

EVALUATION OF THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION AT DOCTORAL SCHOOLS INFORMATION GUIDE FOR EXPERT CANDIDATES

In 2018 a new model of doctoral studies at doctoral schools was introduced in Poland.

Doctoral schools in Poland are very diverse, have different structures and are based on unique solutions implemented by entities in accordance with their autonomy¹.

The independent external evaluation of doctoral schools is intended to be one of the means to ensure the high quality of doctoral student education. The process of evaluation will be cyclical and individually timed for individual doctoral schools. **The first evaluations will start at the beginning of the 2024/2025 academic year, in the fourth quarter of 2024.**

The Science Evaluation Committee (SEC, Komisja Ewaluacji Nauki KEN²) is responsible for carrying out the evaluation. Although this body is appointed by the Minister of Science, it is entirely independent in the field of evaluation of doctoral schools. **The resolution of the Science Evaluation Committee determines the result of the evaluation of a doctoral school.**

The evaluation is conducted by a team of experts individually appointed by the chairman of the SEC for each evaluated doctoral school. Every expert team will include one person from the SEC - as the chairman, and other experts with significant scientific or artistic achievements, including at least one employed at a foreign university or foreign scientific institution, as well as one doctoral student selected from among the candidates indicated by the Polish National Representation of Doctoral Candidates.

Each evaluation team will consist of 4 to 7 expert members.

The Science Evaluation Committee invites individuals with a significant scientific or artistic achievements and fluent English to collaborate in the evaluation of doctoral schools!

Who may be a member of the evaluation team?

An individual who meets, among others, **the following requirements may be an expert**³:

- has at least a doctoral degree,
- has significant scientific or artistic achievements,
- actively participates in the implementation of scientific research,
- speaks English fluently,
- has an impeccable reputation, also in terms of compliance with the principles of scientific ethics,
- has not reached the age of 70.

An experience in doctoral education and evaluation of doctoral schools or doctoral education systems in other countries is very welcomed too.

How to become a member of the evaluation team?

To become an expert in evaluation team, you should **register yourself online**⁴ via electronic registration form, which is available on Doctoral School Evaluation System (SEDok) website. Each evaluation team shall be appointed by the President of the Science Evaluation Committee.

¹ <https://www.gov.pl/web/nauka/the-evaluation-of-the-quality-of-education-at-doctoral-schools>

² More about SEC/KEN: <https://www.gov.pl/web/nauka/komisja-ewaluacji-nauki>

³ A detailed list of requirements can be found next to the expert candidate application form.

⁴ The submission of a candidacy does not guarantee appointment to the evaluation team.

What will the expert's work involve?

1. Before establishing cooperation, the Science Evaluation Committee asks the candidate for an expert about **the willingness to participate** in the evaluation of a specific doctoral school, confirmation of **the absence of a conflict of interest and a declaration of availability on a specified date** to conduct a personal inspection of doctoral school together with other team members.
2. **After establishing cooperation, the expert participates in mandatory online training**, which includes the Polish doctoral education system, the principles of evaluating the quality of education at Polish doctoral schools and the operation of the ICT (information and communication technologies) system - **Doctoral School Evaluation System (SEDok) website** - used for evaluation.
3. **The chairman of the evaluation team will also contact the expert to arrange the date of the first online team meeting.** The meeting will allow team members to get acquainted and discuss detailed cooperation principles in the evaluation process. The experts' work involves remote contacts in English. A secretary will also be appointed to each evaluation team.
4. **The expert will be obliged to analyze the self-evaluation report in the SEDok system**, submitted by the entity operating the evaluated doctoral school, for which he/she will receive access.
5. **On the date agreed upon when establishing cooperation, the expert is obliged to personally participate in the inspection of a doctoral school.** Travel and accommodation-related matters are agreed upon in advance and the expert incurs no costs.
6. **After completing the inspection of the doctoral school, the evaluation team prepares an evaluation report in Polish and English**, containing an analysis of the quality of education at the doctoral school based on the criteria in the Polish legal regulations⁵. The report may also contain recommendations. The preliminary evaluation report is submitted to the entity operating a doctoral school for review and possible comments.
7. After considering the comments, the evaluation team establishes **the final version of the evaluation report and then makes the evaluation of a doctoral school - positive or negative** - which is submitted together with the report to the Science Evaluation Committee.

How much will the expert's fee be?

The amount of remuneration depends on the size of the evaluated doctoral school and may range from approximately PLN 5,000 to approximately PLN 8,000.

What effects of the evaluation are expected?

Evaluation is a guarantee of high-quality education at doctoral schools. We assume that the proposed solutions will stimulate an increase in the effectiveness of doctoral education, which will contribute to increasing the competences of young scientists, increasing the share of highly qualified people in the labor market, as well as intensifying international scientific cooperation.

We encourage individuals who meets the criteria to participate in this process!

⁵ Statutory criteria – art. 261 of Act of 20 of July 2018 – Law on Higher Education and Science; Specific criteria - § 2 of Regulation of the Minister Of Education and Science of 27th September 2021 on the evaluation of the quality of education at doctoral schools.