the lecturers and the supervisors of the Doctoral School. Quality development is carried out with the involvement of the students and external stakeholders of the Doctoral School.

2.2 Basic documents for the quality assurance of the Doctoral School:

- a) *The quality assurance plan*, which contains the framework, rules and procedures for quality assurance, as well as the overall objectives and principles. The quality assurance plan is adopted by the DSC and reviewed at least every 3 years.
- b) *Quality objectives.* Based on the proposal of the Quality Assurance Officer, the DSC adopts quality objectives. The DSC assigns indicators to the objectives and targets (for a period of 3 years) to the indicators on an annual basis. The DSC sets the targets in relation to the academic years. The quality objectives for the following academic years are adopted by the DSC at the latest at the last DSC meeting of an academic year.
- c) *Annual quality assurance report.* The report assesses the achievement of the quality objectives set by the DSC. The report covers one academic year. The report for a given academic year is adopted by the DSC at its first or second meeting of the following academic year. The report shall include:
  - the achievement of quantified targets;

- a brief assessment of the processes of the Doctoral School from a quality improvement perspective, covering the areas of teaching, supervision, admission, doctoral training, comprehensive examinations and doctoral degree awarding;
- a summary of student feedback on the processes of the Doctoral School;
- a summary of the nature of any student complaints submitted during the academic year concerned and how they were dealt with;
- the proposed quality improvement tasks with deadlines and responsibilities.

2.3 In order to facilitate the implementation of quality assurance tasks, the DSC shall appoint a *Quality Assurance Officer*. The Quality Assurance Officer shall be elected by the DSC by simple majority on the proposal of the Head of the Doctoral School. The Quality Assurance Officer shall be responsible for:

- a) participate in the preparation and review of the quality assurance plan;
- b) proposing the annual quality objectives and indicators to measure their achievement;
- c) coordinating the preparation of the annual quality assurance report, proposing the necessary improvement actions and presenting them to the DSC;
- d) attend DSC meetings as an invited member with the right to participate in the deliberations, unless he/she is an elected member.

2.4. In the processes of regulation, quality assurance and information management, the faculty members and supervisors of the Doctoral School participate both directly (through the annual faculty and supervisor meetings with individual proposals) and through representation (through the forums of the DSC and the Disciplinary Doctoral Council). Students/doctoral candidates are involved both directly (through the student review process of the training; information and review sessions held in connection with the researcher forums, individual requests or complaints) and through representation (through the forums of the DSC and the Disciplinary Doctoral Council, through a student member delegated by the doctoral students' self-government or through a faculty member elected by the students).

### **3. General rules to support the implementation of the quality assurance principles**

3.1 The regulation and documentation of doctoral training processes is essential for achieving quality assurance objectives. The processes from the admission of the doctoral student to the award of the degree are regulated and documented in the DSE's Rules of Procedure and Training Plan.

3.2 DSE ensures transparency, documentation and publicity of the processes as follows:

- a) The National Doctoral Council makes it available on its website (doktori.hu) in an up-to-date manner:
  - Its Rules of Procedure, Training Plan and Quality Assurance Plan in Hungarian and English;
  - the list of the DSC members, the lecturers and the supervisors of the Doctoral School
  - the current doctoral topic descriptions of the DSE;
  - the list of DSE students and their supervisors;

- the information and calls for proposals that must be published in connection with doctoral activities.
- b) It will be made available on the DSE website ([www.eco.u-szeged.hu](http://www.eco.u-szeged.hu)) in the language of the doctoral training:
- the names and contact details of DSE officials;
  - its Rules of Procedure, Training Plan and Quality Assurance Plan;
  - the list of the members of the DSC and the Disciplinary Doctoral Council;
  - the basic information on training, in particular on doctoral courses, requirements for obtaining a degree, experience of successful completion of doctoral training;
  - information on the admission procedure.
- c) The DSE will be made available to all students, lecturers and supervisors of the DSE in one place, in Hungarian and English, on the internal electronic system of the SZTE, the "PhD Training platform / PhD study affairs" platform:
- the DSE regulations;
  - information on the procedures of the Doctoral School (in particular, the structure of the training, the procedure and requirements of the research forums, the procedure and requirements of the comprehensive examination, the procedure and requirements of the degree awarding, the formal requirements for the dissertation and doctoral summary, the mid-year activities of students, the possibilities of participating in a conference, the contact details of the persons in charge of various matters);
  - the study plan and the timetable for the current semester;
  - information on quality assurance, in particular the quality assurance objectives and indicators, their achievement, the results of quality assurance measurements and evaluations.
- d) The DSE archives operational documents (in particular the proposals and decisions of the DSC meetings and the documents of the admission procedures) on the internal electronic system of the SZTE in the "SZTE Doctoral School of Economics Administration". Only those involved in the management of the respective matters have access to these documents.

3.3 The DSC shall hold its meetings and take its decisions in Hungarian. Decisions affecting individual students (e.g. decisions on applications, appointment of committees, decisions on degree procedures) are notified to the students concerned by the DSC Administrator in the language of the student's training.

3.4 If the DSE regulations or the information materials listed in 3.2.c are amended, it must be ensured that the amended version is available in all languages of instruction within 3 months. In the case of significant changes, the DSE will send information on the new rules to students, lecturers and supervisors.

3.5 The DSE maintains an e-mail list ([phdlist@eco.u-szeged.hu](mailto:phdlist@eco.u-szeged.hu)), personal information sessions and forums for students, lecturers and supervisors to express their views, in order to ensure continuous communication with students, lecturers and supervisors. The main forms of these are:

- a) bi-annual researcher forums, which provide students with information on current issues affecting doctoral training and allow students to express their questions and suggestions on the training;
- b) meetings of lecturers and supervisors, convened at least once a year, in which the DSE management provides information on the state of doctoral training and lecturers and supervisors formulate questions and suggestions on training;
- c) a briefing for students at the beginning of each academic year (in both Hungarian and English), where the DSE also orally explains the main contents of the documents listed in section 3.2.c and their availability, basic information on being a doctoral student, and who students can contact with regard to various issues or problems. The DSE will organise these briefings in both English and Hungarian.

3.6 The DSE shall design its policies and procedures to promote the professional development and progress of students and their satisfaction with their training.

- a) DSE provides a safe, non-discriminatory learning environment, equal access to information and opportunities for its students; it promotes professional links between students in Hungarian and English language courses.
- b) systematically collects student feedback on the training at least annually and incorporates it into its quality assurance report. In line with the specificity and diversity of doctoral training, the DSE has used primarily qualitative methods to collect student feedback, taking care to include the views of both home and foreign language students in the evaluation. The student survey is conducted for the relevant ESG topic areas (1.2., 1.3., 1.6., 1.9.).
- c) In the context of the degree awarding process, efforts are made to minimise the time required for administrative processes, within the legal framework.
- d) The DSE provides access to mental health counselling for all its students at the GTK, available in both Hungarian and English.
- e) Requests submitted by students will be put on the agenda of the first forthcoming meeting of the DSC and, if a decision of the Disciplinary Doctoral Council is required, the proposal will be submitted to the first forthcoming meeting of the Disciplinary Doctoral Council.

3.7 In the event of comments or complaints about the training and the provision of equal opportunities and equal treatment (in addition to the procedures laid down in the various regulations of the University of Szeged), students may contact the following persons or bodies:

- a) In person or by e-mail directly to the Secretary or Administrator of the DSE, who will forward the student's request to the Head of the DSE.
- b) In person or by e-mail directly to the Head of the DSE, who will forward the student's comment to the DSC, if necessary.
- c) In person or by e-mail directly to the Head of the DSE as DSC President, who will then forward the student's comment or request to the next meeting of the DSC.

- d) If a student wishes to make a complaint about the Head of the Doctoral School, he/she may address it directly to any member of the DSC and/or to the Vice-Dean for Academic Affairs and/or to the Dean of the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration.
- e) The student may appeal against the decisions (or lack of decisions) of the DSC to the Disciplinary Doctoral Council or to the appropriate student appeal bodies of the SZTE.
- f) In the case of comments or complaints about violations of equal opportunities and equal treatment, students may also turn to the Faculty Equal Opportunities Committee.
- g) Decisions on student complaints may not be taken by those who are affected by the complaint or who cannot be expected to give an impartial ruling on the matter.

3.8 Within the framework of the legislation and university regulations, the DSE endeavours to ensure that the composition of the bodies and committees (comprehensive examination board, PhD thesis committee, Doctoral Council) that decide on the promotion of PhD students reflects the diversity of the faculty staff in terms of gender balance and other relevant aspects. Not to set up a committee with only male or only female members.

3.9 Doctoral students are expected to fully comply with the principles of scientific ethics and the provisions for the protection of intellectual property during their training.

- a) In relation to the principles of scientific ethics, the teaching of good practice and the monitoring of compliance with them are primarily the responsibility of the supervisor.
- b) The DSE has detailed rules to promote the ethical principles of scientific research and publication, to avoid plagiarism, to use artificial intelligence responsibly, and to design its publication scoring system in such a way that it does not encourage publication in journals with substandard publication practices.
- c) The DSC may act as a scientific ethics body for students' scientific research: it may assess the proposed research in advance or investigate suspected scientific ethics violations.

## **II. MAIN ELEMENTS AND AREAS OF THE QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM**

### **4. Teaching staff and supervisors of the Doctoral School**

4.1 The requirements for lecturers and supervisors in doctoral education are in line with the recommendations of the National Doctoral Council and the Hungarian Accreditation Committee. The professional-scientific requirements for core members, the heads of the Doctoral School and training programmes, lecturers and supervisors are laid down in the current DSE Rules of Procedure.

4.2. Only lecturers with an academic degree and sufficient experience may be responsible for a course and independent supervisors. Staff members who have recently obtained their PhD degree may be co-supervisors alongside an experienced colleague. This will ensure that the pool of contributors is continuously expanded and updated, while at the same time ensuring

professional control and meeting quality standards. The selection of lecturers and supervisors is approved by the DSC and the Disciplinary Doctoral Council.

4.3. The independent supervisor may be a professor, senior research fellow, professor emeritus and habilitated associate professor whose topic announcement has been approved by the DSC. In the case of other teachers and researchers with at least 5 years of academic experience, the DSC will also consider their publication record in addition to the announced topic, to see whether they will be able to assist the doctoral student in publishing in journals listed in international journal rankings (Scimago, Web of Science). No supervisor can be a candidate who has obtained a PhD degree within 2 years. A supervisor may not have more than six PhD students at any one time.

4.4. The training is mainly based on the staff of the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration, but in order to meet the needs of the students and to broaden the range of optional topics, external experts will be involved in both teaching and supervision. In order to expand international contacts, it is particularly important to invite colleagues from abroad, usually as co-supervisors. Their role is also essential in the dissertation assessment procedure. All external experts involved must meet the criteria set by the DSE for internal staff. They must be known and recognised experts in their field and have an active and regular relationship with the Doctoral School. In the case of external supervisors, it is advisable - although not essential, particularly in the case of long-term cooperation - that their work is supported by a faculty member as co-supervisor.

4.5 DSE lecturers and supervisors are expected to perform their work conscientiously, to a consistently high standard, and to demonstrate, in addition to their teaching, a research activity that will lead them to be recognised by the faculty and the wider scientific community as eminent experts in their subject. This should be reflected in an appropriate number and quality of publications. The fulfilment of these conditions will be monitored and comprehensively assessed by the DSC when preparing the annual quality assurance report.

4.6 It is the responsibility of the supervisor to promote the professional development and satisfaction of his/her supervisor with his/her training. In particular, he/she shall:

- a) provide professional advice to the student throughout the doctoral process, make critical comments in a professional and constructive manner, facilitate the learning process and help the student to obtain the doctoral degree in the planned timeframe;
- b) to respond to the student's requests in a meaningful way within a reasonable time and to consult the student at least twice a semester and at least once a month if the student so requests;
- c) be thoroughly familiar with the research plan of the subject-matter and monitor the progress of the research process;
- d) evaluate the progress of the supervisor in writing every six months; discuss any comments with the supervisor;
- e) provide detailed feedback on the manuscript of the dissertation chapters and manuscript as a whole within a reasonable time;
- f) at the request of the student, read manuscripts of planned journal articles, if they are related to the doctoral research project, and provide feedback within a reasonable time;

- g) be aware of external feedback on the student's work, in particular the evaluations received at the bi-annual research forum and, in the case of journal articles, the opinion of the referees;
- h) promote the ethical practice of scientific research and publication and ensure that scientific ethics are applied in the doctoral research process of the student;
- i) if he/she detects a problem with the collaboration with his/her supervisor, report it in a timely manner to the Head of the Doctoral School or the Secretary.

4.7 The DSE recognises that, from an equal opportunities perspective, the cooperation between student and supervisor is characterised by a strong asymmetry of power, and that the work of the supervisor is therefore associated with increased ethical responsibilities. In all situations, the supervisor is obliged to fully respect the human dignity of the student and to act in an exemplary manner. The supervisor may only give instructions to students on matters directly related to the student's training and progress. Such instructions must be objective and professionally sound. In the case of joint academic work and research, clear indication of individual performance is expected.

4.8 The termination of a supervisor's assignment may be initiated by the supervisor or the doctoral student, if the subject of the previously selected research is changed or if the continuation of the joint work is hindered by either party. The Head of the DSE and the Secretary will actively contribute to resolving any conflicts, finding a solution that is satisfactory to all concerned and appointing a new supervisor. The Head of the DSE may also take the initiative to terminate the status of supervisor if the quality of the work of the Faculty's teacher or external colleague falls significantly and persistently below the general standards. The termination, the change of supervisor and the recruitment of a new co-supervisor shall be approved by the Disciplinary Doctoral Council on the recommendation of the DSC.

4.9 The DSC will review the topic descriptions annually prior to admission and during the admission process, when accepting or rejecting applicants' topic proposals.

## **5. The admission procedure**

5.1 The quality-oriented selection of students is ensured by the admission requirements and the rules of the admission procedure. These elements are set out in the DSE Rules of Procedure.

5.2 An essential part of the admission examination is an oral personal interview or, in particular for foreign candidates, an online interview, which aims to assess the candidates' preparedness and professional intelligence, as well as their academic record, language skills and ideas for future doctoral work. The admission procedure is open-ended and is determined by the candidate's professional interests and achievements to date, as well as by the research topic chosen.

5.3. The entrance examination must be taken before a committee of at least three members appointed by the Disciplinary Doctoral Council, on the recommendation of the DSC. The committee shall be chaired by the senior lecturer of the faculty; its secretary shall be the



secretary of the Doctoral School or the senior lecturer who replaces him/her; its members shall be lecturers holding an academic degree. The candidate's future supervisor may participate in the admission procedure with the right of deliberation. The committee evaluates the candidates' performance, ranks them according to the marks obtained and recommends their admission or rejection. The final decision is taken by the Disciplinary Doctoral Council on the recommendation of the DSC. The scoring system for admission is set out in the Doctoral School's Rules of Procedure.

5.4 Each academic year, the DSC evaluates the experience of the admission procedure as part of the annual quality assurance report and determines the actions to be taken (e.g. methods of informing interested Master's students, criteria for pre-screening foreign applicants).

## **6. The doctoral programme**

6.1 The personnel and material conditions for doctoral training are provided by the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration of the University of Szeged. The DSE provides accommodation (office space) and access to the university systems and subscription software for doctoral students. Doctoral students can use the entire infrastructure of the University, the stock of textbooks and journals, the online databases and programme packages available at the Faculty and the University Library for their research, with the support of the Faculty.

6.2 The Doctoral School ensures the transfer of the most up-to-date theoretical and practical knowledge through the teaching of the subjects announced in the training programme and through the activities of the supervisors. The quality of the teaching, the content and publication of the subjects, and the accountability of the requirements are monitored by the DSC. The subjects and themes of compulsory and elective courses are constantly monitored by the DSC and modified as necessary with the help of the lecturers.

6.3 It is the responsibility of the lecturer to prepare for his/her courses, to perform his/her teaching duties to the best of his/her ability, and to attend in person at the attendance sessions. In particular, it is his/her duty to:

- a) to explain the course schedule and the requirements of the course precisely at the beginning of the semester and to make them available to the students in writing;
- b) give clear feedback on the students' performance, giving clear reasons for marks or failures;
- c) respond to student enquiries within a reasonable time and give feedback on submitted work within a reasonable time - so that the student has the opportunity to obtain a mark (including the opportunity to make any corrections) within the time limits set by university regulations;
- d) suggest additional literature and methods for students interested in the subject, if requested by the students.

6.4 The DSE recognises that, from an equal opportunities perspective, the interaction between doctoral lecturers and students is characterised by a strong asymmetry of power, and that there is therefore a heightened ethical responsibility in the work of lecturers. In all situations, the lecturer is obliged to fully respect the human dignity of the student and to act in an exemplary

manner. The lecturer may give instructions to students only in matters of study and teaching related to his/her course. Such instructions must be objective and professionally sound.

6.5. The progress of doctoral students is monitored by the DSE at the end of each semester. One form of this is a subject-related examination, which may include an essay, with the aim of developing and improving students' literary processing, analytical, evaluative, modelling and expressive writing skills. Another key form of assessment is the bi-annual Research Forum, where each doctoral candidate makes a presentation on his/her research findings. The presentation is followed by an academic debate in which the lecturers leading the forum and fellow students give their views. As a third form of accountability, students report to their supervisor every six months on their research achievements and the progress of their studies.

6.6 The Doctoral School shall keep a permanent record of student progress, including publications. Doctoral students are required to open and maintain their own MTMT record. If any action is required in relation to the student's progress, the Head or Secretary of the DSE will notify the student or the supervisor. In addition to assisting quality work, the aim is to address individual problems in a personalised way to prevent drop-outs.

6.7 The DSE places a high priority on the regular participation of students in national and international academic conferences in order to test their performance, improve their oral and written expression and build broad professional contacts. Submitted papers, posters and presentations are reviewed in advance by the supervisor, which is an integral part of the semester evaluation. The DSE will support conference applications from doctoral students (including contributions to participation fees, accommodation and travel costs) and other trips abroad, such as participation in summer universities, from its own budget, on an individual basis. Each year the Doctoral School itself organises an international PhD workshop. In order to promote publication activities, the best presentations are also published in a Faculty publication after peer review. The DSE also supports students' international exposure by subsidising language proofreading and other publication costs.

6.8 The DSE promotes compliance with the ethical principles of scientific research and publication by establishing a specific (scientific ethics) code of conduct. The Scientific Ethics Code of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences is the guiding principle for the application of the code of conduct. Violations of scientific ethics principles, whether intentional or negligent, are considered to be scientific ethics offences.

6.9 The student review of lecturers is part of the review process explained in section 3.6.b. In addition, students may use the possibilities for comments and suggestions set out in section 2.4 and for complaints set out in section 3.7.

6.10. The DSE also considers the creation of a safe learning environment to be important in a broader sense. A key element of this is to address the challenges arising from the diversity of students' backgrounds and cultures, to provide supportive counselling (mental health counselling) for students, and to prevent conflicts, misunderstandings, abusive language, etc. between students, possibly in relationships with lecturers, supervisors, and to help resolve problems when they arise. The management and the Secretary of the Doctoral School have a

key role to play in this respect, in accordance with the relevant policies and procedures of the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration.

## **7. The comprehensive examination**

7.1 A key element in the assessment of students' progress is the comprehensive examination at the end of the training and research phase. One of the conditions for passing the examination is the acquisition of at least 90 credits in the first four semesters of doctoral studies and all the "training credits" provided for in the Training Plan of the Doctoral School (except for students preparing for the degree individually, whose student status is established by accepting the comprehensive examination). The other condition is the fulfilment of the minimum publication requirements, which are specified in the Training Plan.

7.2 The detailed rules for the conduct of the comprehensive examination are set out in the DSE Rules of Procedure. According to these rules, the examination must be taken in public, in front of a board. The examination committee shall consist of at least three members, at least one third of whom shall not be employed by the Faculty operating the Doctoral School. The chairperson of the examination board shall be a university professor or professor emeritus, or a researcher with the title of Doctor of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. All members of the examination board hold an academic degree. The committee is elected by the Disciplinary Doctoral Council on the recommendation of the DSC.

7.3 The comprehensive examination consists of two main parts: one part assesses the candidate's theoretical knowledge ('theoretical part') and the other part assesses the candidate's academic progress ('dissertation part'). In the theoretical part, the student will be tested in at least two subjects/topics. In the dissertation part, the doctoral candidate will present a lecture on his/her knowledge of the literature, report on his/her research results, outline his/her research plan for the second phase of doctoral studies, and outline the timetable for the preparation of the dissertation and the publication of the results. The supervisor will give the candidate a preliminary written assessment. The members of the committee mark the two parts separately and a written evaluation report is drawn up.

## **8. The degree award procedure**

8.1 In addition to the submission of the first version of the dissertation, the requirements for publication and foreign language proficiency must be fulfilled before the degree-awarding procedure can be initiated. The candidate must have an adequate number and quality of publications by the time of the defence, as determined by the DSC, and must have fulfilled the minimum requirements. Proficiency in English must also be demonstrated by a nationally recognised language examination or equivalent. The precise requirements are set out in the DSE's Rules of Procedure and Training Plan. Compliance will be verified by the Secretary of the Doctoral School before the start of the defence procedure.

8.2. The dissertation may be submitted for public discussion only if the doctoral candidate has previously defended the draft of the dissertation in a preliminary defence and revised it in

accordance with the comments and suggestions received there. The procedure and rules for the preliminary defence are similar to those for the public debate. The difference is that in the case of a preliminary defence, the DSC does not appoint a full panel of referees, but only two assessors with academic degrees (pre-assessors), at least one of whom is not employed by the Faculty. The chairperson of the preliminary defence will be the candidate's supervisor. The preliminary defence is organised by the Secretary of the DSC and a note is taken and an attendance sheet is drawn up, indicating the scientific qualifications of those present and whether they recommend the submission of the thesis: without changes, with minor changes or with a thorough revision.

8.3. The theses submitted for preliminary and public defence are checked online under the guidance of the DSE Secretary using the plagiarism search software provided by the SZTE Klebelsberg Library. The result of this will be sent to the assessors.

8.4 The final version of the dissertation will be posted on the website of the National Doctoral Council and placed in the Doctoral Repository of the SZTE.

8.5 The content and form of the dissertation and the accompanying doctoral summary are specified in the DSE Rules of Procedure. It is primarily the responsibility of the thesis supervisor, the pre-assessors and the assessors to ensure that the content of the thesis is appropriate. The Committee of Assessors and the two official assessors are appointed by the DSC on the basis of a proposal from the Disciplinary Doctoral Council at the time of submission of the dissertation. The assessors recommend the acceptance or rejection of the dissertation, and the Committee members evaluate the student's performance with a score between 0 and 5. The average of these scores determines the grade of the degree, in accordance with the Doctoral Regulations of the SZTE.