

KEN

2023-2027

DOCTORAL SCHOOL

EDUCATION QUALITY REPORT

Szkoła Doktorska Chrześcijańskiej Akademii Teologicznej w
Warszawie

Chrześcijańska Akademia Teologiczna w Warszawie

Name and seat of the doctoral school

Szkoła Doktorska Chrześcijańskiej Akademii Teologicznej w Warszawie

Evaluation period

9/30/19–5/11/25

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

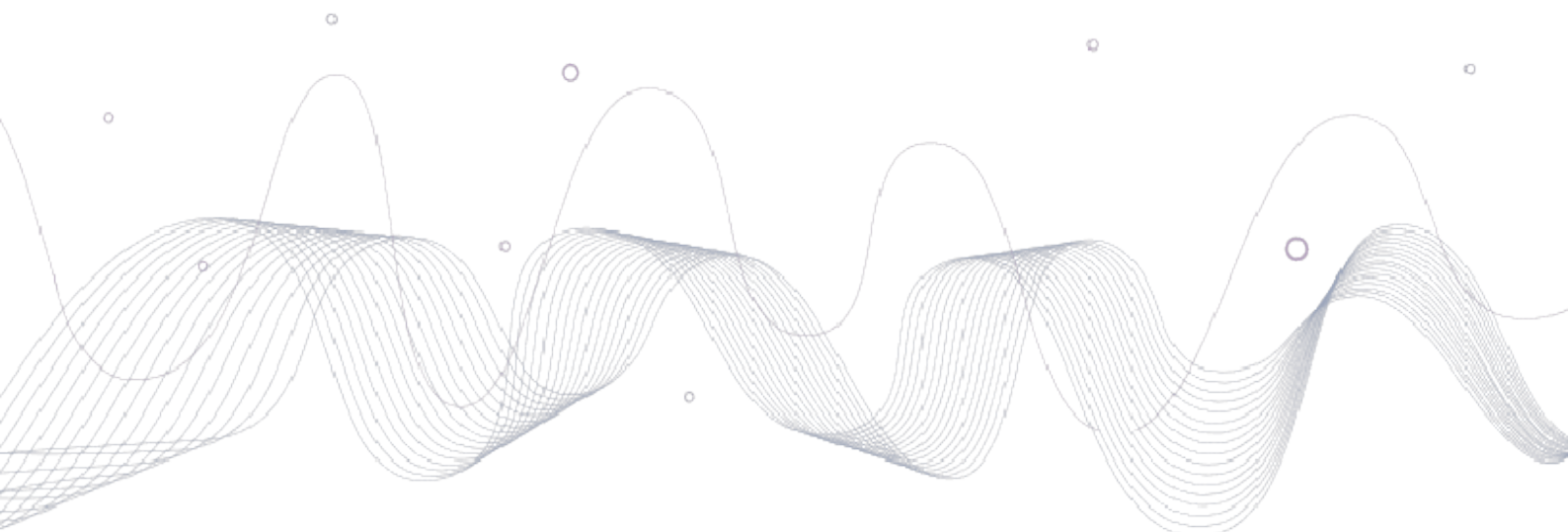
Chrześcijańska Akademia Teologiczna w Warszawie

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

-

Date of report

7/14/25



Composition of the evaluation team:

Chairman:

Grzegorz Chojnacki

Secretary:

Adam Zadroga

Team members:

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I. GENERAL INFORMATION ON THE DOCTORAL SCHOOL

Name of doctoral school	Szkoła Doktorska Chrześcijańskiej Akademii Teologicznej w Warszawie
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	Social sciences (from: 01-01-2018) Theology (from: 01-01-2018)
Discipline(s) of science or art in which training is provided	educational sciences (from: 01-01-2018) theology (from: 01-01-2018)
Name/scope of the education programme	theology education
Number of instructors	24
Number of doctoral students undergoing training at the doctoral school (as of 6/30/25)	20
Number of supervisors in terms of guidance in preparing doctoral dissertations (as of 6/30/25)	12
Number of auxiliary supervisors in terms of guidance in preparing doctoral dissertations (as of 6/30/25)	0

II. INFORMATION ON THE INSPECTION AND ITS COURSE

The site visit took place on 15 November 2025, with all members of the Evaluation Team in attendance. The schedule of the visit was agreed in advance with the authorities of the CHAT Doctoral School and the authorities of the Christian Theological Academy in Warsaw.

The programme of the visit was as follows:

15 November 2025

- 09:00–09:30 – Meeting with the authorities of the CHAT Doctoral School and the Christian Theological Academy in Warsaw.
- 09:30–10:30 – Review of Individual Research Plans, mid-term evaluation documentation, and other relevant documents.
- 10:30–12:00 – Meeting with the team responsible for preparing the Self-Evaluation Report, the administrative staff, the Management, and the Council of the CHAT Doctoral School.
- 12:30–13:15 – Meeting with academic teachers delivering courses in the CHAT Doctoral School, academic supervisors, and representatives of the Scientific Councils of the disciplines in which education is provided.
- 13:15–14:15 – Meeting with doctoral candidates and the PhD Students' Self-Government Council.
- 14:15–14:45 – Internal debriefing of the Evaluation Team.
- 14:45–15:15 – Final meeting with the authorities of the CHAT Doctoral School / the Institution.

The authorities and administrative staff of the CHAT Doctoral School remained available to the visiting team throughout the day. The team was provided with a spacious room in which it could review the documentation; all scheduled meetings were also held there.

The meetings were attended by a representative group of supervisors, academic teachers involved in the CHAT Doctoral School, representatives of the Scientific Councils of the relevant disciplines, doctoral candidates, and members of the PhD Students' Self-Government Council.

The team was also able to familiarise itself with the teaching and research infrastructure of the institution.

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

The PhD Students' Self-Government Council of the Christian Theological Academy (CHAT) expressed its consent to the entry into force of the *Regulations of the Doctoral School* (three improvements proposed by the Council were incorporated), as well as to the appointment of its director. The Council also issued a positive opinion on the curriculum, the criteria for periodic evaluation applicable to different groups of employees and types of positions, and the procedure and body responsible for conducting the periodic evaluation. During the meeting, however, doctoral candidates indicated that they are involved in the development of these acts only once draft versions have already been prepared. In the future, it would be advisable to include doctoral candidates from the earliest stages of work on such documents.

Representatives of the PhD Students' Self-Government Council do not participate as observers in the recruitment process or in the mid-term evaluation. This is due, on the one hand, to the very small size of the Council and, on the other, to the limited interest in participating in recruitment and mid-term evaluation procedures, which are conducted primarily in written form.

The presence of as many as five doctoral candidates on the Quality Assurance Committee deserves particular recognition. The CHAT Doctoral School website includes a dedicated “the PhD Students' Self-Government Council” section.

The Council makes decisions regarding the allocation of financial resources designated by CHAT for doctoral-related purposes. The institution provides the conditions necessary for the functioning of the PhD Students' Self-Government Council, including infrastructure and financial resources, which the Council manages within the scope of its activities.

During the site visit, the Evaluation Team (ET) met with representatives of doctoral candidates from all cohorts and both disciplines—Theological Sciences and Pedagogy—including the Chair, Deputy Chair, and Secretary of the PhD Students' Self-Government Council. The doctoral candidates present expressed an unequivocally positive assessment of the cooperation between the Academy and the PhD Students' Self-Government Council.

The overall assessment of the cooperation between the Institution and the PhD Students' Self-Government Council is positive.

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 CHAT Doctoral School's curriculum aligns with the learning outcomes for qualifications at the level 8 of the Polish Qualifications Framework (PQF). It was designed to ensure the systematic achievement of the intended learning outcomes, consistent with the requirements specified in the Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of November 14, 2018 (Journal of Laws 2018, item 2218), in the disciplines of theology and pedagogy. It implements learning outcomes in the areas of knowledge, skills, and social competences that doctoral students consistently achieve in both disciplines. The learning outcomes for specific classes (lectures, tutorials, seminars), as defined in the subject cards, are coherent with and cover all the disciplinary outcomes, as evidenced by the presented matrix. Their achievement is verified during each stage of education through oral or written examinations, participation in conversations, class activities, discussion, and teamwork. An analysis of the assumptions of individual research plans (IRPs) revealed that specific research tasks achieve learning outcomes in the appropriate sequence. Specific IRPs implement the standard of learning outcomes at PQF level 8. The university offers opportunities to apply for research funding, which enables students to achieve learning outcomes in terms of knowledge and skills. The curriculum also provides opportunities for interdisciplinary development; courses in research methodology take into account the specific cognitive aspects of the discipline and simultaneously provide greater opportunities for discourse through the lens of the philosophy of science.

The university undertakes quality-enhancing activities, in which collegial bodies play a leading role. During the period reviewed by the Evaluation Team (ET), the CHAT Senate made quality-oriented changes to the CHAT Doctoral School Regulations, the last of which took place on November 30, 2023. In 2023, a quality assurance system was adopted at the CHAT Doctoral School and a Quality Assurance Committee was established, whose members represent all the CHAT communities. After each academic year, the Committee prepares a document analyzing the functioning of the quality assurance system, issuing recommendations to the University and CHAT authorities, and assessing the implementation of those already issued. The CHAT Doctoral School Scientific Council plays both a legislative and supervisory role in ensuring the proper implementation of the educational program. The PhD Students' Self-Government Council actively participates in quality-oriented activities based on general regulations and the University's internal legal acts. It is worth emphasizing the implementation of the PhD Students' Self-Government Council proposals to organize specialized courses, enabling doctoral students to acquire greater competences in implementing the IPB, and the introduction of tutoring classes.

- **The method of assessing the learning outcomes for qualifications at level 8 of the PQF:**

The process of verifying learning outcomes is transparent and based on standardised procedures applied uniformly to all doctoral candidates. The obligations required of students in the CHAT Doctoral School—including the preparation of a scientific article, the presentation of research results at a conference of at least national scope, the development of a grant proposal, and the completion of the doctoral dissertation—constitute clear and reliable criteria for demonstrating the learning outcomes corresponding to Level 8 of the Polish Qualifications Framework. The final evaluation of the doctoral dissertation, preceded by the opinion of the supervisor or supervisors, represents an additional and highly significant component of the learning-outcome verification process. The robustness of the system is further strengthened by the activities of the Quality Assurance Committee of the CHAT Doctoral School, which monitors the correctness and adequacy of the assessment methods employed. Transparency is also ensured by a clear procedure for confirming language competence: in the absence of an appropriate diploma or certificate, the doctoral candidate is required to take a certification examination confirming proficiency in a foreign language at a level of at least B2.

The process of verifying learning outcomes is subject to systematic enhancement. The high level of expertise of the academic and teaching staff, including supervisors, constitutes a key element of the quality of verification at every stage of education. At the same time, a systemic solution has been introduced in the form of the Quality Assurance Committee of the CHAT Doctoral School, whose purpose is to structure and document the processes of monitoring, evaluating, and improving the methods used to verify learning outcomes for qualifications at Level 8 of the Polish Qualifications Framework. This system enables, among other things, the analysis of the tools employed, the identification of areas requiring improvement, and the regular adjustment of assessment criteria to current standards and the needs of doctoral candidates.

- **Qualification of academic teachers and academic staff employed at the doctoral school:**

The academic teachers involved in the educational process at the CHAT Doctoral School are distinguished by their solid substantive preparation and professional competences, which fully correspond to the mission and strategic objectives of the university. Their scientific achievements, teaching experience, and activity in the field of research and academic cooperation create a stable foundation for a high level of education. This staff not only meets the required qualification standards, but also develops them through continuous improvement and participation in scientific projects, conferences, and academic initiatives. As a result, it provides students with a comprehensive and professional education process in line with the profile and values of the CHAT Doctoral School. The Evaluation Team (ET) notes with appreciation that the university actively involves lecturers from various academic centers in the teaching process. Such cooperation significantly enriches education, brings new specialist perspectives to it, and at the same time broadens the research horizons of doctoral students. The presence of external experts supports the pluralism of scientific methods, concepts, and traditions, which contributes to improving the quality of academic preparation. The CHAT Doctoral School acts as a representative unit and can be considered the showcase of CHAT. However, given the effectiveness of scientific and research activities conducted in a diverse environment, both in terms of specialization and religious traditions, it seems reasonable to increase the number of doctoral students and open the program to candidates from abroad. At the same time, the CHAT Doctoral School website should be appreciated, especially the publicly available and updated scientific and research profiles of academic supervisors. They provide a very adequate presentation of their scientific work and can effectively encourage potential candidates to undertake education at the CHAT Doctoral School.

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

The internal legal acts governing the functioning of the CHAT Doctoral School are of good quality and characterised by concise regulation. The acts required under Article 358(2) (1–2) of the Law on Higher Education and Science are published in the Public Information Bulletin of the Institution. On the CHAT Doctoral School website, prospective candidates can find information on the curriculum, the School's academic staff, and the catalogue of ongoing research projects, but not on its achievements, infrastructure, scientific cooperation with other institutions, or the accomplishments of its doctoral candidates and graduates.

The recruitment rules are accessible and unambiguous. The CHAT Doctoral School is open to candidates from various institutions in Poland and abroad. The recruitment rules do not take into account specific circumstances related to the timelines and funding principles of projects involving scientific research or development work conducted by doctoral candidates. Recruitment is based primarily on the academic merit of applicants; however, it is necessary to remove § 3(1)(i) of the Recruitment Rules from legal circulation, as it introduces a non-merit-based restriction that is discriminatory and non-competitive in nature, thereby undermining the transparency of the competition procedure and violating statutory provisions.

The Institution takes into account the needs of persons with disabilities by ensuring accessible architectural conditions and providing solutions that facilitate communication. The effectiveness of these measures is confirmed by the fact that the proportion of doctoral candidates with disabilities is comparable to the proportion of persons with disabilities in the Polish population.

The Institution continuously improves the recruitment process, including by amending the recruitment rules. It cannot, however, draw on the outcomes of appeal procedures, as no candidate has appealed a decision refusing admission to the CHAT Doctoral School. Recruitment committees are sizeable (seven members in the most recent year covered by the evaluation) and consist exclusively of full professors and university professors.

Overall, the quality of the recruitment process merits a positive assessment.

- **The quality of scientific or artistic guidance, and support in research:**

Based on an analysis of the available documents and inspections, it should be concluded that the doctoral school performs its tasks at a high level, both in terms of organisation and content. The process of appointing a supervisor or supervisors has been described clearly and transparently, and its structure demonstrates care for the optimal matching of the supervisor's competences to the specific nature of the doctoral student's research problem. The mechanisms for changing supervisors work efficiently, respecting the continuity of supervision and the interests of the doctoral student. Their maturity is confirmed both by the procedures in place and by the statements of the doctoral students themselves.

In order to ensure high-quality cooperation between doctoral students and supervisors, the school has implemented consistent rules for resolving conflicts. These include: a clearly defined procedure for reporting problems, the mediation process and the path for possible modifications in the scope of supervisory support. The high quality of the organisation is also confirmed by the way in which appropriate working conditions are ensured for doctoral students, including those with disabilities. Access to research and teaching infrastructure, the resolution of research funding issues and organisational flexibility have been regulated in a way that enables full participation in the education process. Particularly noteworthy is the wide range of facilities relating to accessibility, adaptation of teaching materials and individualisation of forms of assessment. The Evaluation Team (ET) assesses these practices as consistently implemented and fully compliant with current standards. The very high quality of accessibility was confirmed by a visit to the modern building and by a number of positive opinions from doctoral students.

The preparation of Individual Research Plans (IRP) is also of a high standard. The IRPs contain both a mandatory schedule for the preparation of the dissertation and logically structured research tasks and scientific activities. The plans are regularly reviewed, updated and used as a practical tool for monitoring the progress of doctoral students. Their effectiveness is confirmed by reliable and detailed reviews prepared by leading professors from outside the Academy.

The CHAT Doctoral School is also open to cooperation with outstanding specialists from outside the unit. Inviting external experts, organising joint seminars and involving them in teaching activities enriches the potential of the doctoral school and improves the quality of academic supervision. The fact that foreign experts are invited by the doctoral student community deserves special mention.

ET also positively assesses the system of verifying the work of supervisors. Regular evaluation, analysis of the fulfilment of duties, identification of areas requiring improvement and consideration of doctoral students' opinions prove that the unit treats quality control as an element of a permanent organisational culture.

In summary, the solutions applied by the CHAT Doctoral School in terms of criterion V are consistent and implemented at a very high level, and their practical implementation is not only administratively organised, but above all recognised by doctoral students.



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

In order to ensure an appropriate level of scientific activity among doctoral candidates, the Senate of CHAT has required them, among other obligations, to produce at least one publication during the first half of their studies. The criteria and rules governing the mid-term evaluation are accessible and unambiguous, and have been precisely formulated on the basis of substantive considerations and widely accepted principles of academic integrity. The programme of study lasts four years, while the mid-term evaluation is conducted after the fourth semester (Article 12(1) of the Regulations). The doctoral candidate submits a report on the implementation of the Individual Research Plan (IRP), together with the opinion of the supervisor, supervisors, or auxiliary supervisor, by 1 September of the year in which the mid-term evaluation takes place (Article 12(3)). This corresponds to the deadline specified in Article 202(2) of the Law on Higher Education and Science.

The mid-term evaluation includes an interview with the doctoral candidate only in exceptional cases, and basing the evaluation primarily on documentation is a quality-enhancing solution. A representative of the doctoral candidates does not participate as an observer in a potential interview. The Scientific Council of the CHAT Doctoral School appoints a separate committee to conduct the mid-term evaluation for each doctoral candidate. The same committee is subsequently authorised to consider any appeals against a negative evaluation result (although no appeals have been submitted to date). The analysis of mid-term evaluation documentation carried out during the site visit confirmed its high level of reliability. Overall, the reliability of the mid-term evaluation process is assessed as very high and merits distinction.

- **Internationalisation:**

From the perspective of the internationalization of scientific activity and the quality of doctoral education, it should be emphasized that the Christian Theological Academy in Warsaw, including the CHAT Doctoral School, in accordance with its mission and tradition, functions as an institution that is naturally open to both domestic and international cooperation. This is evidenced not only by its declared focus on academic dialogue, but above all by the specific activities of the academic staff involved in teaching at the CHAT Doctoral School. A significant number of employees regularly participate in international scientific conferences, conduct research at foreign centers, publish in foreign languages, and collaborate with scholars from other countries, which effectively broadens the research and teaching horizons of the CHAT Doctoral School. This cooperation has a stable formal basis: the Academy has numerous agreements with foreign partner institutions, enabling systematic scientific and teaching exchanges. In addition, the internationalization of the CHAT Doctoral School is facilitated by ten active agreements under the Erasmus+ program, which open up educational mobility opportunities for doctoral students. Particularly noteworthy is the implementation of a project co-financed by the European Social Fund – “Improving the competence of academic staff and the potential of institutions to accept people from abroad – Welcome to Poland,” which significantly strengthened the international competence of employees and raised the level of institutional readiness to accept foreigners. At the same time, the Evaluation Team (ET) recognizes areas requiring further development, which could significantly increase the recognition and attractiveness of the CHAT Doctoral School in the international community. First and foremost, it is worth considering the preparation of a full English-language version of the CHAT Doctoral School website, including documents regulating the education process. This is particularly important given the fact that there are numerous renowned research centers offering education in the same disciplines in the immediate academic vicinity. Although the current system of financing doctoral schools is not conducive to internationalization, the potential of the CHAT Doctoral School's staff, their achievements, international experience, and language skills could provide a solid basis for creating a study program that also appeals to candidates from outside the country. Such a proactive initiative would significantly strengthen the university's position in the scientific community. Also noteworthy is the declaration by the Director of the CHAT Doctoral School that changes are planned to the CHAT Doctoral School Regulations to allow foreign research internships to be recognized as grounds for extending the period of study. This is a desirable direction, consistent with international standards, and its implementation will certainly contribute to the further professionalization and internationalization of the doctoral education process.

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

In terms of the timeliness of completing education at the CHAT Doctoral School, the procedures related to the preparation of doctoral dissertations function rationally. The unit monitors the number of doctoral students submitting their dissertations within the deadlines specified in the programme and individual research plans, and decisions regarding the extension of the deadline for submitting a dissertation are made on the basis of clearly defined criteria. In addition, doctoral students have access to the necessary information and a catalogue of procedures enabling them to take advantage of legally prescribed breaks in education and leave. The number of extensions granted is within the typical range.

With regard to the percentage of people obtaining a doctoral degree, it should be emphasised that these ratios do not say much about the effectiveness of education due to the specific nature of the CHAT Doctoral School (small number of students in both disciplines). Nevertheless, the entity conducts the necessary analyses and takes measures to identify factors that both facilitate and hinder the timely completion of doctoral studies.

The level of scientific and artistic achievements of doctoral students is assessed as high. The unit presents the most important achievements in individual disciplines, selecting them on the basis of their quality and significance, and not only their number. The examples given are consistent with the activities provided for in the IRP and confirm that doctoral students carry out projects of an appropriate substantive level. The scientific achievements of doctoral students are published in recognised national journals.

The CHAT Doctoral School education quality assessment system operates in a systematic manner, covering both formal solutions and informal mechanisms. Doctoral students have the opportunity to express their opinions on a regular basis, e.g. through surveys or consultations, and the unit takes this information into account in its improvement activities. The quality assessment mechanisms should be considered properly implemented and consistently applied.

The CHAT Doctoral School analyses the available data on the career paths of its graduates and, as far as possible, uses it to assess the effectiveness of activities preparing them for academic and non-academic careers. However, it should be emphasised that due to the relatively small number of graduates, the scope of possible analyses is somewhat limited, which makes it necessary to be cautious when formulating generalised conclusions. Despite these natural limitations, the institution interprets the available results in a balanced manner, taking into account external factors such as the specific nature of the discipline, the local labour market and regional conditions, as was repeatedly emphasised during the meeting with the university authorities, staff and doctoral students.

V. FINAL OPINION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The verification of the Self-Evaluation Report submitted by the CHAT Doctoral School operated by the Christian Theological Academy (CHAT) in Warsaw, together with the information obtained during the on-site visit, leads the Evaluation Team to conclude that the educational process in the CHAT Doctoral School meets the criteria required for Level 8 of the Polish Qualifications Framework. Pursuant to Article 262(1) and (3) of the Law on Higher Education and Science, the Evaluation Team issues a positive evaluation of the quality of education provided by the CHAT Doctoral School in Warsaw.

The Evaluation Team highly values the commitment of the Director of the CHAT Doctoral School and the administrative staff to the functioning and further development of the school.

Recommendations:

1. The Evaluation Team recommends that the CHAT Doctoral School publish on its website information concerning the school's achievements, its infrastructure, its scientific cooperation with other institutions, as well as the accomplishments of its doctoral candidates and graduates.
2. The Evaluation Team recommends removing § 3(1)(i) of *the Recruitment Rules* from legal circulation.

VI. ASSESSMENT AND REASON

Final assessment
positive

Reason:

After analyzing the self-assessment report of the Christian Academy of Theology (CHAT) in Warsaw and examining the facts during a site visit, the Evaluation Team (ETT) determines that the educational process at the CHAT Doctoral School meets the criteria for PQF level 8. Based on Article 262, paragraphs 1 and 3 of the Law on Higher Education and Science, the ETT positively assesses the quality of education at the CHAT Doctoral School in Warsaw.

ETT highly appreciates the commitment of the CHAT Doctoral School Director and the administrative team to the school's operation and its continued development.

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