
KEN


2023-2027

DOCTORAL SCHOOL

EDUCATION QUALITY REPORT

Szkoła Doktorska Uniwersytetu Ekonomicznego w Poznaniu

Uniwersytet Ekonomiczny w Poznaniu



Name and seat of the doctoral school

Szkoła Doktorska Uniwersytetu Ekonomicznego w Poznaniu

Evaluation period

10/1/19–12/18/24

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

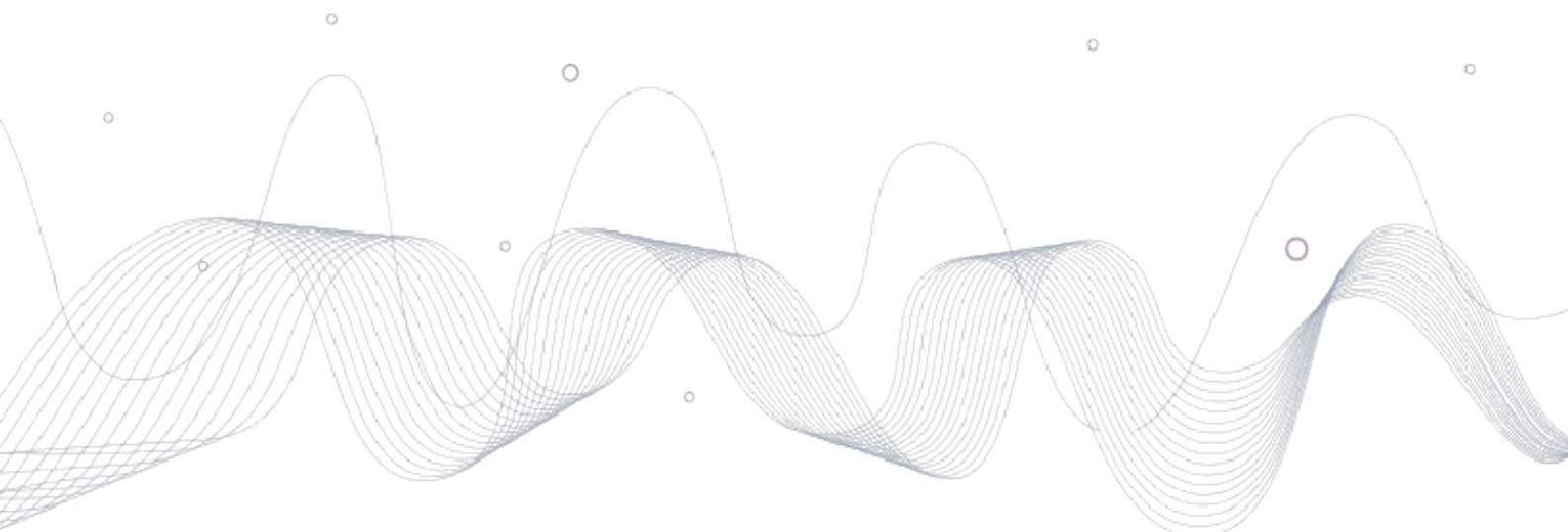
Uniwersytet Ekonomiczny w Poznaniu

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

-

Date of report

3/12/25



Composition of the evaluation team:

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I. GENERAL INFORMATION ON THE DOCTORAL SCHOOL

Name of doctoral school	Szkoła Doktorska Uniwersytetu Ekonomicznego w Poznaniu
Date of establishment	2019
Date of commencement of education at doctoral school	10/2/19
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)
Discipline(s) of science or art in which training is provided	economics and finance (from: 01-01-2018) management and quality studies (from: 01-01-2018)
Name/scope of the education programme	Programme of studies of the Doctoral School of the Poznań University of Economics and Business Programme of studies of the PUEB Doctoral School
Number of instructors	96
Number of doctoral students undergoing training at the doctoral school (as of 2/18/25)	91
Number of supervisors in terms of guidance in preparing doctoral dissertations (as of 2/18/25)	60
Number of auxiliary supervisors in terms of guidance in preparing doctoral dissertations (as of 2/18/25)	50

II. INFORMATION ON THE INSPECTION AND ITS COURSE

The visitation of the Doctoral School at UEP (DS UEP) took place on May 8 2025, and lasted from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM. The meetings were held in a room provided by the Doctoral School. The evaluation concerned the doctoral education in two academic disciplines: economics and finance, and management and quality studies.

The visitation began with a meeting between the evaluation team, the rectors and the doctoral school authorities. During this session, the detailed schedule of the day was presented, followed by a presentation by the authorities on the most significant challenges and the role of the evaluated disciplines in the implementation of the strategic goals of the Doctoral School and its associated institutions. The meeting with rectors and the doctoral school authorities was regarded by the evaluating committee as particularly significant, informative, and instrumental in clarifying the operational framework of doctoral school. This meeting was followed by a meeting with the team responsible for preparing the self-assessment report and the DS administration, including individuals in charge of various assessment criteria. Topics discussed included the adequacy of the curriculum and individual research plans with respect to learning outcomes at level 8 of the Polish Qualifications Framework (PRK/PQF), methods of verifying those outcomes, qualifications of the academic staff, the quality of the recruitment process, the quality of scientific supervision and support, reliability of mid-term evaluations, internationalization, and the effectiveness of doctoral education. The meeting proved valuable in providing a fuller understanding of the structure and operation of doctoral training. The evaluation team also met with DS academic staff, supervisors, and representatives of the Scientific Councils of the evaluated disciplines to gather insights from those directly involved in teaching and supervision. The next stage of visitation involved the evaluation of documentation, including randomly selected individual research plans and mid-term evaluations. The evaluation team also held a meeting with doctoral students and representatives of the Doctoral Student Council, aimed at collecting feedback on the quality of education, the School's operations, and collaboration with the university authorities. The day concluded with an internal summary meeting of the evaluation team, followed by a final meeting with rectors and the DS authorities, during which the next steps in the evaluation process were outlined. Attendance at the meetings was satisfactory, although there were occasional instances of participants leaving early. It is recommended to monitor attendance at meetings and encourage participants to stay until the end in order to ensure full engagement and continuity of discussion.

The DS provided full access to the required documentation and responded comprehensively to the majority of questions raised by the evaluation team. During the on-site visitation, the team verified a range of key documents demonstrating the proper functioning of the school. This included reviewing the Individual Research Plans of doctoral students, mid-term evaluation reports, and the protocols of admission committee meetings. The team was also presented with documents proving the internationalization of the school, results of surveys on the quality of

education conducted among doctoral students, graduate career monitoring data, confirmations of access to research infrastructure, and documentation related to the selection of academic staff. The only issue identified was a minor incompleteness in some of the doctoral students' documentation files. The documentation could more clearly illustrate the progress and changes in the doctoral training process and dissertation writing (e.g., required responses to the mid-term evaluation and, in cases of extensions, clear explanations).

During the site visit, the evaluating committee received comprehensive information that enabled it to formulate an assessment for each of the following criteria:

- the adequacy of the doctoral training program and individual research plans in relation to the learning outcomes for qualification at PRK/PQF level 8, and their implementation,
- the methods for verifying the learning outcomes at PRK/PQF level 8,
- the qualifications of academic teachers or researchers involved in doctoral education,
- the quality of the recruitment process,
- the quality of academic supervision and support in conducting research activities,
- the reliability of the mid-term evaluation process,
- internationalization,
- the effectiveness of doctoral training,
- the institution's cooperation with the doctoral student council.

The prepared descriptions used to assess compliance with the above criteria were complete and thorough, although in some parts they were rather general and formulaic. To some extent, this can be explained by the limitation on text length given by the reporting system.

All criteria were positively assessed by the evaluating committee. No significant shortcomings or deficiencies were identified. Recommendations supporting the further development of the DS were formulated in the detailed evaluation of each criterion.

At a general level, the activities of the DS UEP can be assessed positively. The school provides solid organizational and academic support for doctoral candidates and operates in accordance with current academic and formal standards. From the perspective of strategic development, however, it is recommended that the DS engages in a deeper reflection on its identity—its unique profile, mission, and role within the university structure and the national system of doctoral education. Clearly defining the school's identity could enhance its visibility, help attract candidates with a suitable academic profile, and support the development of a coherent vision for building the next generation of researchers. One recommended direction for further development is the introduction of industrial PhD programs. Such an initiative would not only increase the attractiveness of the school's educational offering but also strengthen the practical relevance of the research conducted. In this context, it is also important to deepen cooperation with industry, the business sector, and the broader socio-economic environment. Developing external partnerships could lead to better alignment of research topics with current market challenges and increase the university's impact on innovation.

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

Chapter 3 of the Self-assessment report outlines the framework of cooperation between doctoral schools, the university, and the doctoral student government, focusing on its practical aspects. The legal basis for this collaboration is provided by internal regulations and statutes. The doctoral student government holds significant competencies, such as giving opinions on education programs, co-developing the doctoral school's regulations, and representing the interests of the doctoral community. A key element enabling the student government's operations is the possession of a budget by the university's representative body, which allows it to undertake and carry out statutory activities. It is gratifying to note that the university allocates funds for the functioning of the student government.

Among the main benefits of the cooperation between the DS and the Doctoral student government at UEP, the strengthening of dialogue and transparency of actions is highlighted. The direct involvement of the student government in decision-making processes facilitates the exchange of information between doctoral students and the university authorities, which in turn leads to better consideration of their needs in educational programs and regulations, ultimately contributing to the improvement of education quality. Another advantage is the activation of the doctoral community - the autonomy of the student government promotes initiative and creativity, and participation in institutional decision-making fosters a sense of agency and responsibility among doctoral students, which may increase their motivation for academic and organizational activities.

The collaboration also enables flexible adaptation of educational programs to real-world challenges. Through regular consultations with the Student government, the university can continuously adjust teaching content to respond to the changing demands of the labor market and research challenges. A final important aspect is the cultivation of partnership relations—engaging doctoral students in decision-making processes fosters an atmosphere of trust and integrity among all parties, reinforcing the shared pursuit of scientific goals.

However, potential areas for further improvement can also be identified:

- a) Although the Doctoral council provides opinions on various aspects of the functioning of the DS and the university, the report does not specify the extent to which these opinions are binding or taken into account in the university's final decisions. Despite broad engagement, the report lacks information on specific outcomes of the Doctoral student government's initiatives that have led to systemic changes. It would be advisable to introduce more concrete procedures defining how the university authorities consider the Council's opinions and how these are incorporated into decision-making. Introducing a requirement for justification when the Council's opinion is not taken into account could also be considered.
- b) While the annual amount of PLN 5,000 in funding constitutes support, it may be insufficient to

implement more ambitious initiatives of the Doctoral student government, especially considering the variety of needs and potential projects.

c) It is not indicated whether the Doctoral council conducts regular consultations with the wider doctoral community (e.g., general assemblies, informational meetings, or voting).

d) The report also lacks references to how the Doctoral student government supports international doctoral students, who constitute 15% of the doctoral students' community. At the meeting with the doctoral students, it was stated that they are indeed supported; however, no specific examples were provided.

Despite above remarks, the cooperation between the DS and the Doctoral student government is well-established formally and institutionally. Addressing the above remarks could further enhance the effectiveness of this cooperation, strengthening the voice of doctoral students and their actual influence on the quality of education and the university's operations.

This criterion has been met.

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:**
PRK/PQF level 8 is the highest level of qualification, characterized by advanced knowledge, skills and social competences, allowing for independent scientific research and problem solving. The training program at SD UEP meets these requirements. The education lasts 8 semesters (4 years) and prepares doctoral students to conduct scientific research in two disciplines: economics and finance and management and quality sciences.

The following elements contribute to the positive assessment:

- The educational contents (syllabuses) cover the learning outcomes of PRK/PQF level 8
The required learning outcomes are included in the content of the subjects, which is automatically verified by the coverage matrix. The reliability of the educational process is also based on program improvement through surveys after each semester, the annual university survey, and interviews with doctoral students, the Doctoral Council and supervisors.
- Adequacy of Ph.D. students' research activities with the outcomes of PRK/PQF level 8
Doctoral students develop an Individual Research Plan (IPB) in accordance with a form that takes into account scientific activity and the dissemination of its results, referring to the learning outcomes at PRK 8 level. IPBs are reviewed by the DS Council for compliance with the learning outcomes, and comments are forwarded to the doctoral student and supervisor - the plan is approved by the Council and accepted by the rector.
- Implementation of the educational program and IPB to achieve the effects of PRK/PQF level 8

The educational program includes basic content (compulsory classes, full-time mode), developing universal skills, and elective classes covering specialty content. Additional activities are directed to the verification of knowledge and skills of formulating a research problem, their innovative solution, defining the purpose and object of research, choosing methods and research tools (doctoral seminar, doctoral student session -1 year, doctoral student conference - 2 year). Verification also includes semester reports and mid-term evaluation. Professional internships are used to improve teaching competence (teaching with inspections or co-teaching).

- Interdisciplinarity of the educational process in order to achieve the results of PRK/PQF level 8

Interdisciplinarity is ensured by compulsory subjects, inaugural lectures, an individual education program with the option of cooperation with another university, the possibility of choosing a second supervisor from another discipline, and international tutoring.

However, there are also areas for potential optimization:

- a) Increasing the share of elective classes of a specialized nature, especially in modern areas of research, such as new products and technologies, artificial intelligence, behavioral aspects;
- b) in the sub-discipline of economics and finance, in terms of specialty lectures, adding a strictly financial subject (not just "financial economics" but, for example, "advanced finance");
- c) in terms of motivating doctoral students, the names of doctoral students and research topics that have received external grants could be made public on the DS website.
- d) the supervisors' database is available on the website by institute, but without any even short information about the specialization of supervisors and contact to them which does not make

it easy for PhD student to choose.

In summary, despite above remarks, the learning process at DS UEP is reliable and in accordance with statutory requirements for qualifications at PRK/PQF level 8, and is also consistent and transparent. The set of learning outcomes includes all the effects stipulated by the regulation of the Ministry of Education in the areas of knowledge, skills and social competencies. The on-site mode of education, the multistage nature of the verification of learning outcomes, the constant and transparent verification of the results of the studies carried out, as well as support for internationalization and support for interdisciplinarity need to be evaluated positively. The verification process is based on transparent procedures for ensuring the quality of the research and education conducted, as well as the selection of lecturers and supervisors. Doctoral students also have a great deal of financial assistance in conducting research, both through internal grants and support in applying for external grants.

Criterion 1 has been met.

- **The method of assessing the learning outcomes for qualifications at level 8 of the PQF:**
The method of verifying learning outcomes for qualifications at PRK/PQF level 8 is described in Section 4.2 of the Self-Evaluation report. The SD UEP employs a multidimensional system for verifying learning outcomes, encompassing both formal course completions and the assessment of doctoral candidates' progress in their scientific work (doctoral candidates are subject to both summative and formative assessments).

Formal methods of verification include mandatory attendance at on-site classes and a system of assessments and examinations for compulsory and elective courses, with specific rules outlined in the course syllabi. Examples of assessment tools used in courses include: written exams, econometric projects, essays, tests, dissertation proposals, article abstracts, and working papers, completion of professional internships involving the delivery or co-delivery of classes (development of teaching competencies).

Verification of progress in scientific work includes:

- Submission of semester progress reports on scientific work, reviewed by supervisors.
- Assessment of doctoral thesis progress conducted each semester by the Director of the Doctoral School.
- Participation in the doctoral session (semester 2), during which knowledge, problem formulation skills, goal definition, and methodological choices are assessed.
- Submission of the Individual Research Plan (IRP) and its implementation, verified based on semester reports. The IRP is evaluated by the Doctoral School Council, which enhances the credibility of the assessment.
- Participation in the doctoral students' conference (semester 4), where research results are presented and article reviews are received (verification of research and communication skills).
- Submission of applications for research grants and international fellowships (optional).
- Timely submission of the doctoral dissertation, which constitutes the final outcome of the educational process and the ultimate verification of learning outcomes at PRK/PQF level 8.

The transparency and reliability of the verification process are emphasized in the report through the accessibility of rules, evaluation of the Individual Research Plan by the Doctoral School Council, transparent selection of the mid-term committee, and the review of changes in rules by various bodies. Reliability is further assessed via quality surveys, analysis of grade distribution, and evaluation of collaboration with the supervisor.

The method of verifying learning outcomes at SD UEP is extensive and aligned with PRK/PQF level 8. The presented description is thorough and comprehensive. However, based on the outlined verification procedures in the report, certain areas for improvement can be proposed: -Strengthening the verification of critical analysis skills and innovative problem-solving abilities. Although the current methods are diverse, they could be complemented by tasks and assessments that directly measure these key PRK/PQF level 8 competencies (K3_U02, K3_U01). For example, more case studies and in-depth research problem analyses requiring synthetic thinking and the proposal of unconventional solutions could be considered.

Additionally, more emphasis could be placed on verifying social competencies such as readiness for critical reflection on one's own contribution to scientific advancement (K3_K01).

- There appears to be limited flexibility in course completion for doctoral students. Allowing only one conditional semester pass may be too restrictive and may not accommodate diverse development paths. More flexible systems could be considered, such as the possibility of individual completion paths in consultation with the supervisor and the Doctoral School Council. The lack of online course formats may limit access to training for students benefiting from academic mobility or those with limited physical availability.
- The report does not indicate the use of feedback mechanisms following exams or assessments, which may hinder doctoral candidates' development.
- Standardizing feedback after each assessment, either in written or oral form, could be considered a good practice.
- Consideration could be given to introducing oral examinations, which, in the absence of final exams, would strengthen the academic competencies of doctoral students. Low response rates in course evaluation surveys are highlighted as an issue in the report. This limits the effectiveness of evaluating and improving teaching methods and learning outcomes verification processes.
- The potential introduction of external reviews of learning outcomes could also be considered in the future.

Criterion 2 of evaluation has been met.

- **Qualification of academic teachers and academic staff employed at the doctoral school:**
Assessment of the qualifications of academic staff involved in doctoral education was based on the following auxiliary criteria:
 - a) The relevance of the academic or artistic achievements, professional accomplishments, and scientific or artistic activities of the staff to the scope of doctoral education being delivered – including the criteria for the selection of teaching staff, such as their academic output, the alignment of their qualifications with the curriculum, the academic discipline they represent, and their declared proficiency in English.
 - b) The quality of actions undertaken to support the professional development of staff, particularly in relation to their role as supervisors or assistant supervisors (including both activities undertaken by individuals and those initiated by the institution running the doctoral school), as well as information on participation in training sessions, internships, conferences, and seminars by academic teachers of the Doctoral School.
 - c) The reliability of measures undertaken by the institution to verify the qualifications of these individuals – including information on classroom observations of academic teachers at the Doctoral School, evaluation surveys completed by doctoral students, and the process of reviewing teaching assignments.

In general terms, the description of the staff qualifications comprehensively covers all relevant assessment areas. However, the presentation remains rather general in some parts. Based on the applicable regulations and the guidelines issued by the National Evaluation Committee (KEN), the following observations may be made:

- (1) The selection of academic staff, as indicated in thereport, takes into account their academic achievements, qualifications, alignment with the profile of the Doctoral School, the discipline represented, and their declared English language proficiency. Detailed information, including academic achievements, is provided in Annex 1 (five staff profiles per discipline represented at the UEP Doctoral School). However, a more in-depth analysis of staff qualifications is lacking, particularly with regard to how their achievements contribute to the learning outcomes of doctoral candidates.
- (2) When assessing the quality of activities undertaken for the professional development of staff, the following points emerge:
 - a) The procedure for appointing supervisors is described only in summary form. The inclusion of specific numerical data – for example, the number of supervisors or the number of joint publications between supervisors and doctoral students – could substantiate evidence of cooperation. It is unclear what is meant by the “milestones” mentioned in this section of the description.
 - b) With regard to staff development, the description notes that training sessions are organised for supervisors and lecturers. However, this statement remains vague, merely indicating that such training is offered within the Doctoral School. While support for research and teaching activities is reportedly provided, the description remains general (e.g., conferences, internships, publications). It could be enhanced by specifying the direction and impact of these initiatives on doctoral students. There is no detailed information on the types of training or courses offered, their impact on the professional development of the staff, how they contribute to the enhancement of their competencies and qualifications, or the benefits to doctoral candidates. The general nature of the description fails to demonstrate how the Doctoral School actively supports the development of supervisory competencies. Although the

section concerning staff development and supervision indicates some organisational efforts by the School, a broader elaboration of these activities is missing.

(3) The DS carries out an evaluation of staff qualifications (academic teachers) during the selection process. It is also noted that staff employed full-time at UEP must meet the Guidelines for the Employment Policy of Academic Teachers at UEP, which should be positively assessed. The verification of the quality and effectiveness of teaching provided by the academic staff follows several stages: (1) Informing lecturers about the teaching model and course delivery in the Doctoral School, (2) Evaluation surveys completed by doctoral students, (3) Classroom observations. However, no information is provided on actions taken in cases of identified deficiencies. Nor are there any details concerning mechanisms for improvement or corrective measures.

In conclusion, the overall assessment of this criterion is positive. Nevertheless, the description submitted for evaluation is succinct and, at times, schematic. It lacks empirical data (e.g., the use of estimates such as “approximately 70%” is a case in point). Although reference is made to examples of good practices, none are actually presented. There are also no specific examples or descriptions illustrating the staff's engagement in doctoral candidate development. The narrative remains general, as evidenced by phrases such as “training is organised,” without specifying the type or nature of the training (not all training offers the same value).

Recommendations:

- Expand the description of the staff's achievements with reference to learning outcomes.
- Supplement empirical data and indicators.
- Indicate specific good practices and examples of cooperation between supervisors and doctoral students.
- Clarify the offer and the impact of training on staff competencies.· Do not use terms without explanation - “milestones” and their application.·
- Consider introducing improvement mechanisms and corrective measures.·
- Highlight the impact of staff work on doctoral students' development (grants, publications, achievements).

Criterion 3 has been met.

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

The recruitment process for doctoral candidates is outlined in Chapter 4 of the Self-assessment report. The process has been designed as competitive, multi-stage, and grounded in clearly defined principles. It is based on published internal legal acts – senate resolutions and rector’s announcements – all of which are made available on the BIP (Public Information Bulletin) website and the school’s official platforms in both Polish and English, ensuring transparency and equal opportunity.

Recruitment consists of several stages:

(1) Registration and document submission: Candidates register electronically and submit required documents.

(2) Formal and substantive assessment: A commission, composed of representatives from individual institutes and the school’s directorate, conducts a two-step verification, evaluating both document completeness and the quality of the doctoral research proposal, publication record, or secured grants.

(3) Qualifying interview: Candidates meeting formal requirements are invited for an interview conducted by the commission, with the proceedings documented in an official record.

(4) Decision-making: The final decision rests with the rector, and recruitment results are publicly announced. Additionally, candidates may appeal the outcome (via a reconsideration request within 14 days or a complaint to the administrative court within 30 days).

The recruitment process stands out for its clarity and multi-dimensional approach, ensuring efficiency and fairness. Transparency is prioritized through advance publication of the recruitment schedule – rules are announced at least five months before the application period – and bilingual documentation (Polish and English language), enabling candidates to thoroughly review requirements. Basing the process on official, publicly accessible documents further reinforces trust in evaluation criteria, eliminating ambiguities. The multi-stage structure (registration, document review, interview) allows for assessment of diverse candidate competencies, from formal eligibility to subject-matter expertise. The commission’s composition – involving representatives from multiple institutes and the directorate – ensures balanced, objective evaluations by incorporating varied perspectives.

An important element of the recruitment process is guarantee equal opportunity for candidates. Accommodating needs of international candidates (online meetings) and individuals with disabilities guarantee adequate and equal conditions for all. Public result announcements and appeal mechanisms underscore procedural fairness.

The program’s competitiveness is evidenced by statistics: 293 applications, 150 interviews conducted, and 92 candidates admitted. These figures reflect the program’s appeal, effective promotion, and a rigorous selection system that successfully identifies candidates best prepared for doctoral studies.

Key challenges that require special attention include:

- a) Frequent modifications to evaluation criteria: Five revisions of recruitment rules across successive cycles may foster unpredictability, complicating candidates' strategic preparation.
- b) Administrative complexity: The multi-layered process (formal and substantive document checks) is perceived as cumbersome and time-consuming, potentially disadvantaging candidates unfamiliar with digital registration systems or complex documentation requirements.

To summarize, the DS's recruitment process is meticulously organized, transparent, and ensures fair competition. Strengths include information accessibility, multi-stage evaluations, and commitment to equal treatment, evidenced by public results and appeal options. The process also accommodates candidates with special needs. However, frequent criterion changes, procedural complexity, and rigid scoring systems highlight areas for future optimization to enhance candidate-friendliness.

Criterion 4 has been met.

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

At the DS UEP, the education model fosters the development of key transversal skills through a mix of structured program elements, individual research, and interdisciplinary initiatives. This model includes:

(1) Enhancing critical thinking:

Students participate in seminars and PhD sessions, requiring them to formulate research problems, critically assess literature, and design methodologies, particularly in year 1 and year 2 PhD sessions and conferences.

(2) Enhancing creativity:

The design of Individual Research Plans (IPB) encourages innovative research questions and methods, often supported through international collaborations, interdisciplinary electives, and individual study programmes.

(3) Taking initiative:

Doctoral students are encouraged to apply for research grants (e.g., NCN Preludium) and participate in international internships. Active participation in academic governance through the Doctoral Students' Council also builds initiative skills.

(4) Developing problem-solving skills:

Students present working papers and draft solutions during PhD conferences and mid-term evaluations, focusing on solving real-world problems in economics, management, and interdisciplinary fields.

(5) Developing skills related to risk assessment and decision-making:

Research design (e.g., during doctoral seminars) teaches students to evaluate risks (methodological limitations, research ethics) and to make informed choices in their projects.

(6) Developing scientific research skills:

Core and elective courses, professional internships (teaching internships), research dissemination at conferences, and publishing activities (including article-based theses) systematically develop research methodology, data analysis, and scientific communication skills.

Based on the Self-assessment report, a SWOT analysis focused on the quality of scientific supervision and support for conducting scientific activities has been conducted, followed by recommendations for improvement.

Strengths of supervision:

- Structured supervisor appointment: A transparent, multi-step process involving the DS Office, DS Council, and Academic Advancement Board ensures qualified, appropriate supervisors.
- Pre-admission collaboration: Many supervisors work with candidates on research proposals during admission, facilitating alignment and early rapport.
- International involvement: engagement with international experts (e.g., Prof. Ivo Bischoff, Prof. Lubor Lacina) and participation in the NAWA STER project enhances quality and global reach.
- Conflict Resolution Mechanisms: clear reporting lines and procedures for supervisor replacement or conflict mediation.
- Research Infrastructure Access: Includes advanced tools (e.g., SPSS, Stata, Atlas.ti), libraries, and specialised labs (e.g., VR/AR Lab).

-Funding and mobility support: grants (e.g., Mini-Grants, Erasmus+) and international research opportunities.

Weaknesses of supervision:

- Limited foreign supervisors: A small percentage of supervisors are still outside Poland, which could limit internationalisation.
- Supervisor training: no formal, regular training program for supervisors on mentoring, supervision best practices, or intercultural competencies.
- Dependence on individual initiative: Much support depends on the supervisor's engagement; there's limited institutional follow-up beyond surveys and semester reports.

Opportunities in supervision:

- Expand supervisor training: introducing mandatory, periodic training or certification on supervision and research ethics.
- Creating peer mentoring networks among doctoral students to complement formal supervision.
- Enhance feedback loop: using aggregated, anonymized survey data to identify high- and low-performing supervisors for targeted improvements.
- Broaden external collaboration: partnering with more international institutions for joint supervision or co-tutelle PhDs.

Threats in supervision:

- Supervisor overload: high-quality supervisors may be overburdened, leading to diluted attention to individual doctoral students.
- Potential drop in quality: supervision quality could stagnate without regular supervisor evaluation or renewal criteria.

Recommendations for improvement:

- (1) Implementation of a supervisor development program that includes mentoring, conflict resolution, diversity, and inclusion training.
- (2) Establishment of KPIs for supervisors that tie continued appointment to engagement level, publication co-authorship with students, and feedback ratings.
- (3) Enhancing international supervision: recruiting more foreign supervisors and promoting dual supervision models.
- (4) Creating a supervisor feedback dashboard: using survey data to offer individualised performance insights to supervisors.
- (5) Launching a supervision contract to define mutual expectations, responsibilities, and communication norms between PhD students and supervisors.

Criterion 5 has been met.

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

All the guidelines of the Regulation of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education on the evaluation of the quality of scientific activity in conducting the mid-term evaluation have been met, in particular:

- Selection of criteria and objective rules for conducting evaluation

The rules for conducting mid-term evaluation are strictly defined in the SD Regulations. The only evaluation criterion is the degree of implementation of the individual research plan (IPB), which the Commission appointed for this purpose evaluates on the basis of the documentation submitted by the doctoral student, and an interview with the doctoral student. The scope of the documentation is detailed. Doctoral students are informed about the principles and role of the mid-term evaluation during meetings with the SD management after admission to SD and several months before the evaluation. The process of evaluating the degree of implementation of the individual research plan (IPB) is clearly described and meets the statutory requirements.

- Composition and powers of the evaluation commission

The composition and powers of the commission are in accordance with the SD regulations (impartiality, specialization, external commission member). The composition is different for each doctoral student, depending on the specifics of the work. Candidates are identified by the SD Director, after appropriate consultation. In the selection of candidates, among other things, reviewer selection support system is used. Internal candidates for committee members may not be employed in the department where the doctoral student's supervisor is employed. The directorate of the SD organizes an informational meeting with the chairs each time, which may also be attended by other committee members. The purpose is to familiarize the committee members with the rules in force at UEP for conducting the mid-term evaluation.

- Deadline for conducting the mid-term evaluation

It is strictly defined in the SD Regulations and scrupulously observed (end of the 4th semester of education). Members from outside UEP can participate remotely in the interview with the doctoral student, other members of the committee and the doctoral student attend the meeting on site. The evaluation is adopted by resolution in an open vote, and the chairman prepares the minutes of the committee meeting. The report did not show only how to deal with objections to the evaluation results, but this was probably due to the fact that out of 52 mid-term evaluations carried out in SD UEP, only in one case the evaluation was negative (in 2023). The Commission gives a negative evaluation in cases where the IPB is not implemented on time and there is a high risk that the dissertation will not be completed on time - in cases where the delays are insignificant and the doctoral student has explained the reasons for them, the Commission can also give a positive evaluation.

- Reliability of actions taken by the subject to improve the evaluation process.

SD is taking measures to contribute to the improvement of the process, e.g. in 2024, changes were made to the schedule to accelerate the correction session for 2nd year doctoral students in order to improve the process of the flow of documents to the mid-term committees.

In conclusion, given the very good implementation of the IPB by doctoral students in the period under review (overwhelming acceptance of the IPB), a positive assessment of the efficiency of the first half of the educational process can be formulated. In terms of procedures, both the objective and impartial way of selecting the composition of the Commission following a multi-stage process, as well as the unambiguity and transparency of the evaluation process should

be evaluated positively. In the future, consideration may be given to including foreign experts in the mid-term evaluation process. In addition, the SD website lists the composition of the committees for individual doctoral students, but there is no title of the dissertations, which could be supplemented

Criterion 6 has been met.

- **Internationalisation:**

Based on the self-assessment report of the DS UEP we have drawn out a SWOT analysis specifically focused on the school's internationalisation dimension.

Strengths of internationalization:

-English-language curriculum: Since 2020/2021, all doctoral courses have been taught entirely in English, making the programme accessible to international candidates and fostering an international academic environment. [In the 2023/2024 academic year, four foreign lecturers taught classes, with a total of 42 teaching hours, accounting for approximately 10% of the programme of studies .

-Active international advisory board: This diverse board, with 12 members from 11 foreign universities in 8 countries, contributes widely to the curriculum assessment, doctoral supervision, and tutoring.

-Global academic involvement: Staff regularly engage in international conferences, publish with foreign collaborators, and host foreign professors for specialised workshops.[Number of Doctoral Students Employed by the institution running the doctoral school as academic teachers or research staff – 10, A key criterion for selecting academic staff is international engagement]

-NAWA STER Programme: Provides structured support for international research internships and foreign academic tutoring, and increases thesis outputs in English.

-Growing international enrollment: Steady rise in international PhD applicants and admissions, with foreign students making up over 25% of the 2024/25 cohort.

-Supportive infrastructure for foreign students: Dual-language communication, onboarding materials, and detailed online resources for international life and study at DS.

-Workshops and transferable skills training: Each semester includes structured workshops and lectures that promote skills like research design, academic writing, publication, and public speaking. These are integrated into the curriculum and offered in formats accessible to all students.

-Inauguration lecture and annual conference: Every academic year begins with a formal inauguration lecture, and by the 4th semester, doctoral students participate in the DS conference, where they present their research articles.

-Research proposal showcases: During the second semester, students present the concept of their doctoral dissertations in a formal setting as part of the "Planning Research Projects" course. This acts as a form of internal showcase for ongoing doctoral work.

-Online information and open meetings for candidates: The school also holds online meetings with prospective candidates, responds actively to inquiries through email, the recruitment portal, and direct contact, and promotes itself at international education fairs (e.g., Study in Europe week).

-Online library and digital access : Doctoral students are entitled to use the university's library collections. They are given access to use educational platforms like Moodle and MS Teams for course delivery and research collaboration. Additionally, training is provided to ensure students can effectively use these resources and tools. Students can access their academic progress and documentation using the University's ICT platforms. Moreover, they are given access to utilise digital tools for research, such as: SPSS, Stata, Statistica, OXMetrics, Atlas.ti, Microsoft Office 365, MS Azure

Weaknesses of internationalization:

- Limited international faculty involvement: Despite efforts, only 10% of course hours were delivered by foreign academics in 2023/2024.
- Few international research collaborations: The number of research projects involving foreign institutions or co-authors remains relatively low.
- Onboarding gaps: An internal review noted a critical gap in the lack of formalised onboarding support post-admission for international students.

Opportunities in the area of internationalization:

- Expanding co-tutelle agreements: Growing interest and groundwork in appointing international co-supervisors and initiating joint PhD programmes present a valuable expansion path [PhD programme where a research candidate is jointly enrolled at two universities and spends time at each university].
- Leveraging international platforms: Enhanced use of platforms like FindAPhD and international fairs can continue boosting visibility and applications.
- Global research networks: Participation in EU doctoral education initiatives (e.g., EUA-CDE) can help integrate doctoral candidates into broader research networks.
- Conferences: Stronger students' participation at international conferences.
- Research clusters: present significant opportunities for PhD candidates, especially in fostering interdisciplinary collaboration, enhancing industry engagement, and improving career trajectories.

PhD students often benefit from participating in research clusters through increased exposure to interdisciplinary networks and entrepreneurial ecosystems. Collaborative doctoral programs, often embedded in research clusters, can bridge academia and industry, offering real-world problem-solving experiences. These structures are starting to replace traditional academic-only Ph.d. models. Research clusters and university-industry partnerships contribute to stronger academic publication records and sustained collaborations throughout a researcher's career.

Threats in the area of internationalisation:

- Global competition for talent: competing internationally for top-tier doctoral candidates and foreign lecturers may be challenging without increased financial and institutional incentives.
- Visa and mobility barriers: External political or administrative hurdles (e.g., visa delays) could hinder efforts to attract and retain international students or visiting professors.
- Overdependence on project funding: Internationalisation efforts heavily rely on externally funded projects (e.g., NAWA STER), which may not guarantee long-term sustainability.

Recommendations for enhancing internationalisation:

- Expand long-term International research collaboration
- Many top institutions emphasise sustained international research collaboration beyond student mobility. For example, Portuguese universities integrate international co-authorship

and research partnerships directly into doctoral progress metrics, encouraging international publications and joint supervision arrangements.

Recommendation: Embed international co-supervision or co-publication targets within the Individual Research Plan (IPB) framework and extend the co-tutelle model to more doctoral candidates.

-Develop institutional alliances for joint doctorates

European doctoral programs are increasingly forming joint doctoral training networks, like the EU-funded Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions, where doctoral students are co-hosted by multiple universities, creating mobility pathways and shared research supervision.

Recommendation: Pursue ERASMUS+ or Horizon Europe partnerships to establish joint PhD tracks, enabling students to conduct research across institutions and earn joint degrees.

-Professional development for supervisors on global best practices

Outstanding universities have found success by investing in professional development for doctoral supervisors.

Recommendation: Institutionalise supervisor training modules focused on international research mentorship, supported by input from the International Advisory Board.

-Strengthen international student onboarding and alumni tracking

The OECD notes that effective onboarding for international students significantly affects retention and post-graduation impact. Structured support from arrival to job market preparation fosters community integration and institutional reputation.

Recommendation: Create a multilingual onboarding guide and alumni tracking platform to support long-term engagement with international students and showcase global graduate outcomes.

-Strategic international branding

Participating in initiatives like EUA-CDE or EFMD-accredited networks enhances visibility and integrates doctoral schools into trusted global consortia.

Recommendation: Actively contribute to European doctoral forums and showcase the DSI's unique value proposition through webinars and global platforms like FindAPhD or EURAXESS.

Public webinars or open days:

Recommendation: Hosting online open days with Q&A sessions involving current students and supervisors could make the program more tangible for prospective applicants.

Showcase events featuring alumni:

Recommendation: Adding public presentations by alumni or current PhD students for an external audience could boost interest and credibility internationally.

Research clusters and university-industry partnerships

Recommendation: This presents significant opportunities for PhD candidates, especially in fostering interdisciplinary collaboration, enhancing industry engagement, and improving career trajectories. Students involved in external collaborations during their doctoral studies believed these experiences enhanced their career prospects. Collaborative doctoral programs, often embedded in research clusters, can bridge academia and industry, offering real-world problem-solving experiences. These structures are replacing traditional academic-only PhD models.

Criterion 7 has been met.

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

The education program has been designed based on key principles, with the primary objective of achieving learning outcomes aligned with the requirements of Level 8 of PRK/PQF. The entire cycle lasts eight semesters and is divided into two distinct stages. The first stage, spanning two semesters, focuses on mandatory courses in foundational disciplines such as economics, finance, management and quality sciences, as well as an introduction to research methodology. The second stage, beginning in the third semester, centers on developing an Individual Research Plan (IPB) and fostering academic mobility, which constitutes a crucial element of preparation for the doctoral dissertation in subsequent semesters. All curricular content and syllabi are rigorously aligned with Level 8 PRK/PQF learning outcomes, as evidenced by the publicly accessible coverage matrix. This ensures that doctoral candidates systematically acquire competencies that meet contemporary educational standards. The clear linkage between courses and required outcomes not only maintains program coherence but also ensures transparency, enabling participants to strategically plan their academic and research development paths.

The evaluation and monitoring process relies on comprehensive mechanisms to track doctoral candidates' progress. A key component is the mid-term evaluation, a pivotal tool for verifying learning outcomes. Data from the latest cycle shows that 51 candidates received positive results, while only one case required corrective measures. This outcome underscores both the effectiveness of the educational process and the relevance of the verification methods employed. Additionally, the program implements systematic progress checks through mandatory semesterly scientific reports submitted by candidates. IPBs undergo detailed review by the Doctoral School Council, and feedback from this process allows for program adjustments tailored to participants' needs. This approach enables prompt responses to challenges and continuous refinement of the educational system, enhancing its quality and flexibility. It also promotes personalized development paths, aligning activities with candidates' individual research goals.

The program's strengths significantly bolster its quality and efficacy. Foremost is its coherent and logically structured framework, where each stage—from theoretical knowledge acquisition to practical research skill development—addresses specific candidate needs. This gradual progression ensures a seamless transition from foundational concepts to advanced scientific projects. Another advantage is the transparency of educational materials: public access to syllabi, learning outcome coverage matrices, and other resources allows candidates to thoroughly review requirements, fostering trust in the program and facilitating personalized academic planning. Furthermore, evaluation results—51 positive assessments against one negative—confirm the high effectiveness of monitoring mechanisms, validating the verification methods and the program's tangible impact on participants' growth.

Despite its strengths, the document identifies areas for potential improvement. One is expanding elective offerings, particularly interdisciplinary modules. Introducing such courses could enrich candidates' competencies, enhancing their flexibility in research design and encouraging innovative integration of perspectives across fields. While these changes require

additional resources, they hold the potential to further align the program with the dynamic demands of the scientific community.

Chapter 8 highlights the program's high effectiveness in achieving its intended learning outcomes. The eight-semester program, grounded in strict alignment of content with Level 8 PRK/PQF expectations, demonstrates excellent results—evidenced by the high rate of positive mid-term evaluations. A robust evaluation system, based on report analysis, consultations, and syllabus updates, ensures continuous improvement and adaptation to evolving academic needs. Though expanding interdisciplinary offerings could further enhance the program, the current structure already exhibits high efficiency and readiness to meet future demands of modern doctoral education.

V. FINAL OPINION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Doctoral School UEP met all the criteria identified in the evaluation process, which were positively assessed by the evaluation team. Detailed information is presented in the individual sections of the preliminary evaluation report. The comments and shortcomings identified do not interfere with the overall functioning of the UEP Doctoral School. The evaluation team presented recommendations on how to use these comments and shortcomings to improve the quality of the education process at the UEP Doctoral School. The members of the Team unanimously agreed that the doctoral education process at the UEP Doctoral School deserves a positive assessment. It is characterized by consistent organization, a high level of expertise, and the strong commitment of the academic staff, which is conducive to the implementation of research projects and the comprehensive development of young scientists. The Evaluation Team recommends that the next evaluation of the Doctoral School run by the UEP be carried out in six years, in accordance with Article 259(2) of the Act on Higher Education and Science of July 20, 2018 (Journal of Laws of 2024, item 1571, as amended).

VI. ASSESSMENT AND REASON

Final assessment
positive

Reason:

After reviewing the self-assessment report of the Doctoral School of the Poznań University of Economics, the evaluation team unanimously concluded that the doctoral education process is running smoothly. The identified shortcomings and comments do not affect the functioning of the institution. The recommendations provided by the Evaluation Team may be used to improve the quality of the education process at the SD UEP. The visit to the institution was conducted in a professional and high-quality manner. It allowed for the clarification of doubts and the supplementation of issues subject to evaluation.

The Team members unanimously agreed that the doctoral education process at the Doctoral School of the Poznań University of Economics deserves a positive assessment. It is distinguished by its consistent organization, high level of expertise, and strong commitment of the academic staff, which is beneficial for conducting scientific research and the comprehensive development of young researchers. All criteria subject to evaluation were met.

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