

# **Quality assurance requirements at the University of Szeged (SZTE) School of Theoretical Medicine (EODI)**

February 20, 2023

## **1. EODI's Quality Assurance Requirements Related to Management and Organization**

### **1.1 Basic principles of the EODI quality assurance plan**

The multi-stage process of obtaining a doctoral degree places high demands on the doctoral candidates participating in it, the teachers and researchers assisting them, and the administrative staff. In order to ensure successful degree completion, the EODI has developed a quality control/quality assurance system that takes into account the specific characteristics of the field of science and covers the entire degree completion process.

In order to ensure the quality indicators of scientific work (publications, conference presentations, dissertations), a number of conditions must be met:

- a) highly qualified and experienced supervisors who are proficient in the given scientific field, as well as committed, motivated students with the appropriate basic training are required,
- b) the existence of scientific workshops of a high professional and technical standard is essential,
- c) furthermore, funded research topics are needed that are at the forefront of today's international scientific research.

In order to obtain a degree, documented theoretical knowledge, high-level research work and publications that meet international standards, as well as a well-rounded dissertation prepared as a synthesis of these, and proven presentation and debating skills during the defence are required.

A sufficient condition for admission to the defence is the publication of the number and classification of publications specified in the Regulations for Doctoral Training and Doctoral Degree Acquisition and in the EODI training plan. Furthermore, it is a necessary condition that the doctoral candidate be able to summarize his or her research results at a high level in his or her dissertation.

- a) The EODI Doctoral Council (=DT) reviews its training and quality assurance plan by January 31 each year to ensure that the necessary changes are made from year to year.
- b) The EODI's annual report is approved by the DT and the subprogram leaders.

The EODI publishes the results of the previous year on its own website (results of PhD students and supervisors, defences, dropout data, changes in supervisors), which can be commented on by the DT, subprogram leaders, supervisors, thesis writers, and doctoral students. They may communicate their opinions to the head of the Doctoral School verbally and in writing, and may make suggestions for changes. All of these are reviewed by the DI subprogram leaders,

c) and the DT shall discuss and take steps to change the processes in question, then incorporate these into its amended training and quality assurance plan.

d) EODI shall publish its quality assurance report for the previous year on its website by February 15 each year and, if necessary, its revised training and quality assurance plan.

## **1.2. EODI quality assurance officer and availability of EODI documents**

### **1.2. a) Name of the quality assurance officer**

The EODI DT entrusts Prof. Dr. László Czakó, university professor (SZTE SZAOK Department of Medicine), with the task of quality assurance officer, who is responsible for the quality assurance of the EODI.

### **1.2. b) Availability of EODI public documents**

The doctoral school's public documents in Hungarian and English (training plan, quality assurance plan, forms) are available on the official EODI website: [http://www.phd.szote.u-szeged.hu/Elmeleti\\_DI.htm](http://www.phd.szote.u-szeged.hu/Elmeleti_DI.htm) and on the doktori.hu website: <https://doktori.hu/index.php?menuid=316&lang=HU>.

### **1.3. a) Students' options for filing complaints**

The EODI provides students with the opportunity to file complaints regarding doctoral training. Students may submit their complaints in writing to the head of the doctoral school or communicate them in person. The EODI DT will act on the complaint within 30 days.

### **1.3. b) Issues concerning student status**

Issues concerning student status are handled by the dean of SZTE SZAOK. Student status is recorded by the doctoral school administrator based on the university's Neptun system.

## **2. EODI quality assurance requirements for instructors**

### **2.1.1. Academic/educational expectations for persons performing teaching and supervisory tasks**

EODI supervisors and teachers must meet the academic and educational requirements based on the MAB and the SZTE Regulations on Doctoral Training and Doctoral Degree Acquisition. This information is publicly available on the website of the National Doctoral Council at [https://doktori.hu/index.php?menuid=191&lang=HU&di\\_ID=144](https://doktori.hu/index.php?menuid=191&lang=HU&di_ID=144).

### **2.2. a) 1. Review of the composition of existing core members and teaching staff**

The EODI reviews the scientific and supervisory activities of its existing core members, supervisors, and instructors on the ODT website annually and makes recommendations for corrections if necessary.

### **2.2. a) 2. Admission requirements for new supervisors**

The EODI DT evaluates the professional background of applicants with academic degrees who have applied to become EODI supervisors/instructors and decides whether to accept their application based on this evaluation. The acceptance of the application is approved by the Doctoral Council of the SZTE. The EODI DT strives to ensure that instructors/researchers who meet the university's habilitation requirements become members of the school, but based on individual assessment, thesis supervisors who only conduct research activities may also be included among the EODI thesis supervisors.

The EODI Council makes it mandatory in a progressive system that, from June 1, 2022, teachers and researchers applying for admission as supervisors researchers applying for admission as supervisors must have at least two English-language, Q1 or Q2-rated first/last author articles (full scientific publications) in the MTMT2 database since their defense.

### **2.2. b) Termination of the supervisor's mandate**

This occurs if the internal supervisor (SZTE institute/clinical employee) terminates their legal relationship with the SZTE, **or if the instructor/supervisor does not meet the publication requirements for two consecutive years and therefore does not have a publicly visible valid page on the doktori.hu website.**

Resignation of the supervisor. After the first academic year, the supervisor may resign from their position without giving a reason and transfer their student to another supervisor; the student may also initiate this without giving a reason. Resignation after one year must be justified and, at the same time, the student must be provided with supervision of an appropriate professional level.

### **2.2. c) Conditions for involving an external supervisor in student supervision**

The condition for involving a new external supervisor is that they have a documented connection with the SZTE and, since their defence, have at least two English-language articles (full scientific publications) classified as Q1 or Q2, of which they are the first or last author.

### **2.2. d) Publication of student evaluations of instructors and their consideration for quality assurance**

The EODI DT provides students with the opportunity to evaluate teaching and research work. They can submit their opinions in writing to the head of the Doctoral School. Due to the nature of student feedback, it must be addressed immediately or during the annual quality assurance review.

## **2.3. Developing the educational environment and supporting teachers in acquiring new knowledge and methodologies - quality assurance**

**2.3. a)** The EODI DT selects the supervisors, teachers, and core members of the Doctoral School in such a way as to ensure that the educational environment and the opportunity for its development are available in the given department or research laboratory.

**2.3. b)** The EODI DT continuously motivates teachers to develop teaching materials and participate in training courses on new teaching techniques and to apply these in their teaching.

### **3. EODI quality assurance in terms of academic requirements**

#### **3.1. a) Review of thesis topics**

Thesis topics are reviewed and revised annually by February 15 of the given year.

#### **3.1. b) Quality-oriented admission of EODI students to doctoral programs**

The doctoral school's admission rules stipulate the entry requirements in accordance with the Regulations for Doctoral Training and Doctoral Degree Acquisition, which are uniform for both full-time and individual students in terms of qualifications. Individual students enter doctoral training by taking a complex exam, skipping the training and research phase. (See section 5.1. e).

The EODI DT strives to select the most outstanding applicants. The DT scores and ranks students based on their admission and previous academic performance, while also taking into account their motivation and commitment to research work.

#### **3.1. c) Transfer of theoretical and practical knowledge**

In the EODI subprograms, theoretical knowledge is transferred through compulsory and elective courses taught by the most outstanding instructors, while practical knowledge is transferred through research work supervised by thesis advisors.

Continuous research work in departments or institutes and active participation in departmental life, e.g., through practical exercises and lectures, provide students with the opportunity to actively apply the knowledge they have acquired in previous courses relevant to their field of study.

### **4. EODI requirements during the doctoral admission process**

#### **4.1. a) For members of the admission committee**

In the case of Hungarian full-time students, the members of the admissions committee are the head of EODI DT and the subprogram leaders. In case of their absence, the head of EODI will ensure that they are replaced by persons of appropriate level.

#### **4.1. b) Quality assurance of the admission procedure for full-time students: topics, scoring system, and objective formulation of the ranking**

In the 100-point admission system, full-time students must achieve a minimum of 60 points to reach the admission threshold. (See Chapter IV, Sections 17-27 of the Regulations for Doctoral Training and Doctoral Degree Acquisition, and in detail, the scoring sheet of the EODI admission exam form).

#### **4.1. c) Technical details of the admission procedure**

Admission can be done in person or online. External members of the examination board can also join the work of the examination board online. The language of the examination for foreign students is English.

#### **4.1. d) The admission procedure for individual students is based on a comprehensive exam (see section 5.1. e).**

#### **4.2. Recording the experiences of the admission procedure**

In its annual report, the EODI DT describes its experiences of the admission procedure and makes recommendations for possible changes, e.g., regarding exam requirements and organization, which are incorporated into the training and quality assurance plan as amendments.

### **5. EODI doctoral program quality assurance requirements during doctoral studies**

#### **5.1. a) 1. EODI strives to ensure that personnel requirements are met**

Members, thesis supervisors, and core members are selected in such a way as to ensure that the personnel requirements necessary for research are met. The EODI familiarizes its students with the latest teaching materials. With regard to compulsory subjects linked to compulsory foundation and sub-programs, it expects its lecturers to deliver high-quality lectures to their students and, in exceptional circumstances where the lecturer is unable to do so, to provide teaching materials and online consultation in online form.

#### **5.1. a) 2. EODI strives to ensure the necessary material conditions**

EODI DT selects the supervisors, instructors, and core members of the Doctoral School in such a way as to ensure that the educational environment and the given department or research laboratory have the opportunity for development (See section 2.3. a).

#### **5.1. b) EODI on monitoring the progress of doctoral students**

The doctoral school monitors student progress in the Neptun database from enrollment to defence, and keeps track of student requests received by the head of the EODI, decisions of the Doctoral Council of the Field of Science, and examination documents.

Every semester, the EODI requests the **Provisional Performance Book** of full-time students. It monitors course registration and completed courses (entry of grades, instructor's signature, date).

At the end of every second semester, the doctoral school requests the submission of a work log for the past academic year, which is accepted by the head of the EODI.

At the end of the fourth semester, the EODI checks whether the student meets the conditions for admission to the exam based on the EODI training plan and the Doctoral Training and Doctoral Degree Regulations.

After completing the eighth semester, the EODI secretariat checks whether the student has a minimum of 240 certified study credits.

The student enters the **degree award** procedure with the help of the DI's acting staff member, who prepares the defence committee, reviewed and signed by the head of the doctoral school, and the necessary documents required by the Doctoral Regulations for the Doctoral Council of the Scientific Field (=TDT). Two weeks before the defence, the EODI representative will publish the details of the defence on the EODI website and on the ODT page under "planned doctoral defences."

### **5.1. c) The EODI supports the academic advancement of its students**

With the help of supervisors, the EODI DT encourages students to participate in face-to-face and online conferences, summer schools, part-time training, and the Eugloh programs currently operating with the cooperation of five European universities. EODI DT encourages students to apply for grants, e.g. from ÚNKP and Richter scholarships. EODI DT ranks the applications within its jurisdiction. It encourages students to publish their academic results in Open Access format and to use SZTE support to finance the related costs.

### **5.1. d) The EODI ensures the placement of students' publications**

After enrollment, full-time and individual training students of the EODI register in the SZTE Repository, MTMT2, and affiliate themselves with their university institute. If a full-time student is not conducting research at a university institution, they must affiliate at least one publication related to their defence with the DI before the defence.

### **5.1. e) The procedure and requirements of the comprehensive examination; objective determination and regular review of the evaluation criteria; expectations regarding the members of the examination committee**

The EODI secretariat checks the conditions for full-time students to be admitted to the examination (90 credits, completion of foundation and compulsory courses). The EODI DT determines the examination committees and compulsory examination subjects for each applicant in agreement with the supervisor and in accordance with the relevant points of the Doctoral Degree Regulations. (See Doctoral Training and Doctoral Degree Regulations, Chapter V, Sections 1-7.) The head of EODI invites experts in the given field to serve on the examination committees, and the TDT approves the nominations.

Students and their supervisors fulfill the preliminary requirements of the exam (research report, supervisor's evaluation of the work done with the student) based on the Regulations for Obtaining a Doctoral Degree and the description of the EODI training plan. The examination committee receives the mandatory examination materials (minutes, student materials) at least 2 days before the examination date.

The complex examination consists of 2 parts and its result will be counted 50-50% towards the final result.

The first part is the theoretical part, the professional exam (replacing the previous doctoral exam): The candidate must demonstrate their preparedness in the selected subjects.

The second part is the dissertation part, during which candidates must present a pre-prepared dissertation report on their research during the first two years and their planned research for the next two years (max. 10-12 slides).

#### **5.1. f) Individual students are admitted to the EODI upon passing a comprehensive exam.**

Applicants who have conducted research alongside their work (with at least one relevant publication) have the opportunity to take the comprehensive exam twice a year. See the website of the Doctoral Institute of the SZTE. <https://u-szeged.hu/dokint/hataridok> In addition, applications for supplementary admission can be submitted between August 1 and 20 each year. At the end of the fourth semester, examinees must meet the same requirements as full-time students taking the comprehensive exam.

#### **Ensuring the quality requirements for members of the comprehensive examination committee**

We involve university lecturers and researchers who meet the university's expectations in the comprehensive examination. Student performance is determined in accordance with Chapter V, Section 6 of the Doctoral Regulations.

#### **5.1. g) Monitoring the collection, processing, and use of student feedback and student progress data, as well as the implementation of decisions made in this regard (especially those related to dropout rates)**

We monitor student feedback and data related to student progress (especially dropout rates) in accordance with university regulations.

#### **5.2. Review of compulsory and elective course topics**

The EODI DT regularly reviews its compulsory and elective subjects and their course syllabi. Taking into consideration student and teacher suggestions, it updates and modifies the materials with new information and publishes the revised version on its website. At the same time, it changes its training plan.

### **6. EODI quality assurance requirements for doctoral degrees**

#### **6.1. a) 1. Verification of publication requirements for degree procedures**

Based on the decision of the TDT on July 2, 2019, the EODI will apply both the old "IF-based" publication requirement and the new "classification based on D and Q ranking data" requirement system in parallel until December 31, 2023.

Based on the old "IF-based system," the EODI uniformly sets 4 IF as the requirement to be met in all four of its subprograms (see EODI training plan).

From January 1, 2024, only the new "classification taking into account D and Q ranking data" requirement will remain in force, to which the EODI DT adds one point. When using the evaluation system that takes into account D and Q ranking data, if more than one person wishes to use the main article to obtain a degree, it must be specified exactly which parts or results are used by another candidate in their thesis. *The same result cannot be included as an independent result in multiple procedures and dissertations.*

#### **6.1. b) Ensuring the verification of foreign language requirements**

The EODI requires English as the first foreign language, which students must pass with an intermediate-level complex language exam. The doctoral school verifies this during the admission process. If the student does not have an intermediate English language exam, the doctoral school requires that they complete it as soon as possible. **As a second language, the student must pass a basic language exam in any living foreign language.** They must prove this with a language exam certificate before entering the degree program at the latest.

#### **6.1. c) Quality guarantees for foreign-language students at EODI regarding the degree award procedure**

EODI DT sets the same requirements for the defence of foreign-language students as it does for Hungarian-language students. In this case, however, all stages of the procedure are conducted in English, both in writing and orally. (dissertation, minutes, invitation)

#### **6.1. d) Obligation and timing of using the SZTE Klebersberg Library plagiarism detection software program for the purpose of checking dissertations**

The EODI DT makes it mandatory to use the SZTE Klebersberg Library plagiarism detection program before sending dissertations to opponents. The results are sent to the head of the doctoral school, the student, and the supervisor within two weeks. The student takes responsibility for the written thesis and declares in a statement what percentage of the similarity comes from their own publications and what percentage comes from international literature. Upon learning the results of the screening, the supervisor will support or not support the submission of the thesis. If plagiarism is suspected, the head of the doctoral school will decide after discussing the matter with the school's doctoral council.

#### **6.1. e) Objective evaluation criteria for the public defence process and requirements, frequency of monitoring**

The EODI DT participates in the defences related to the individual subprograms of the doctoral school once a year, either in person or online, with the participation of the head of the EODI and/or the subprogram leader and the doctoral student's supervisor. In this regard, it complies with the requirements set out in the Doctoral Degree Regulations. Objective evaluation is ensured by the EODI Council appointing a five-member committee, of which the chair is a university professor or holds a doctorate from the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, all other members hold academic degrees, and one member and one opponent are not university employees or members of the candidate's external institution.

The degree awarding process, requirements, and evaluation criteria are reviewed by the EODI every five years.

The defence committee is approved by the TDT and entrusted with compliance with the rules on conflicts of interest. The candidate may not have any joint publications with any member of the committee.

If one of the reviewers gives a negative recommendation, the TDT shall request a third reviewer in accordance with the above rules.

Based on two positive reviews, the TDT shall submit the thesis for public discussion within two months.

The list of invitees, as indicated on the invitation, includes the head of the EODI, the student's supervisor, the members of the committee, the subprogram director, and the members of the TDT. In addition to these, the doctoral student may invite anyone to the defence.

The discussion is open to the public, where the doctoral student presents the theses of their dissertation in a free presentation lasting a maximum of 30 minutes. After this, the reviews are presented publicly, and the candidate first answers the questions posed in writing by the reviewers, and then the spontaneous questions and comments posed by the audience present (even online).

The committee votes by secret ballot in a closed session, based on uniform rules in all cases. They can score the thesis on a scale of 0-5. A minimum of 60% of the total score is required for a successful defence. The chair also announces and explains the final result publicly a few minutes after the defence. These steps ensure objectivity during the evaluation.

After this, the EODI DT accepts the defence, then the TDT reviews it, and finally the University Doctoral Council approves the degree in a resolution. The student receives the doctoral degree qualification based on the average score of the defence (see Regulations for Obtaining a Doctoral Degree, Chapter 6, Section 47.)

In the case of a double degree, the doctoral degree regulations of the other university must also be taken into account, unless otherwise specified in the agreement between the two universities.

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