4eu+ EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY ALLIANCE

Doctorates in 4EU+ Alliance member Universities

Admission, structure of studies and graduation processes

June 2026

Creating 4EU+ environment for PhD candidates

Task 3.3 – 1CORE Erasmus+ European Universities Project – Grant agreement 1010898226

Table of contents

TABLE OF CONTENTS 2

INTRODUCTION 5

About the Erasmus+ 1CORE Project 5

Doctorates in 4EU+ Alliance member Universities 6

CHARLES UNIVERSITY 8

Admission 8

Duration 8

Studying 9

Graduation 9

Link(s) 10

HEIDELBERG UNIVERSITY 11

Admission 11

Duration 13

Studying 13

Graduation 15

Link(s) 15

PARIS-PANTHÉON-ASSAS UNIVERSITY 16

Admission **16**

Duration **17**

Studying **17**

Graduation **18**

Link(s) **18**

SORBONNE UNIVERSITY 19

Admission **19**

Duration **19**

Studying **20**

Graduation **21**

Link(s) **21**

UNIVERSITY OF COPENHAGEN 22

Admission **22**

Duration **23**

Studying **23**

Graduation **24**

Link(s) **26**

UNIVERSITY OF GENEVA 27

Admission **27**

Duration **27**

Studying **28**

Graduation **29**

Link(s) **29**

UNIVERSITY OF MILAN 30

Admission **30**

Studying **31**

Graduation **32**

Link(s) **33**

UNIVERSITY OF WARSAW 34

Admission **34**

Duration **35**

Studying **35**

Graduation **36**

Link(s) **36**

Introduction

About the Erasmus+ 1CORE Project

The present document disseminates the results of a mapping carried out in the context of the Erasmus+ 1CORE project, WP3 – 4EU+ Flagships: research-based education, Task 3.3 – Creating 4EU+ environment for PhD candidates.

The Erasmus+ European Universities Project 1CORE (One Comprehensive Research-Intensive European University) supports the 4EU+ Alliance's ambition to create an integrated European University that seamlessly connects its member institutions, in the context of the European Universities Initiate. In the 1CORE project, the 4EU+ Alliance focuses on consolidating a model of a comprehensive, research-intensive European University based on a common multi- and interdisciplinary educational offer, research-based, innovative pedagogies and enhanced physical and virtual mobility.

Doctorates in 4EU+ Alliance member Universities

Creating 4EU+ environment for PhD candidates

This document summarises the results of an internal mapping aimed at collecting essential information on doctorates at universities members of the 4EU+ European University Alliance – regarding the admission process, the duration and organisation of studies, and the graduation exam. As such, it is intended as a tool that can meet a twofold aim:

- Provide an understanding of the organisation of PhD studies in the mapped universities for the purpose of facilitating cooperation among administrative services that provide support for international cooperation.
- Serve as an orientation map for prospective PhD candidates seeking a primary understanding of what it means to be a doctoral candidate at the mapped universities.

The document is organised into information sheets dedicated to each of the eight 4EU+ Alliance's Universities: Charles University, Heidelberg University, Paris-Panthéon-Assas University, Sorbonne University, University of Copenhagen, University of Geneva, University of Milan and University of Warsaw. For each University, readers can find an overview of the following aspects:

- **Admission**

  Requirements for admission

  How to apply

  Selection process

  Starting dates

- **Duration**

  Standard duration

  Average duration

  Maximum duration/extensions

- **Studying**

Doctoral school(s)

Types of doctorates (if applicable)

Availability of scholarships/salaries

Part-time enrolment

- **Graduation**

Final exam

Qualification awarded

Link(s)

How to read this document

All information provided in the present document is updated as of the end of July 2026. The present document should not be used as a tool to find punctual information on how PhD candidates are expected to apply and navigate their studies. Rather, it is intended as a guidance document providing a first general overview of the organisation of doctoral studies in each of the 4EU+ Alliance universities. Links to webpages of the universities' websites dedicated to doctoral studies are provided for each university. Prospective candidates are invited to consult these webpages for up-to-date information.

Charles University

Admission

Requirements for admission

Diploma of completed Master's Degree.

How to apply

Submission of an electronic application, payment of application fee (around 40 euros), verification of professional competence and language skills. Submission of the electronic application form for study is usually by 30th of April, in some cases also by 30th of November.

Selection process

The admission procedure varies considerably from programme to programme. Everything is described in the terms of the admission procedure. It is usually an oral exam about the topic of dissertation and overview of the given research discipline. The applicant will receive an invitation in advance with specific instructions. The admission procedure can take place online (based on application). The results are known approx. six weeks after the application submission deadline (usually 30 April).

Starting dates

Usually in October, some programmes can also be started in March or April.

Duration

Standard duration

Standard duration is 4 years, with some programmes lasting 3.

Average duration

On average it takes 6 years to complete the doctorate.

Maximum duration/extensions

Maximum duration is 8 years, that can be extended in exceptional cases (such as health reasons, parenthood).

Studying

Doctoral school(s)

Charles University does not have a doctoral school, but an umbrella activity on rectorate level called Doctoral Study Hub, which aims to provide primarily soft skills courses for doctoral students.

Types of doctorates (if applicable)

There aren't different types of doctorates.

Availability of scholarships/salaries

Full-time students are entitled to a doctoral study income of at least 1.2 times the minimum wage (currently approx. 1000 euros per month), during the standard period of study. The doctoral study income can consist of a scholarship, salary or a combination of both.

Part-time enrolment

Most doctoral study programs allow for "combined form study". Part-time students are not eligible for a doctoral scholarship.

Graduation

Final exam

Studies are completed with the defence of a dissertation. The "state doctoral examination" consists of defending a dissertation. This is the last study obligation. The examination is held before a committee. Before the defence, two opponent's reports are prepared for the dissertation.

The dissertation may take the form of a monograph, a collection of works, or a combination of both. The student has one retake.

Qualification awarded

Academic Degree of Doctor.

Link(s)

https://phd.cuni.cz/PHDEN-15.html

https://is.cuni.cz/studium/eng/prijimacky/index.php?do=obory

https://cuni.cz/UKEN-999.html

Heidelberg University

Admission

Requirements for admission

Completion of one of the following university degrees with very good or good results:

- Master
- Magister
- Diplom
- Staatsexamen
- an equivalent university degree from a German or foreign university.

Cases in which one of the above degrees has not been completed or the research field of the doctoral training differs significantly from the degree earned will be decided on an individual basis.

How to apply

Each of the thirteen academic faculties at Heidelberg University independently regulates and oversees doctoral training, assuming responsibility for the admission and registration of its respective doctoral candidates. The specific formal procedures required are determined by whether the candidate pursues individual doctoral training or participates in a structured doctoral program.

The general steps for commencing doctoral training are as follows:

1. Finding a supervisor

Every doctoral candidate at Heidelberg University must secure an academic supervisor who provides guidance and support in selecting a research topic and methodology, planning the

project, drafting and revising the dissertation, and pursuing additional professional skills and qualifications. The academic supervisor may be a professor, associate professor, or junior group leader within the relevant subject area.

2. Doctoral Agreement

Within the doctoral agreement, the supervisor and the doctoral candidate establish the framework for the doctoral project, including the project duration, reporting schedule, resources to be provided, and any supplementary qualifications the candidate is expected to obtain.

3. Registration in heiDOCS

Heidelberg University has developed a web portal for doctoral candidates, known as heiDOCS, which initiates the registration process and serves as a resource throughout the duration of the doctoral studies. The portal also provides information regarding services available to doctoral candidates. Prior to submitting an application to the faculty, candidates must register in the heiDOCS portal and create an online doctoral file.

4. Application for Admission as a Doctoral Researcher to the Faculty

The doctoral candidate must apply for admission to the relevant faculty. Final admission is granted in writing, through the so-called “Annahme als Doktorand” (letter of admission). The faculty admission represents the permission for the doctoral candidate to pursue the planned doctoral project within the faculty as well as the faculty’s commitment to support the candidate’s doctoral training. This admission is valid for a limited period, generally between three and five years, depending on the faculty. If doctoral training is not completed within this period, the candidate must apply for an extension of the faculty admission.

5. Admission and Enrolment to the University

Enrolment as a doctoral candidate at Heidelberg University is a legal requirement for all doctoral candidates in Baden-Württemberg. Immediately upon receiving faculty admission, the candidate must complete the two-step process of admission and enrolment at the university. enrolment must be maintained throughout the entire period of doctoral training, until the successful completion of the thesis defence. There is one exemption from mandatory enrolment: Doctoral candidates who have an employment contract of 50% or more of the regular working hours with

Heidelberg University, the Heidelberg University Hospital or the University Medical Centre Mannheim can apply to be exempted from mandatory enrolment.

Selection process

During the selection process, the faculty's doctoral committee reviews the candidate's previous academic qualifications and proposed doctoral project to ensure compliance with the faculty's requirements. Should the candidate's previous academic degree not be equivalent to a German qualification, or if the doctoral studies are to be undertaken in a field different from previous studies, the doctoral committee may require additional coursework or examinations prior to granting admission.

Starting dates

Date of admission to the Faculty.

Duration

Standard duration

3-5 years.

Average duration

3-5 years.

Maximum duration/extensions

Admission is valid for a limited period (usually 3-5 years). If the doctorate is not completed within this time, the candidate must apply for an extension.

Studying

Doctoral school(s)

There are currently more than 40 structured doctoral programs involving different levels and varying elements of structured doctoral training at Heidelberg University. Structured programs have been established predominantly in the natural and life sciences; however, their numbers are

also increasing in the humanities, social sciences and law, where the traditional model has been individual doctoral training.

In Heidelberg, there are three different forms of structured doctoral programs:

(i) Graduate Schools (Graduiertenschulen) – large facilities with 150–300 doctoral candidates covering a wide range of research fields.

(ii) Research Training Groups (Graduiertenkollegs) – medium-sized groups with 15–50 doctoral candidates. The individual dissertation topics often come from a variety of research fields and faculties but are all focused within a defined topic area.

(iii) Research Training Groups (Promotionskollegs) – small groups with five to seven doctoral candidates covering very specific research questions.

Types of doctorates (if applicable)

- Individual doctoral training.
- Structured doctoral program.

Availability of scholarships/salaries

The funding available for doctoral training varies greatly according to research field and doctoral supervisor. While it is common in the natural sciences, life sciences and engineering for doctoral candidates to have an employment contract provided by the doctoral supervisor/research group, this is much less common in the humanities and social sciences. A typical employment contract varies between 50% and 75% of the normal working hours at the salary level TV-L 13 (approximately 29,000 to 43,000 Euro per year). Heidelberg University provides individual doctoral fellowships within the Landesgraduiertenförderung (LGF) program for a duration of up to 3 years.

Fellowships are also available from external funding organisations. It is the responsibility of doctoral candidates themselves to find and secure doctoral fellowships.

Part-time enrolment

Part-time enrollment is not possible for doctoral candidates. A reduced time commitment is subject to an individual agreement between the doctoral candidate and the supervisor.

Graduation

Final exam

The successful conclusion of doctoral training involves:

• The submission of the doctoral dissertation (either as a monograph or as a cumulative dissertation, depending on the regulations of the relevant faculty) to the faculty

• The review and evaluation of the written dissertation by at least two evaluators. One of these evaluators is the primary supervisor of the doctoral candidate

• An oral thesis defence held in front of a group of evaluators, one of whom must be the primary supervisor of the doctoral candidate.

The regulations governing the structure of the dissertation, the evaluation of the dissertation and the structure and evaluation of the thesis defence vary significantly among the faculties.

Qualification awarded

• Dr. Phil. – Faculty of Philosophy, Faculty of Modern Languages, Faculty of Behavioural and Cultural Studies, Faculty of Chemistry and Geosciences for the discipline of Geography

• Dr. rer. nat. – Faculty of Biosciences, Faculty of Mathematics and Computer Science, Faculty of Physics and Astronomy, Faculty of Chemistry and Geosciences

• Dr. iur. – Faculty of Law

• Dr. med., Dr. med.dent., Dr. sc.hum. – Faculties of Medicine

• Dr. rer.pol. – Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences

• Dr. theol. – Faculty of Theology

• Dr. ing. – Faculty of Engineering Sciences

Link(s)

https://www.graduateacademy.uni-heidelberg.de/promovieren/index_en.html

https://www.uni-heidelberg.de/de/doktorandinnen

Paris-Panthéon-Assas University

Admission

Requirements for admission

A Master's degree (or an equivalent diploma giving the grade of "master"). The university delivers doctorates in law, political science, economics, management, information and communication sciences, and computer science.

How to apply

Candidates must first find a thesis supervisor (consulting the list of academic staff). The application is then submitted online via the ADUM platform, where candidates upload required documents (master's diploma and transcripts, ID/passport copy, CV, motivation letter to the doctoral school director, supervisor's acceptance form, and a photo). Once the application is accepted, candidates complete the administrative registration online (via IA Web Primo for new students or IA Web Reins for returning students), pay the registration fees and the CVEC contribution, and upload supporting documents (payment receipt, CVEC certificate, ID photo, Journée Défense et Citoyenneté certificate if under 25, ADUM account certificate).

Selection process

Applications are reviewed by the relevant doctoral school (one of the five doctoral schools: ED6 Private Law, ED7 Public Law/Political Science "Georges Vedel", ED8 Legal History/Philosophy and Sociology of Law, ED9 International/European/Comparative Law, and EGIC Economics, Management, Information and Communication). Admission is granted by the president of the university on the joint proposal of the supervisor, the head of the research centre and the director of the doctoral school.

Starting dates

Usually in September (start of the academic year). Doctoral candidates must apply each year during the application period (e.g. late August to October for the 2025-2026 cycle)

Duration

Standard duration

3 years (full-time), in line with the French national doctoral framework (Arrêté of 25 May 2016, amended 26 August 2022).

Average duration

On average, doctorates tend to last close to or slightly above the standard 3 years, with variation depending on the discipline.

Maximum duration/extensions

Doctoral registration is renewed annually. Extensions beyond the standard duration are possible on a case-by-case basis (e.g. via a derogatory procedure from the 4th year onwards), following the rules set out in the university's Charte des thèses.

Studying

Doctoral school(s)

Doctoral training is organised through five doctoral schools (Écoles Doctorales): ED6 (Private Law), ED7 "Georges Vedel" (Internal Public Law, Administrative Science and Political Science), ED8 (Legal History, Philosophy of Law and Sociology of Law), ED9 (International Law, European Law, International Relations and Comparative Law), and EGIC/ED455 (Economics, Management, Information and Communication Sciences).

Types of doctorates (if applicable)

Individual doctoral training under the supervision of a thesis director, including the possibility of an international joint supervision (cotutelle internationale de thèse), carried out in collaboration with a partner university abroad, with a single defense and a doctoral degree awarded by both institutions.

Availability of scholarships/salaries

Funding can take the form of doctoral contracts (contrats doctoraux) and other external funding (e.g. CIFRE contracts, research grants, fellowships). A minimum funding level is generally expected for candidates applying with a financed project; candidates can also apply for a doctoral contract through a dedicated competitive process, separate from the doctoral enrolment itself.

Part-time enrolment

Part-time enrolment is possible, in accordance with the general French doctoral framework, with the duration adjusted accordingly under the rules of the doctoral school and the Charte des thèses.

Graduation

Final exam

The thesis is defended publicly before a jury (soutenance), following submission and evaluation of the dissertation by at least two external reviewers (rapporteurs). Defence requests are submitted via the ADUM platform; defences requested after 31 December require a prior re-registration request via ADUM.

Qualification awarded

Doctorat (national doctoral degree, e.g. Doctorat en droit, en science politique, en sciences économiques, en gestion, en sciences de l'information et de la communication, or en informatique, depending on the doctoral school).

Link(s)

https://www.assas-universite.fr/fr/formations/offre-de-formation/doctorats;

https://www.assas-universite.fr/fr/formations/candidatures/inscription-reinscription-en-doctorat;

https://www.assas-universite.fr/fr/recherche/ecoles-doctorales;

https://www.assas-universite.fr/fr/formations/offre-de-formation/doctorats/cotutelle-internationale-de-these

Sorbonne University

Admission

Requirements for admission

Applicants must hold a Master's degree (or equivalent).

How to apply

A distinction should be made between humanities and science disciplines: humanities twice a year –October and May -: Doctoral School Directors' Council to select candidates. In science, engineering, and health: year-round admissions with mandatory funding of at least €2,300. For both humanities and sciences, enrolment takes place on a specific platform called "ADUM."

Selection process

Candidates are selected by the doctoral school based on the evaluation of their application, which includes research experience and a master's degree with good academic results.

Starting dates

September - The establishment of a cotutelle at Sorbonne University can only take place during the first year of the PhD (or before, but not after).

Duration

Standard duration

3 years. Possible extension of the PhD to 4 years with an amendment.

Average duration

Information not available.

Maximum duration/extensions

6 years.

Studying

Doctoral school(s)

Sorbonne's 23 doctoral schools organize the training of doctoral students and prepare them for their professional activity at the end of doctoral training, there are integrated in a College doctoral.

Types of doctorates (if applicable)

There is only one national doctoral degree in the legal and academic sense: the Doctorate (Doctorat), which corresponds to Level 8 of the French National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). It is awarded by accredited higher education institutions following the successful defence of an original doctoral thesis, upon the recommendation of the examination committee.

The thesis is prepared under the supervision of a thesis advisor and may, in accordance with the provisions of the decree of May 25, 2016, be co-supervised. In the context of an international joint supervision arrangement, the doctoral student is placed under the supervision of a thesis advisor in each of the countries involved, with the advisors jointly overseeing the research. A joint supervision arrangement leads, following a single defense, to the awarding of two doctoral degrees, one from each partner institution.

Availability of scholarships/salaries

Funding opportunities are available (doctoral contracts or external funding, with an average gross salary of around €2,300/month).

Part-time enrolment

Possible.

Graduation

Final exam

PhD thesis defense (public defense before a jury).

Qualification awarded

Doctorat.

Link(s)

https://www.sorbonne-universite.fr/profil/doctorant-0

University of Copenhagen

Admission

Requirements for admission

Qualifications equivalent to a Danish two-year master's degree (120 ECTS). The qualifications of applicants who do not hold a two-year master's degree are assessed on a case-by-case basis. At the time of enrolment, the applicant must hold an academically relevant master's degree or be able to document equivalent qualifications.

The PhD programme is not open to candidates who already hold a PhD degree.

How to apply

Admission as a PhD student follows an application to the faculty concerned. Usually in response to a public announcement of a PhD position. As a minimum, all applications must include:

- A description of the planned research project and a preliminary PhD plan with information about a plan for supervision.
- A curriculum vitae with, if relevant, a list of publications
- A copy of the diploma (including, where possible, the number of ECTS)
- An account of the funding, including, where relevant, a budget.
- Each PhD School can decide to stipulate additional requirements for the applications.

Selection process

An assessment committee evaluating all applications received is appointed by the department with which the PhD student will be affiliated. Decisions on admission and enrolment are made by the head of the relevant PhD School upon recommendation from the department appointing the assessment committee. Special emphasis is placed on the following:

- The applicant's documented academic qualifications

- The research project's suitability as a PhD project
- How the project fits into the faculty's academic profile
- Availability of the necessary academic and financial resources.

Applications for enrolment are submitted to the PhD Schools by the department in which the principal supervisor is employed. The department must submit the full application, including any required enclosures, a preliminary PhD plan and the department's recommendation for enrolment to the PhD school. The head of department's approval confirms that the required financing of a full PhD programme is available, including salary costs and funds for study abroad, course fees etc. When the application has been approved by the PhD school, the PhD plan will form the basis of agreement for the approval.

Starting dates

Date of enrolment.

Duration

Standard duration

3 years full-time (from enrolment to PhD submission).

Average duration

Average duration is approximately 3.5 years.

Maximum duration/extensions

No fixed maximum duration. Extensions are given for 6-12 months. Extensions beyond 12 months require valid reasoning such as pregnancy leave, sick-leave etc.

Studying

Doctoral school(s)

PhD programmes at UCPH are organised and administered by the 6 PhD-schools at the individual Faculties. Each PhD School is run by a head of School who is responsible for the programme and

who is assisted by a PhD committee with equal representation of academic staff and PhD students. Each PhD School may run a range of local or inter-institutional research training programmes.

Types of doctorates (if applicable)

Most PhD students are admitted through a) the standardized 5+3 program, which involves three years of full-time PhD studies. In addition, there is the option to pursue b) a flexible combined Master's and PhD track, participate in c) an industrial PhD program, or complete d) a dual degree in collaboration with a foreign university.

Availability of scholarships/salaries

In most cases full employment contracts for the three years of PhD study are required in accordance with a special protocol to the Danish Confederation of Professional Associations' agreement. Depending on the PhD students prior work experience, the annual salary will vary between EUR 55.000 – 67.000, including mandatory pension payments. Similar PhD positions are also awarded by research councils and other public bodies and private foundations, although these are often for major research projects or for dealing with research assignments.

Part-time enrolment

Possible but not common.

Graduation

Final exam

The PhD programme culminates in the submission of a PhD thesis for assessment. The PhD thesis and the public defence are assessed by an assessment committee. A three-member assessment committee is appointed no later than on submission of the PhD thesis. The members must be employed at associate professor or senior researcher level or higher in the relevant subject area. Two of the members must be external researchers, i.e. not employed at UCPH. At least one of the members must be from outside Denmark unless this is deemed not appropriate

from an academic point of view. The third member is usually from the faculty concerned and is appointed by the faculty to chair the committee. Co-authors of articles included in the PhD thesis are not eligible to be on the assessment committee.

The PhD student's supervisors may not be members of the assessment committee, but the principal supervisor will be appointed as an adviser without voting rights. In this capacity, the principal supervisor must answer questions about the PhD programme and the academic progression in the student's research project.

When proposals for the composition of the assessment committee have been submitted to the PhD School, the PhD committee nominates the composition of the assessment committee to the Dean. The PhD student must approve the composition of the committee. All PhD defences at UCPH are public. At the defence, the author is given the opportunity to explain his or her work and defend the PhD thesis before the members of the assessment committee. The PhD thesis must be available to the public in reasonable time before the defence, normally at least two weeks in advance. The entire defence may take a maximum of three hours, including any breaks. The author is given up to 45 minutes to present the main findings of the PhD thesis, and the assessment committee then asks the author questions based on the thesis and the presentation. At the end of the defence, the audience is given the opportunity to ask the author questions based on the thesis and the presentation. The moderator must ensure that the defence proceeds in a dignified manner and may, if necessary, interrupt or prolong the defence. The PhD degree is awarded if the assessment committee submits a recommendation to that effect. The PhD degree is awarded by the Academic Council. If the assessment committee's recommendation is negative, the author has the option, within two weeks of receiving the final written recommendation, to submit comments. The head of the PhD School may decide that the thesis be assessed by a new assessment committee, if requested by the author.

Qualification awarded

Title in Danish: Ph.d.-grad i [a given subject, e.g. Datalogi)/Title in English: PhD degree in [a given subject, e.g. Computer Science].

Link(s)

https://phd.ku.dk/english/

University of Geneva

Admission

Requirements for admission

Recognised Master's degree. Other requirements are defined by each doctoral programme and aligned with the faculties' doctoral study regulations, where applicable.

How to apply

There are no standard application documents. The procedures, application timelines and platforms, documents required, and other requirements vary from one faculty/doctoral programme to another. Some programmes accept applications within specific time windows. Other programmes accept applications year-round.

Selection process

The selection process is defined by each doctoral programme and aligned with the faculties' doctoral study regulations, where applicable.

Starting dates

Depends on the doctoral programmes at each faculty.

Duration

Standard duration

5 years (10 semesters).

Average duration

The average duration corresponds more or less to the standard duration, as extensions are granted only on an exceptional basis (see below). However, every faculty has its own study regulations, so there may be exceptions.

Maximum duration/extensions

Extensions can be granted in principle, based on reasonable grounds (typically in cases of illness, maternity leave, military service, etc.). There are limits to the number of extensions that can be granted (usually once or twice maximum). This depends on faculties' regulations. Doctoral assistantship contracts can be renewed for a maximum of five years: contract extensions cannot be granted beyond this time. However, doctoral candidates may request unfunded extensions.

Studying

Doctoral school(s)

The University of Geneva has 20 doctoral schools, of which 8 are co-finaced with other Swiss universities. They are very diversified in their organisation, scope and activities.

Types of doctorates (if applicable)

Doctoral assistantships funded by the University, doctoral assistantships funded by research projects with external grants.

Availability of scholarships/salaries

There are two types of funded PhDs at UNIGE: doctoral assistantships funded by the University; doctoral assistantships funded by research projects with external grants (e.g. from the Swiss National Science Foundation). Very few competitive scholarships are offered by external bodies (mostly the Swiss government), with varying conditions and levels of coverage. 40% of doctoral candidates at UNIGE are not funded.

Part-time enrolment

Part-time doctoral work may exist as funded doctoral candidates are not all on full-time contracts, and unfunded doctoral candidates may work on the side to fund their studies and life in Geneva. Regardless of the situation, the standard duration of the PhD programme at the University of Geneva is 10 semesters.

Graduation

Final exam

The evaluation criteria are defined by each doctoral programme and aligned with the faculties' doctoral study regulations, where applicable.

Qualification awarded

Doctorat.

Link(s)

https://www.unige.ch/doctorat/une-these/une-these-geneve

University of Milan

Admission

Requirements for admission

Master's degree or academic qualification obtained abroad and declared equivalent or recognised as suitable for access to doctoral studies, to be completed by the date of enrolment. The suitability of the foreign qualification is ascertained by the doctoral selection committee, in compliance with the relevant legislation in force in Italy and in the country where the qualification was awarded and with international treaties and agreements on the recognition of qualifications. All candidates must also provide a level B2 certificate of proficiency in English.

How to apply

Admission into the PhD programme shall take place through a public, competitive selection process that ensures a comparative evaluation of candidates, based on qualifications and examinations, to be completed by the University’s established deadlines. The call for applications also indicates the documents that each candidate must submit: any publications, any other qualifications held by the candidate, one or more letters of reference, if requested.

Selection process

The selection is intended to ascertain the candidates' preparation, skills and aptitude for scientific research and their personal motivation. The selection must be based on the evaluation of the (i) curriculum, (ii) a research project, and (iii) an interview. The curriculum vitae may include the academic career, any publications, any professional experience and other qualifications possessed by the candidate. The research project is a draft of a project on a specific topic proposed by the candidate, but it is not binding in defining the future activities of the doctoral student. The purpose of the interview is to verify the candidate's knowledge on specific topics and to verify his/her skills, scientific profile and motivation.

Starting dates

Usually 1 October or 1 November - other dates can be established according to specific funding schemes.

Duration

Standard duration

Standard duration is 3 years, with some programmes lasting 4.

Average duration

Corresponds to standard duration, with possibility to extend for maximum 1 year.

Maximum duration/extensions

1 year extension can be granted, without further financial support. If a PhD student has needed to request a suspension of their PhD programme (for a maximum period of 6 months) for valid reasons provided for by law, the total duration of the extensions and suspensions, referred to above, may not exceed 18 months. No scholarship or equivalent funding will be paid for the duration of the suspension.

Studying

Doctoral school(s)

One doctoral school that submits proposals, organizes and manages common activities and promotes interdisciplinarity.

Types of doctorates (if applicable)

Doctoral programmes can be instituted in collaboration with other Italian universities and research institutions, international institutions, through a consortium with other universities and research institutions, in cooperation with businesses - including industrial PhDs and advanced-training apprenticeship research doctorates.

Availability of scholarships/salaries

The amount of the scholarship is approximately 1,400.00 euros per month (net salary) for students starting their PhD programme in 2026/2027. The grant is awarded for one year and is renewed on condition that the PhD student is admitted to the following year by the Teaching Board., up to three years. The amount of the scholarship is increased by 50% for any stays abroad for research activities, lasting no less than ten days, authorized by the Teaching Board.

Part-time enrolment

Not possible.

Graduation

Final exam

Three steps process:

1) The dissertation, to which the PhD student must annex a report on all activity undertaken over the course of the PhD programme, and any publications during the same, is submitted by the end of the final year to the Faculty, who will then provide an assessment on the student's research activities. The dissertation, along with the annexed report by the Faculty, shall be submitted to the dissertation committee.

2) The dissertation shall be assessed by a committee of at least two highly qualified instructors, who may be from institutions other than the University, whether in Italy or abroad, or from other entities who are issuing the degree jointly with the University. The dissertation committee members are chosen by the Faculty and shall not sit on the Adjudication Board for the final exam. The dissertation committee issues a detailed written analysis in which they make a recommendation to the Faculty whether to allow the student to defend his or her dissertation at the public session, or to defer such defence for up to six months, should they believe corrections or changes to be in order. Once that six-month deferment has passed, the dissertation shall automatically qualify for public defence, and it must then bear a new written opinion from the same dissertation committee.

3)The public session for the student's dissertation defence shall take place before an Adjudication Board appointed by the Rector, upon motion of the Faculty. The Adjudication Board shall be made up of three members chosen from amongst university professors (at least one of

whom must be first-tier) and researchers with specific expertise in the subject area. At least two Board members must be university faculty who are not part of the PhD programme and shall not be members of the Faculty. At the end of the dissertation defence, the Board, providing a written, detailed report on the same issued following a discussion and vote by the Board, shall accept or reject the dissertation presented by the PhD Candidate. The exam is administered on a pass/fail basis. Should the dissertation contain findings of high scientific value, the Board, pursuant to unanimous vote, may confer the degree with honours. The dissertation defence is public, as is the notice of the Board's official findings.

Qualification awarded

Dottore di ricerca/Doctor of Philosophy. The University may, upon the PhD candidate's request and with the Faculty's approval, issue a "Doctor Europaeus" certification in addition to the Italian PhD degree if a period abroad of at least 3 months has been spent, the thesis reviewers are foreigners and the thesis discussion is done in English, with a final evaluation panel of foreign professors.

Link(s)

https://www.unimi.it/en/study/postgraduate-study/doctoral-research-phd-programmes

University of Warsaw

Admission

Requirements for admission

Completion of the long-cycle Master's degree programme or second-cycle programme or an equivalent diploma.

How to apply

Candidates shall submit the application for admission to the doctoral school on: https://irk.uw.edu.pl/en-gb/. It shall include:

- scan of a diploma of completion of the long-cycle Master's degree programme or second-cycle programme or an equivalent diploma;
- a description of the initial research project proposal together with the title and the bibliography;
- a resumé or CV containing information about scientific activities;
- scans of materials confirming scientific activities;
- declaration about the command of English;
- a scan of the declaration of the supervisor candidate;
- a photograph.

Selection process

The main selection process takes place once a year during the spring. It is usually a two-stage process:

- Stage I: evaluation of the research project and scientific activities of the candidate;
- Stage II: interview.

Candidates who score at least 50% points in Stage I and are within twice the limit of places in a given discipline will be invited to participate in an interview in Stage II. Obtaining at least 50 out

100 points in the entire qualification proceedings, including at least 50% points in the Stage I and at least 50% points from the Stage II, is the condition of admission.

In the case of the Doctoral School of Exact and Natural Sciences it is a one-stage process which includes: evaluation of the research project and scientific activities of the candidate; an interview, qualification examination. The condition of admission is obtaining at least 50 out of 100 points in the entire qualification proceedings.

Starting dates

Usually 1° October.

Duration

Standard duration

4 years.

Average duration

4-6 years.

Maximum duration/extensions

6 years.

Studying

Doctoral school(s)

There are 4 doctoral schools which are mainly responsible for the doctoral education at the University.

Types of doctorates (if applicable)

General doctorates, doctorates funded within research grants, industrial doctorates, co-tutelle, extramural mode.

Availability of scholarships/salaries

All doctoral students who do not hold a doctoral degree receive a scholarship. As of 2026 the scholarship amounts to PLN 4346 before the mid-term evaluation (first two years) and PLN 5500,50 after the mid-term evaluation. The total period of receiving the doctoral scholarship cannot exceed four years. The supplement for persons with disabilities amounts to PLN 1071,15.

Part-time enrolment

Not possible.

Graduation

Final exam

Submission of dissertation to the chairperson of the appropriate academic council. Each academic council sets the rules for taking 1 or 2 exams in a specific discipline. If at least two reviews of the doctoral dissertation contain positive conclusions and the candidate has obtained a positive grade on the doctoral examination, the doctoral committee decides on admission to defence, part of which is public.

Qualification awarded

Doktor/Doctor of Philosophy

Link(s)

https://szkolydoktorskie.uw.edu.pl/en/

4eu+

GROWING TOGETHER

4EU+ European University Alliance

secretariat@4euplus.eu

www.4euplus.eu

Univerzita Karlova · Universität Heidelberg Zukunft seit 1386 · Panthéon-Assas Université Paris · Sorbonne Université

Københavns Universitet · Université de Genève · Università degli Studi di Milano · Uniwersytet Warszawski

Co-funded by the European Union

Co-funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Commission. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.