
KEN

2023-2027

EVALUATION REPORT

QUALITY OF EDUCATION AT A DOCTORAL SCHOOL

Szkoła Doktorska Politechniki Częstochowskiej
Politechnika Częstochowska

Name of the doctoral school

Szkoła Doktorska Politechniki Częstochowskiej

Evaluation period

10/1/19–9/18/25

Name of the entity that is responsible for running the doctoral school

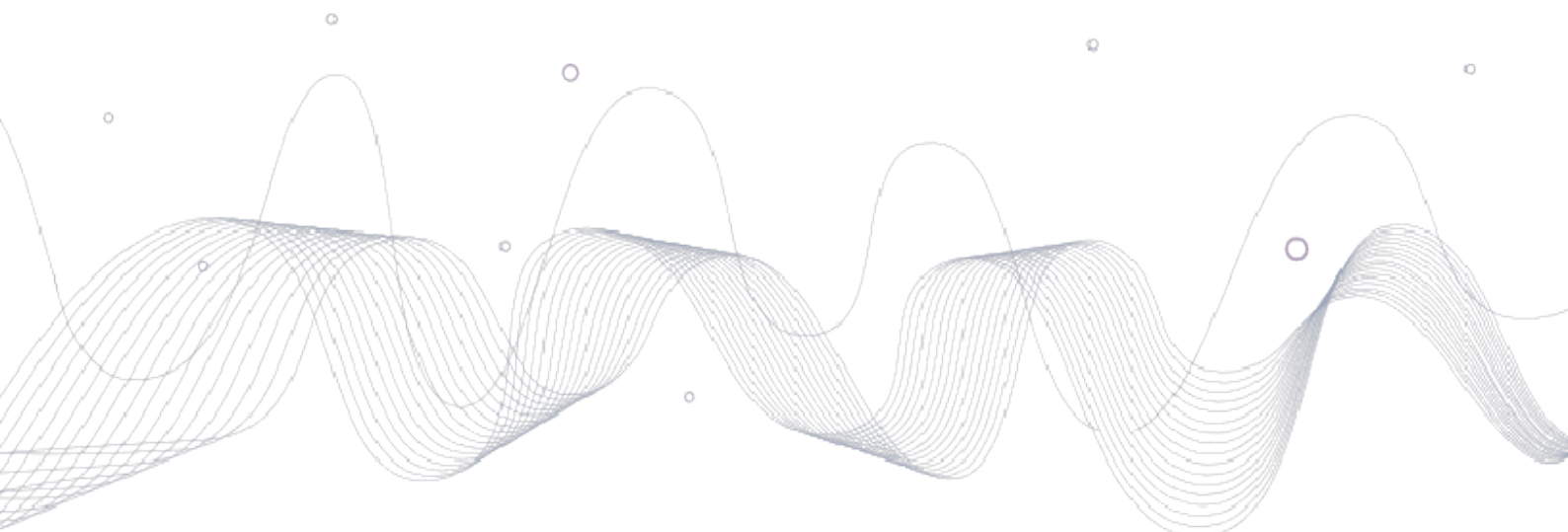
Politechnika Częstochowska

Entities that jointly run the doctoral school (when conducted jointly)

-

Date of submission of the self-assessment report by the Entity: DD.MM.YYYY

12/11/25



Composition of the evaluation team:

Chairman:

Rafał Stanisławski

Secretary:

Jerzy Baranowski

Team members:

Krzysztof Piotr Okarma

Tadeusz Łagoda

Hubert Gojzewski

Michał Klimczyk

Developed: 7/8/26

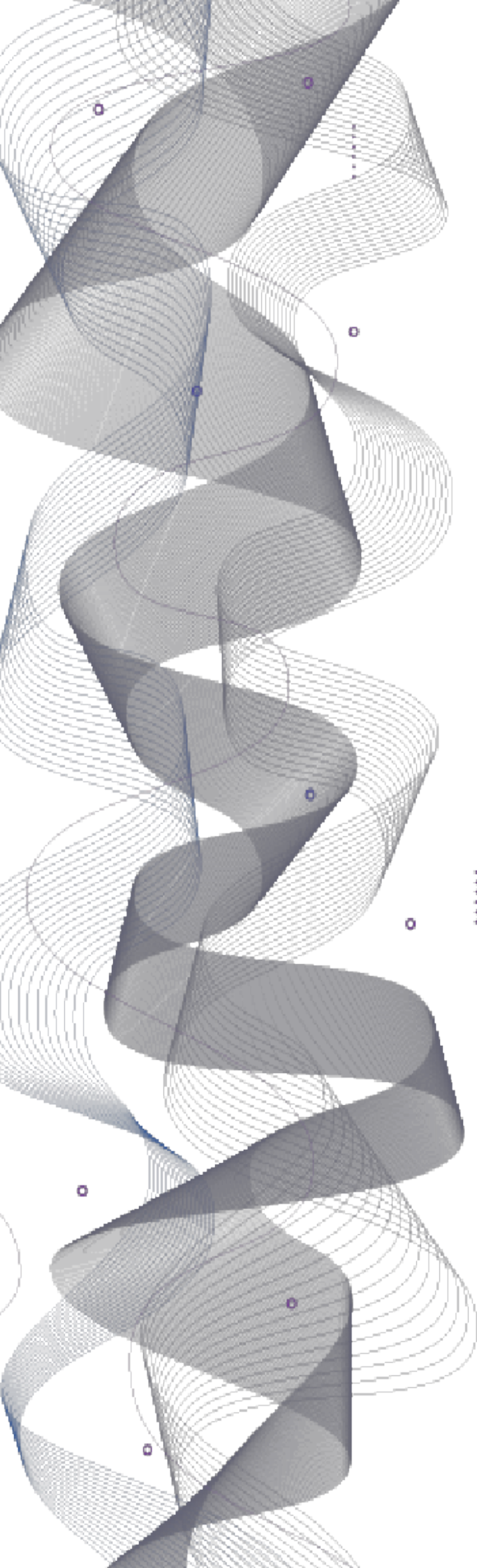


TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. General information on the doctoral school	5
II. Information on the inspection and its course	7
III. Collaboration between the entity and the doctoral student self-government	8
IV. Information on the doctoral school to which the statutory criteria apply	10
V. Final opinion and recommendations	25
VI. Assessment and reason	29

I. GENERAL INFORMATION ON THE DOCTORAL SCHOOL

Name of doctoral school	Szkoła Doktorska Politechniki Częstochowskiej
Date of establishment	2019
Date of commencement of education at doctoral school	10/1/19
Entity cooperating in the conduct of education (this does not refer to entities co-founding a doctoral school)	-
Domains of study	Engineering and technology (from: 01-01-2018) Social sciences (from: 01-01-2018)
Discipline(s) of science or art in which training is provided	automation, electronics and electrical engineering (from: 01-01-2018 to: 10-11-2022) information and communication technology (from: 01-01-2018) materials engineering (from: 01-01-2018) mechanical engineering (from: 01-01-2018) environmental engineering, mining and energy (from: 01-01-2018) automation, electronics, electrical engineering and space technologies (from: 11-11-2022) management and quality studies (from: 01-01-2018)
Name/scope of the education programme	The scope of the curriculum covering social sciences A The scope of the education program covering engineering and technical sciences A The scope of the education program covering engineering and technical sciences B The scope of the curriculum covering social sciences B
Number of instructors	70
Number of doctoral students undergoing training at the doctoral school (as of 9/19/25)	132
Number of supervisors in terms of guidance in preparing doctoral dissertations (as of 9/19/25)	96
Number of auxiliary supervisors in terms of guidance in preparing doctoral dissertations (as of	52

9/19/25)	
----------	--

II. INFORMATION ON THE INSPECTION AND ITS COURSE

The site visit of the Doctoral School of the Częstochowa University of Technology was conducted on 12 March 2026 by the Evaluation Team of the Commission for Science Evaluation (KEN). All meetings took place on the premises provided by the Doctoral School and were carried out in accordance with the agreed schedule.

The visit began at 8:30 a.m. with a meeting between the Evaluation Team and the authorities of the Doctoral School as well as the authorities of the entity operating the school. The purpose of the meeting was to present the detailed schedule of the visit, introduce the Doctoral School and the hosting institution, and discuss the role of the evaluated disciplines in the functioning of the school.

At 9:30 a.m., a two-hour meeting was held with the team responsible for preparing the self-evaluation report and the administrative staff of the Doctoral School. During this session, the key areas subject to evaluation were discussed in detail, including the adequacy of the study programme and Individual Research Plans in relation to the learning outcomes at PQF Level 8, methods of their verification, staff qualifications, the quality of the recruitment process, academic supervision, the mid-term evaluation process, internationalisation, and the overall effectiveness of doctoral education. At the same time, the Evaluation Team reviewed extensive documentation, including the self-evaluation report, quality assurance reports, recruitment and mid-term evaluation regulations, documents confirming staff qualifications, opinions of doctoral candidates and discipline councils, data on internationalisation, and records concerning the number of completed doctoral degrees.

At 11:30 a.m., a meeting with the administrative staff of the Doctoral School took place, focusing on organisational matters, document circulation, and practical aspects of the school's operation. This was followed at 12:00 p.m. by the Evaluation Team's analysis of randomly selected Individual Research Plans and mid-term evaluation documentation, enabling a direct assessment of how doctoral candidates' progress is planned, monitored, and verified.

After a lunch break (1:00–2:00 p.m.), at 2:00 p.m. a meeting was held with academic teachers, supervisors, and representatives of discipline councils. The discussion focused on the quality of doctoral education, supervisor–doctoral candidate cooperation, and the specific characteristics of education within individual disciplines.

At 3:00 p.m., a meeting was conducted with doctoral candidates representing all cohorts and disciplines, as well as with representatives of the doctoral candidates' self-government. During this session, the Evaluation Team gathered feedback on the functioning of the Doctoral School, the quality of education, academic supervision, and institutional support.

At 4:00 p.m., the Evaluation Team held an internal summary meeting to conduct a preliminary analysis of the collected information and documentation. Subsequently, at 4:30 p.m., a closing meeting took place with the authorities of the Doctoral School and the hosting institution, during which the general course of the visit was summarised and the subsequent stages of the evaluation procedure were outlined. The visit concluded at 4:45 p.m.

III. COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE ENTITY AND THE DOCTORAL STUDENT SELF-GOVERNMENT

Representatives of doctoral students serve on university bodies and committees that are crucial from the doctoral students' perspective (including those established by law).

The doctoral student council has approved (rather than merely agreed upon) successive versions of the doctoral school's regulations, the curriculum, and the rules for the periodic evaluation of academic staff.

The Doctoral School Regulations specify the doctoral student council bodies responsible for carrying out specific duties. For example: according to the Regulations, the University Doctoral Student Council delegates a doctoral student representative to the Scientific Council - this may constitute a violation of the Student's Council autonomy to determine its own structure and division of responsibilities.

The head of the doctoral school and the vice-rector responsible for doctoral affairs are appointed after consulting (rather than in agreement with) the relevant body of the Student Government, which is directly inconsistent with Article 23(5) of the PSWN. Similarly, the School Regulations are subject to consultation (rather than agreement). It should be noted, however, that all opinions expressed on the above matters were positive.

The University's budget plan includes a budget for the University Doctoral Student Council, which currently amounts to 6,000 PLN. To date, this budget has not been fully utilized. The budget plan does not include a general budget for doctoral student affairs (which should be allocated by a decision of the student council), but only the budget of the doctoral student council. It should be noted, however, that funding for academic matters related to doctoral students comes from the resources of departments and faculties based on separate, individual applications submitted by doctoral students.

Doctoral students have the unrestricted right to express their opinions and raise issues both through the survey process and via direct submissions to the Doctoral School administration. Doctoral students view their collaboration with the Doctoral School administration and the openness to their reported needs very positively.

An example of development initiatives undertaken at the request of doctoral students includes the introduction of additional courses in the curriculum.

It is ordered to:

1. Regardless of the financial resources enabling the functioning of the doctoral student council (Art. 110, para. 9 in conjunction with Art. 215, para. 2 of the PSWN), it is recommended that the University's budget plan include a budget for doctoral student affairs (Art. 110(5) in conjunction with Art. 215(2) of the Higher Education Act), the allocation of which will be determined by the doctoral student council - these funds may be allocated to additional doctoral student initiatives, e.g., organizational, cultural, integration-related, etc.
2. It is ordered to align the Doctoral School Regulations with the principle of autonomy in the functioning of the doctoral student council by not designating a specific body of the doctoral student council responsible for carrying out selected functions—this regulation should be established at the level of the Doctoral Student Council Regulations, which should have

autonomy in defining the functions of individual bodies. For example: currently, according to the Regulations, the doctoral student representative to the Doctoral School's Scientific Council is delegated by the University Doctoral Student Council. It is recommended that provisions of this kind be formulated in general terms—in this case, by stating: “(...) delegated by the doctoral student council.”

3. It is ordered that candidates for the position of doctoral school director, the vice-rector responsible for doctoral studies, and the content of the Doctoral School Regulations be agreed upon (rather than reviewed) with the Doctoral Student Council.

IV. INFORMATION ON THE DOCTORAL SCHOOL TO WHICH THE STATUTORY CRITERIA APPLY

- **The adequacy of the education programmes and individual research plans with respect to the learning outcomes for qualifications at level 8 of the PQF and their implementation:**

The assessment of Criterion is moderately positive, with significant qualitative reservations.

The evidence gathered during the visit indicates that the doctoral school has a functioning study programme and an established practice of preparing and approving individual research plans. It should be noted positively that individual research plans are developed in stages, consultations with the Head of the Doctoral School are possible, and where a plan is too general or insufficiently developed, the Head intervenes and sends it back for revision. The plan may also be modified, which allows the school to respond to the development of the research project.

The most important weakness in this area is the lack of a sufficiently clear and systematically embedded link between individual research plans and the learning outcomes at PQF level 8.

During the visit it became clear that this link is not explicitly reflected in the documentation and that, in practice, the quality assessment of the plans is concentrated largely in the hands of one person, namely the Head of the Doctoral School. In addition, discussions with supervisors showed that the research plan is understood primarily through the internal logic of the research project and the dissertation, whereas the role of PQF level 8 learning outcomes is not consciously operationalised by the participants in the process. From the perspective of the evaluation criteria, this does not automatically constitute a conceptual flaw, since an individual research plan should not be reduced to an overly formal mapping of each activity onto a separate learning outcome. However, the school should be able to demonstrate a global and qualitative connection between the research plan and the achievement of PQF level 8 learning outcomes. This was not demonstrated convincingly during the visit.

It is also important that doctoral candidates perceive the individual research plan ambivalently: they consider it necessary, yet also point to its restrictive function and limited flexibility. At the same time, they do not suggest that the programme as a whole is detached from research needs; on the contrary, they indicate that the courses are useful and not merely “study-like” in character. This suggests that the problem lies not in the existence of the programme and the research plans themselves, but rather in their insufficient operationalisation and limited transparency.

The assessment is also influenced by the role of the Head of the Doctoral School. The material collected during the visit suggests that this person’s substantial commitment sustains the day-to-day functioning of this area: the Head consults the plans, verifies their quality, responds to deficiencies, and in practice compensates for part of the systemic weaknesses. This is undoubtedly a major institutional asset, but also a source of organisational risk. A model that depends so heavily on the work of a single individual may be effective in the short term, yet it does not provide a full guarantee of long-term stability and consistency of quality.

Conclusion: Criterion should be assessed as met at a satisfactory level, but requiring clear improvement.

Recommendations:

1.1. Strengthen the qualitative and clearly visible link in the documentation between individual research plans and PQF level 8 learning outcomes, without falling into excessive formalism or mechanical mapping of each activity to a single outcome.

1.2. Introduce more transparent standards for assessing the quality of individual research plans, so that responsibility for their interpretation and approval is not concentrated solely in

the hands of the Head of the Doctoral School.

1.3. Increase administrative and organisational support for the Head of the Doctoral School, as the current efficiency of this area depends largely on the Head's exceptional personal commitment, which compensates for systemic shortcomings and creates a risk to process stability.

- The method of assessing the learning outcomes for qualifications at level 8 of the PQF: The assessment of Criterion is moderately positive, but with serious reservations concerning the quality and documentation of the verification process. The doctoral school identified several mechanisms for monitoring the progress of doctoral candidates, including seminars involving the heads of discipline councils and periodic supervisor assessment before the end of the academic year. During the meetings, emphasis was also placed on direct discussions with doctoral candidates, support in crisis situations, and responses to a lack of progress. This shows that the school does not limit itself to passive recording of doctoral candidates' status and does undertake monitoring activities. The fundamental weakness in this area is that feedback remains too limited in qualitative terms and is insufficiently documented. It was stated explicitly that after the annual progress report the doctoral candidate receives a binary assessment, while after the mid-term evaluation a meeting with the doctoral candidate takes place but leaves no durable documentary trace. From the point of view of this criterion, such a model is insufficient, because reliable verification of learning outcomes at PQF level 8 should be based on the assessment of research progress, independence, methodological choices, and the ability to respond to critique, rather than merely on the formal confirmation that particular stages have been completed. Supervisor opinions and evaluation records should function as concise developmental reports, not merely as certificates confirming completion. An additional concern is that the answers provided by supervisors do not yet show convincingly how the school distinguishes between formal completion of planned activities and actual development of research independence. The statement that the individual research plan "supports systematic work" is not a sufficiently strong answer to the question of how learning outcomes are verified. On the other hand, doctoral candidates indicated that they receive the most useful feedback during the mid-term evaluation and discipline-specific seminars, and they do not strongly articulate the need for additional documented feedback. Nevertheless, from the perspective of quality assurance, the school should still be able to demonstrate a more durable and analytically meaningful record of this verification process. Here too, the special role of the Head of the Doctoral School is clearly visible. The answers collected during the visit indicate that many monitoring, corrective and supportive activities are in fact held together by the Head's personal commitment. Thanks to this, the process functions more effectively than the degree of formalisation alone would suggest. At the same time, however, this means that one person is carrying a disproportionate burden, which increases organisational risk in the event of overload or personnel change. An effective system for verifying learning outcomes should be more firmly embedded in procedures and in a broader distribution of responsibilities.

Conclusion: Criterion should be assessed as met to a limited extent. The school has functioning mechanisms for observing doctoral candidates' progress, but it has not yet demonstrated sufficiently that these mechanisms generate high-quality, documented and developmental feedback.

Recommendations:

2.1. Introduce brief, qualitative and documented feedback after annual progress reviews and after the mid-term evaluation.

2.2. Standardise the minimum format of supervisors' opinions and other forms of progress assessment so that the logic of the doctoral candidate's development of research competences can be reconstructed more clearly.

2.3. Increase administrative and organisational support for the Head of the Doctoral School, as the Head's intensive personal work currently compensates for procedural shortcomings, improving day-to-day functioning but creating a risk to the long-term sustainability of the system.

- **Qualification of academic teachers and academic staff employed at the doctoral school:**
The qualifications of the teaching staff (academic teachers and research staff) are consistent with the university's mission and educational goals. The teaching staff for the Doctoral School is selected based on the convergence of scientific interests and research areas with the subjects taught. It is confirmed by the Vice-Deans for Science, who in turn lead the specialized seminars and doctoral workshops on their own. According to § 8, Section 9 of the Doctoral School Regulations, courses may be taught by individuals with at least a doctoral degree and scientific achievements from the last five years in the represented scientific discipline. Any changes in teaching staff are made considering the results of surveys and interviews with doctoral students and Vice-Deans. The appointment of a supervisor by the Head of the Doctoral School follows the opinion of the Doctoral School Council; however, there is no opinion from the Scientific Discipline Council, whose members are naturally more familiar with a given research topic. Influence over the appointment of a supervisor within a faculty is limited to the Vice-Dean for Science; The Scientific Discipline Council's opinion would be particularly useful in the case of external supervisors, who are not always well-known to the Vice-Deans for Science. Two courses are taught in English, but there are no classes taught by foreign lecturers. With very low recruitment limits (two per discipline per year), many university employees with at least a habilitation degree (ranging from 18 to 35 in individual disciplines) have little chance of serving as supervisors (statistically, this may occur only once every dozen years, assuming a relatively stable number of potential supervisors in subsequent years). This poses a significant threat to the future replacement and development of university staff. The activity of teaching staff in submitting grant applications requires improvement (intensification), while the success rate in obtaining them should be assessed as good. The documentation lacks academic profiles of the individuals teaching certain subjects, such as "Statistical Methods of Data Processing" (the syllabus contains an incorrect academic degree/title, obtained in 2016), "Modern Engineering Materials," or "Methods of Obtaining Funding for Scientific Research." However, bibliographic databases contain several or more publications by those teaching these subjects from the last five years. There are also no academic profiles of the Head of the Doctoral School or some Vice-Deans for Science, who are also Heads of Scientific Discipline Councils. It seems advisable to implement an IT tool that facilitates the consistent preparation and updating of course descriptions (syllabuses) and academic profiles of scientists.

Recommendations:

- 3.1. Involving Scientific Discipline Councils in the process of appointing external supervisors and assistant supervisors.
- 3.2. Involving foreign lecturers in conducting classes in English.
- 3.3. Considering the creation of a database of supervisors with designated research topics, offering opportunities to potential candidates who are not graduates of Częstochowa University of Technology.
- 3.4. Annually updating and reviewing course descriptions (syllabuses), considering changes in content and staff data, and considering the use of an IT tool to facilitate integration and consistent data presentation.
- 3.5. Increasing the number of grant applications (to various research funding agencies) that receive funding, particularly conducted jointly with doctoral students.

- **The quality of the admission process:**

All key information and documents are available on the website, which is accessible exclusively in Polish. The Regulations set forth the key principles governing the educational process. Attention is drawn to the need to develop best practices (e.g., regarding the preparation of the Individual Study Plan) and guidelines for specific documents (e.g., the personal statement for admissions).

Information and internal regulations should be considered freely accessible and, for the most part, adequate to the needs of the audience (in Polish only).

Detailed admission rules are adopted and published within the timeframe prescribed by law (in Polish only).

The admission requirements require editorial and substantive revisions. For example, there is no indication that certain documents are optional (e.g., language certificates), and the requirement to submit an identity document is stated (it should be a copy).

A person employed by the University may be admitted to the doctoral school provided that their full-time employment is reduced to 0.5, which should be considered a discriminatory rule. The rules should be assessed as publicly available in Polish and published in a timely manner; however, they require review and editorial correction, as well as the removal of provisions that discriminate against University employees.

Recruitment is conducted separately for each discipline. Recruitment is carried out by committees composed of members representing the disciplines, representatives of the doctoral student government, and the School's administration.

The admission threshold has been set at 75 points, with a maximum score of 100. The rules for awarding points have been divided into categories and precisely formulated.

Two admission modes are provided for: regular, allowing studies to begin on October 1, and special, allowing studies to begin outside the established dates, linked to the results of grant competitions funding doctoral scholarships—beyond the basic admission quota. In light of the information presented above, the manner in which the competition is conducted should be assessed as appropriate and adequate to the needs.

Candidates with disabilities or chronic illnesses are provided with assistance and accommodations during the admissions process in accordance with their individual needs.

Applicants to the doctoral school are required to submit documents confirming their academic qualifications. The evaluation process assesses, among other things, the ability to present a research topic, formulate a research objective, define the scope of research, use scientific language, demonstrate general knowledge in the relevant discipline, and showcase the applicant's research activity.

In light of the above information, the method of verifying candidates' aptitude should be assessed as comprehensive and adequate to the needs.

The unit consults on the recruitment process during meetings with newly admitted doctoral students. During the visit, examples of effective development initiatives undertaken on this basis were highlighted.

It is ordered to:

4.1. The discriminatory rule excluding the possibility of doctoral studies for individuals employed on more than a half-time basis be removed.

It is recommended:

- 4.1. To develop catalogs of best practices related to processes at the Doctoral School (e.g., preparing the Individual Research Plan) and guidelines regarding selected documents (e.g., the personal statement in the recruitment process).
- 4.2. To make an English-language version of the Doctoral School's website available, along with documentation in English.
- 4.3. Editing the admission rules—there is no indication that the submission of certain documents is optional (e.g., certificates confirming foreign language proficiency, which may not be available for all candidates); the requirement to submit an identity document (most likely a copy) is specified.

- **The quality of scientific or artistic guidance, and support in research:**
The assessment of Criterion is rather positive, although not all elements of this area were documented equally well. In the school's favour, the responses obtained during the visit suggest that real support mechanisms do exist: discussions with doctoral candidates are held, the school responds to crisis situations, and practical action is taken in cases of problems within the supervisory relationship. A specific conflict between a doctoral candidate and a supervisor was also acknowledged, which is in itself important, as it indicates that difficult situations are not concealed or entirely excluded from the school's self-understanding. The doctoral candidates' perspective also did not reveal an environment that appears clearly dysfunctional. Their statements did not contain strong signals of a systemic lack of academic or organisational support; on the contrary, they pointed to the usefulness of discipline-specific seminars and to the fact that the courses support their research work. From the point of view of Criterion 5, this is significant, because the quality of supervision and support should be visible in the actual experience of doctoral candidates, not only in institutional declarations. The main reservation concerns the degree of documentation and procedural structuring of actions taken in difficult situations. The material gathered during the visit does not allow a full reconstruction of a clearly described and well-documented pathway for dealing with supervisory conflicts or other problems requiring intervention. According to the evaluation criteria, procedures for reporting irregularities are valuable only when they are known, actually used, and lead to real corrective action; their formal existence alone is not sufficient. In the case of this school, effective practical action is more visible than a clearly organised body of evidence demonstrating the system as a whole. Here again, the exceptional role of the Head of the Doctoral School should be explicitly underlined. The collected responses suggest that the Head's very substantial personal commitment is one of the key factors stabilising the quality of support and responsiveness to problems. The Head's actions compensate operationally for part of the organisational and procedural shortcomings, allowing the school to function more effectively than the degree of formalisation alone would imply. However, such a model cannot be regarded as fully safe from an organisational perspective, since it makes the quality of support heavily dependent on one individual and increases the risk of overload.
Conclusion: Criterion should be assessed as met at a good level. The school appears to be capable of responding to difficult situations and of providing generally appropriate conditions for supporting research activity, but it should improve the documentation of intervention mechanisms, safety procedures and supervisory support.

Recommendations:

- 5.1. Clarify and document more effectively the procedures for dealing with conflict situations and the actions taken in response to problems in the doctoral candidate–supervisor relationship.
- 5.2. Strengthen the systematic monitoring of supervisory quality and doctoral candidates' sense of safety, so that this area depends less on ad hoc interventions.
- 5.3. Increase administrative and organisational support for the Head of the Doctoral School, as the Head's exceptional personal commitment currently compensates for systemic shortcomings to a significant degree, while at the same time creating a risk to the stability and repeatability of support.

- **The reliability of the midterm evaluation:**

Mid-term evaluation committees are appointed by the Doctoral School's head, and the evaluation is conducted in October. Doctoral students must submit all required documentation (IPB, along with documentation confirming IPB completion and a self-report) for evaluation by September 30th, just before the mid-term evaluation, to the Vice-Deans for Science. The evaluations take place in October. This may leave the committee with only one day to review the documentation, especially considering the need to transfer it from the faculty to the Doctoral School. This could result in an unfair evaluation of the doctoral student. Additionally, the doctoral student submits the opinions of the supervisor(s). In a given discipline, a single external expert, in accordance with the adopted rules, having at least a postdoctoral degree in the same discipline, is generally appointed to cover all doctoral students. This is justified if this expert has extensive scientific experience. The committee chairperson is the vice-dean associated with the academic discipline represented by the doctoral student. The composition of the evaluation committee is not reviewed by the appropriate Disciplinary Council; this is also not among the tasks of the Doctoral School Council. There is no formal template for the committee meeting report. However, the evaluation criteria are outlined in the regulations. Positive and negative evaluations are envisaged, which is consistent with the Act.

Conclusion: The criterion should be assessed as fulfilled at a satisfactory level. The Doctoral School correctly conducts the mid-term evaluation process; however, the Committee has formulated recommendations and suggestions in this area.

It is ordered to:

6.1. Introduction of a template for the mid-term evaluation report.

6.2. The deadline for submitting documents for the mid-term evaluation and the mid-term evaluation itself should be at least two weeks apart.

Recommendations:

6.1. It is recommended that the Disciplinary Council at least give an opinion on the composition of the committee, especially on candidates for external experts, and their additional verification (e.g., using the RAD-on database) to avoid repeating the situation of appointing an expert based on the represented discipline despite habilitation obtained in another discipline.

- **Internationalisation:**

The internationalization of the educational process and the research activities of doctoral students are implemented in the Doctoral School (DS) to a degree that requires further development, intensification, and improvement. The DS offers two courses in English and emphasizes its ambition to increase the number of courses delivered in this language, as well as to involve international lecturers in the educational process. The DS curriculum includes basic components of internationalization, such as the course *Technical Academic Writing*. In the analyzed Individual Research Plans (IRPs) and the provisions of the DS Regulations, which define their core content, elements of internationalization are limited mainly to participation in conferences and publication of research outputs. Despite this, the DS actively supports doctoral students who independently establish international collaborations, as evidenced, for example, by the appointment of foreign assistant supervisors. Doctoral students present their research results at conferences and seminars outside Poland to a limited extent; only a small number undertake medium- or long-term international research internships. The Main Library of Częstochowa University of Technology provides doctoral students with both remote and on-site access to commercial databases and scientific journals.

The needs of international doctoral students are recognized and largely met. The DS has a functioning support office (the International Students Office) that assists foreign doctoral students, for example in matters related to residence legalization in Poland or accommodation. The DS is moderately oriented toward attracting international doctoral candidates (currently 4 foreign doctoral students are enrolled). Communication with the DS in English is possible, and recruitment committees are prepared to assess international candidates; however, doctoral education in the DS is officially conducted in Polish.

The international visibility and effectiveness of the DS are noticeable but require improvement. The DS benefits from numerous international agreements on scientific and educational cooperation concluded by various units of the university, including the International Students Office. The university itself conducts effective promotional activities on social media, although the DS is not specifically included. Currently, the DS does not have a formalized system for tracking the career paths of its graduates; this is instead handled informally through personal contacts between graduates and their supervisors.

Recommendations:

- 7.1. Extend IRPs to include short-term international internships, applications for international grants, or another verifiable requirement that would strengthen the internationalization of the research work being carried out.
- 7.2. Intensify support for doctoral students in applying for research grants.
- 7.3. Introduce a requirement to prepare the doctoral dissertation in English when the supervisor or assistant supervisor is affiliated with a foreign institution.
- 7.4. Review international cooperation agreements (renewal, termination, amendment, etc.).
- 7.5. Introduce verifiable enforcement of doctoral student obligations as specified in §11(5) of the current DS Regulations.
- 7.6. Modify the current doctoral training programs to strengthen students' ability to communicate freely in English.
- 7.7. Translate the DS website, admission procedures, regulations, curriculum, and other relevant legal documents into English.
- 7.8. Expand promotional activities to highlight opportunities for international doctoral

candidates (social media).

7.9. Build a positive image of the DS by regularly communicating the achievements of doctoral students and staff (social media).

- **The effectiveness of the doctoral education:**

The effectiveness of doctoral education should be assessed as high. This is facilitated by the good communication between the Head and administration of the Doctoral School and doctoral students, which is partially due to the relatively small number of doctoral students. Relatively low admission limits, which on the one hand can pose a significant challenge for staff development, on the other hand, allow for the admission of the best-prepared candidates, most of whom complete their doctoral dissertations on time. The great majority of the doctoral students who requested extensions of their study period (38 in total) due to deadlines for the publication of articles constituting the basis of their doctoral dissertations, extended research, or maternity leave, submitted their dissertations (26) and obtained their doctoral degrees. For eight doctoral students, the extended deadline for submitting their dissertations has not yet expired. Of the four who failed to meet this requirement, three were conducting research in the “information and communication technology” discipline, and one was in the related discipline “automation, electronics, electrical engineering, and space technologies”. In these cases, ongoing presentations of results in journals or at conferences directly related to the research topic were not always noticed. It is recommended to more effectively motivate doctoral students to present their partial results at conferences and in thematic journals, which will enable ongoing feedback from reviewers of submitted papers. This is particularly important in computer science-related disciplines, where ongoing presentation of results is essential. Supervisors' opinions on annual reports only require the doctoral student's name, surname, and signature – it is recommended to use descriptive opinions, which would allow for a more comprehensive assessment of research progress. Currently used forms serve only a formal purpose.

Recommendations:

8.1. Descriptive opinions from supervisors on doctoral students' annual reports should be used.

8.2. The motivation of doctoral students to publish research results on an ongoing basis and present them at conferences related to their doctoral thesis topics should be increased.

V. FINAL OPINION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the analysis of documentation, site visit results, and interviews with the Doctoral School authorities, staff, administration, and doctoral candidates, the Evaluation Team concludes that the Doctoral School meets all evaluation criteria for doctoral education quality. The organisational, teaching, and research solutions form a coherent quality assurance system aligned with Level 8 of the PQF.

Recommendations regarding the cooperation between the institution and the Doctoral Candidates' Self-Government are presented in Section III of the report.

Criterion 1

The study programme and Individual Research Plans are generally consistent with PQF Level 8 requirements and reflect disciplinary specificity and research needs. Procedures for preparing and verifying IRPs are in place and supported by the Head's involvement. A key limitation is the lack of a clear link between IRPs and learning outcomes and strong reliance on a single individual, indicating the need for improvement. Therefore, the following recommendations are proposed:

- 1.1. Strengthen the qualitative and clearly visible link in the documentation between individual research plans and PQF level 8 learning outcomes, without falling into excessive formalism or mechanical mapping of each activity to a single outcome.
- 1.2. Introduce more transparent standards for assessing the quality of individual research plans, so that responsibility for their interpretation and approval is not concentrated solely in the hands of the Head of the Doctoral School.
- 1.3. Increase administrative and organisational support for the Head of the Doctoral School, as the current efficiency of this area depends largely on the Head's exceptional personal commitment, which compensates for systemic shortcomings and creates a risk to process stability.

Criterion 2

The school applies mechanisms to monitor doctoral progress; however, verification of learning outcomes remains largely informal and insufficiently documented. Feedback is limited and does not fully reflect the development of research competences. The process relies heavily on the Head's involvement, indicating the need for stronger systematisation; therefore, the following recommendations are proposed:

- 2.1. Introduce brief, qualitative and documented feedback after annual progress reviews and after the mid-term evaluation.
- 2.2. Standardise the minimum format of supervisors' opinions and other forms of progress assessment so that the logic of the doctoral candidate's development of research competences can be reconstructed more clearly.
- 2.3. Increase administrative and organisational support for the Head of the Doctoral School, as the Head's intensive personal work currently compensates for procedural shortcomings, improving day-to-day functioning but creating a risk to the long-term sustainability of the system.

Criterion 3

Staff qualifications are consistent with the university's mission and teaching goals, and selection reflects research achievements and subject alignment. Procedures for selecting staff and supervisors are in place but require refinement, including greater involvement of Discipline Councils and improved transparency. Systemic limitations (e.g. low admission limits, uneven staff engagement, documentation gaps) indicate the need for improvement, while the criterion is met. The following recommendations are proposed:

- 3.1. Involving Scientific Discipline Councils in the process of appointing external supervisors and assistant supervisors.
- 3.2. Involving foreign lecturers in conducting classes in English.
- 3.3. Considering the creation of a database of supervisors with designated research topics, offering opportunities to potential candidates who are not graduates of Częstochowa University of Technology.
- 3.4. Annually updating and reviewing course descriptions (syllabuses), considering changes in content and staff data, and considering the use of an IT tool to facilitate integration and consistent data presentation.
- 3.5. Increasing the number of grant applications (to various research funding agencies) that receive funding, particularly conducted jointly with doctoral students.

Criterion 4

The recruitment process is transparent, based on clear criteria, and ensures comprehensive assessment of candidates. Information is publicly available and timely, but only in Polish. Editorial and systemic shortcomings remain, including unclear requirements and potentially discriminatory provisions. The following requirements and recommendations are presented below.

It is ordered to:

- 4.1. The discriminatory rule excluding the possibility of doctoral studies for individuals employed on more than a half-time basis be removed.

Recommendations:

- 4.1. To develop catalogs of best practices related to processes at the Doctoral School and guidelines regarding selected documents (e.g., the personal statement in the recruitment process).
- 4.2. To make an English-language version of the Doctoral School's website available, along with documentation in English.
- 4.3. Editing the admission rules—there is no indication that the submission of certain documents is optional (e.g., certificates confirming foreign language proficiency, which may not be available for all candidates); the requirement to submit an identity document (most likely a copy) is specified.

Criterion 5

The quality of supervision and research support is generally good, with effective responses to problematic situations and positive doctoral experiences. A key limitation is insufficient documentation and formalisation of procedures, especially in conflict situations. The system relies heavily on the Head's involvement, indicating the need for greater systematisation. The following recommendations are proposed:

- 5.1. Clarify and document more effectively the procedures for dealing with conflict situations and the actions taken in response to problems in the doctoral candidate–supervisor relationship.
- 5.2. Strengthen the systematic monitoring of supervisory quality and doctoral candidates' sense of safety, so that this area depends less on ad hoc interventions.
- 5.3. Increase administrative and organisational support for the Head of the Doctoral School, as

the Head's exceptional personal commitment currently compensates for systemic shortcomings to a significant degree, while at the same time creating a risk to the stability and repeatability of support.

Criterion 6

The mid-term evaluation process is regulated and includes committees and defined criteria. Limitations include very short time for reviewing documentation, lack of a report template, and limited involvement of Discipline Councils. This indicates the need to improve organisation and systematisation. The following requirements and recommendations are presented below.

It is ordered to:

6.1. Introduction of a template for the mid-term evaluation report.

6.2. The deadline for submitting documents for the mid-term evaluation and the mid-term evaluation itself should be at least two weeks apart.

Recommendations:

6.1. It is recommended that the Disciplinary Council at least give an opinion on the composition of the committee, especially on candidates for external experts, and their additional verification to avoid repeating the situation of appointing an expert based on the represented discipline despite habilitation obtained in another discipline.

Criterion 7

Staff internationalisation is at a good level, evidenced by mobility, publications, and scientific networks. However, internationalisation of training and doctoral activities remains limited and requires development, particularly in mobility, international projects, and use of English. Systemic gaps include limited international promotion and lack of graduate tracking. The following recommendations are presented below:

7.1. Extend IRPs to include short-term international internships or applications for international grants.

7.2. Intensify support for doctoral students in applying for research grants.

7.3. Introduce a requirement to prepare the doctoral dissertation in English when the supervisor or assistant supervisor is affiliated with a foreign institution.

7.4. Review international cooperation agreements.

7.5. Introduce verifiable enforcement of doctoral student obligations as specified in §11(5) of the current DS Regulations.

7.6. Modify the current doctoral training programs to strengthen students' ability to communicate freely in English.

7.7. Translate the DS website, admission procedures, regulations, curriculum, and other relevant legal documents into English.

7.8. Expand promotional activities to highlight opportunities for international doctoral candidates.

7.9. Build a positive image of the DS by regularly communicating the achievements of doctoral students and staff.

Criterion 8

Doctoral education effectiveness is high, supported by good relationships and selective recruitment. Most candidates complete dissertations on time, and many with extensions obtain degrees. There is a need to strengthen motivation for ongoing dissemination of research results and improve documentation of progress. The following recommendations are presented below:

8.1. Descriptive opinions from supervisors on doctoral students' annual reports should be used.

8.2. The motivation of doctoral students to publish research results on an ongoing basis and present them at conferences related to their doctoral thesis topics should be increased.

VI. ASSESSMENT AND REASON

Final assessment
positive

Reason:

Based on the analysis of the documentation, the findings from the site visit, and discussions held with the authorities of the Doctoral School, academic staff, administrative staff, and doctoral candidates, the Evaluation Team clearly states that the Doctoral School meets all evaluation criteria established for assessing the quality of doctoral education. The existing organisational, teaching, and research-related solutions form a coherent quality assurance system for doctoral education, corresponding to the requirements of qualifications at level 8 of the Polish Qualifications Framework.

The System of Evaluation of Doctoral Schools is financed by
the Minister of Science and Higher Education.

KEN

2023-2027



Minister of Science and Higher Education
Republic of Poland



**NATIONAL
INFORMATION
PROCESSING**
INSTITUTE