

REPORT ON THE OPERATION OF THE EDUCATION QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM

**AT THE DOCTORAL SCHOOL of Humanities
in the 2021/2022 academic year**

Number of doctoral students as of 1.10.2021 - 26 students; 30.10.2022 - **26 students**
(including: 14 students in the 1st year, 5 in the 2nd year, 7 in the 3rd year)

Number of doctoral students from individual disciplines:

Philosophy – 4 students

History – 14 students

Linguistics – 4 students

Literary studies 4 students

Quality of Education Team at the Doctoral School of Humanities at the University of
Białystok

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prof. Małgorzata Kowalska – discipline: philosophy prof. Joanna Cholewa - discipline:
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1. MONITORING THE QUALIFICATIONS OF ACADEMIC TEACHERS OR RESEARCHERS CONDUCTING CLASSES WITH DOCTORAL STUDENTS

Monitoring the qualifications and competences of academic teachers and of other persons conducting classes with doctoral students at the Doctoral School of Humanities (DSH) is based on the principles resulting from Resolution No. 2614 of the Senate of the University of Białystok of November 27, 2019 *on the internal system of ensuring quality of education at the University of Białystok* (§ 4). Therefore, the deans of both Faculties, the director of the Institute of Philosophy, as well as the central administration were systematically consulted on:

- the staffing of classes by research and teaching staff and other persons conducting classes with doctoral students; great importance was attached to the compatibility of competences, experience, and professional qualifications of academic teachers with the conducted classes (including title or degree, academic achievements, academic area of expertise,

interdisciplinary skills, professional experience);

- attention was paid to the academic development of research and teaching staff, as well as raising professional qualifications by academic teachers and pursuing subsequent stages of their professional careers.

In accordance with the DSH Regulations, the principle was observed that core courses are conducted only by senior academic staff (full professors, university professors, and teachers with post-doctoral degrees) specializing in a given discipline.

At DSH, even teachers of language courses (foreign language for specific purposes) are taught by senior academic staff (two professors and one full professor), specializing in the following disciplines: philosophy, history, linguistics and literary studies, with the exception of two employees with doctoral degrees).

Two junior academic staff members with extensive academic and teaching experience conducted the following courses: *tertiary education pedagogy* and *forms of financing the humanities*. Among the classes conducted by junior academic staff, two other courses from the group of soft courses should be mentioned: *time management* and *communication and building relationships with a group*, as well as a non-core course: *workplace health and safety*.

In total, in 2021/2022, 42 academic employees conducted classes at the DSH, including: 13 full professors, 23 university professors and teachers with post-doctoral degrees, as well as 6 junior academic employees.

Conclusions (recommendations for the EQT):

The staffing of courses at the Doctoral School of Humanities of the University of Białystok is – according to the Team – based on the right principles. In order to improve the quality of teaching at the school, the Team recommends the following actions:

- continue cooperation with the deans and the director of the Institute with respect to the staffing of courses at the DSH,
- monitor the staffing of courses, especially when core courses strictly related to an academic discipline are offered to academic staff members with a doctoral degree.

Implementation of the recommendations of the EQT and UEQT from the previous academic year:

- continue cooperation with the deans and the director of the Institute regarding the staffing of courses at DSH,
- monitor the staffing of courses, especially when core courses strictly related to an academic discipline are offered to academic staff members with a doctoral degree.

Use the results of the questionnaire completed by doctoral students regarding the assessments of individual lecturers.

2. MONITORING AND IMPROVING THE TEACHING PROCESS

Documents approved by the Senate of the University of Białystok, based on the Act of 20 July 2018 – Law on Higher Education and Science (Journal of Laws of 2018 item 1668 as amended), form the basis for the operation of the Doctoral School of Humanities at the University of Białystok. These are the following legal acts:

- Ordinance No. 8 of the Rector of the University of Białystok of 27.03.2019, on establishing doctoral schools at the University of Białystok: <http://docs.uwb.edu.pl/pliki/2019-8-2.pdf>
- DSH Regulations – Resolution No. 2357 of the Senate of the University of Białystok of 27 March 2019 on the Regulations of the Doctoral School of Humanities of the University of Białystok: <https://bip.uwb.edu.pl/download/64/31532/2019-2357-1.pdf>
- School curriculum – Resolution No. 2425 of the Senate of the University of Białystok on establishing a curriculum for the Doctoral School of Humanities: <http://docs.uwb.edu.pl/pliki/2019-2425-1.pdf>

Monitoring and improving the teaching process at DSH is carried out in accordance with the provisions contained in Resolution No. 2614 of the Senate of the University of Białystok of November 27, 2019 on the internal system of ensuring quality of education at the University of

Białystok (§ 5). As part of the assessment of the teaching process, the following areas were analysed and evaluated:

- 1) the adequacy of the curriculum and individual research plans for the learning outcomes for qualifications at PQF level 8,
- 2) methods of verifying learning outcomes for qualifications at PQF level 8,
- 3) quality of academic supervision and support in scholarly activities,
- 4) reliability of mid-term evaluation,
- 5) effectiveness of doctoral education

Ad. 1) *the adequacy of the curriculum and individual research plans to the learning outcomes for qualifications at PQF level 8*

The curriculum and the classes are adapted to the scope of knowledge, competences and skills necessary to achieve learning outcomes at PQF level 8. The curriculum was developed to include a common learning module for all doctoral students from all the university doctoral schools (so-called soft skills) and a module on 4 learning paths within the academic disciplines included at the DSH (philosophy, history, linguistics, and literary studies).

The learning modules enable students to achieve the assumed learning outcomes, in the area of: knowledge, competences and skills. The possibility of choosing a course outside the discipline, including the soft skills development courses, addressed to doctoral students of all university doctoral schools, gives doctoral students a chance to develop their individual research interests.

Detailed information on the assumed learning outcomes is indicated in the curriculum.

The structure of the curriculum consists of: • a general education module, • separate modules of education in disciplines (philosophy, history, linguistics, literary studies); within this module, classes for all DSH doctoral students (tertiary education didactics and forms of financing humanities) are conducted, • a module for the preparation of a doctoral dissertation, • a module for professional internship.

The DSH Regulations require first-year doctoral students to submit the following documents by the end of the 12th month from the start of their education at the school:

- individual research plans approved and signed by supervisors and assistant supervisors (along with the doctoral dissertation concept)
- an annual report with attached documentation confirming the activity of the doctoral student (in accordance with the Doctoral Student's Task Schedule, by July 2, 2022)

IPB and the annual report are not only an important element of education, but also an important aspect of monitoring and improving the education process at DSH.

On the basis of the submitted documentation, the director of DSH reviewed the progress of all eligible doctoral students and determined that they successfully completed the requirements for their first year of study in statutory time (that is, until the end of the resit session of the summer semester of the 2021/22 academic year).

By mid-September 2022, second-year doctoral students submitted, in accordance with the regulations and doctoral student task schedule (posted on the DSH website), mid-term reports. They were submitted by e-mail to the Mid-Term Evaluation Committee together with the relevant documentation, one month before the date of the evaluations.

On the basis of the annual reports of second and third year doctoral students for the 2021/22 academic year, positively assessed by the RN DSH (occasionally there were comments from members of the RN regarding the lack of progress of the doctoral dissertations of third-year doctoral students), the director credited all eligible second- and third-year doctoral students (after appropriate supplements to the documentation and the

chapters of the dissertations were submitted).

Ad. 2) method of verifying learning outcomes for qualifications at PQF level 8

Course syllabuses and the information contained in them about the learning outcomes and criteria for passing the course were made available to doctoral students by placing the documents in the USOS system. Some employees were reminded during the academic year that there were no syllabuses in the USOS system – they were added.

Analysis of the syllabuses allowed to conclude that the DSH correctly verifies the assumed learning outcomes at the level of knowledge, skills and social competences. The adequacy of the scope of requirements and forms of assessment in relation to the assumed learning outcomes in all the implemented courses was positively assessed.

In the 2021/2022 academic year, the implementation of the courses resulting from the program and the verification of learning outcomes achieved by doctoral students should be assessed positively. Classes were held in person. The winter semester ran smoothly. Verification of the final learning outcomes was fully adequate to the initial assumptions indicated in the syllabuses by the people teaching the courses. In the summer semester classes were also conducted on-site (one subject, at the request of the lecturer – remotely), and a direct assessment of the obtained learning outcomes was carried out. No difficulties related to the implementation of the courses specified in the curriculum were reported.

Ad. 3.) quality of academic supervision and support in conducting academic activities

The main task of the doctoral school is to support the academic development of a doctoral student. Starting cooperation with the supervisor, the doctoral student becomes a member of a research team and carries out his/her work on the dissertation within the academic community. This gives him/her the opportunity to establish academic contacts and get acquainted with the research from the academic area that is of interest to him/her. The school creates an environment of support for doctoral students, which allows their research to be successful, i.e. a doctoral dissertation to be submitted by the end of the fourth year of study. The school supports the research conducted by doctoral students in several ways: substantively, organizationally, and financially, (e.g. each doctoral student may receive approx. PLN 1000 for conference expenses after submitting an application).

In the 2021/22 academic year, all applicants received funding from the DSH. Doctoral students received financial support covering conference fees (8 persons), participation in archival research (2 persons), participation in the Białystok Summer School of Women's History (1 person), participation in an international language seminar (1 person). The total amount of funding is PLN 5214,43

Academic supervision of doctoral students begins from the very beginning of their enrolment in the doctoral program. All first-year doctoral students submitted their supervisor appointment applications within 60 days of beginning their education. The Academic Council positively reviewed these applications. It was determined that the research areas of the doctoral students are aligned with the areas of expertise of the supervisor candidates. The School Director appointed supervisors and assistant supervisors in December 2020, i.e. within statutory time. In the summer semester, based on the applications of three doctoral students, the justification of the main supervisor, and a positive opinion from the Research Council - in accordance with the DSH Regulations, the School Director approved the appointment of an assistant supervisor.

From the moment supervisors were appointed, doctoral seminars began (30 teaching hours per year), initiating systematic collaboration with the doctoral students. Already in October 2021 the director organized a meeting with doctoral students, and in December 2021 – with supervisors, to

discuss, among others, the principles of developing an individual research plan, to present the main duties of an academic supervisor and a young aspiring academic, as well as to characterize the most important aspects of teaching and learning at a doctoral school. Subsequent training and organizational and information meetings were held both for all doctoral students and all supervisors on March 11, 2022. In March and May 2022 letters and information materials were also sent to all doctoral students containing detailed information on the Individual Research Plan, annual report, Erasmus program, etc.

The director also answered detailed questions from doctoral students and supervisors during duty hours at the DSH and via e-mail.

All annual reports, which were analysed and corrected in some cases in consultations with the Director, received a positive assessment from the Supervisory Board (occasionally there were comments from members of the Supervisory Board regarding the lack of progress of a doctoral dissertation). They were also approved by the school director by September 30, 2022 after doctoral students completed the documentation, i.e. submitted dissertation chapters.

Analysis of the annual reports of first-year doctoral students shows that for the most part they fulfilled their obligations, submitted Individual research plans on time, responsibly presented preliminary research concepts and successfully implemented the research plans planned for the first year.

The quality of academic support for first-, second-, and third-year doctoral students is high, which is manifested in the fulfilment of all obligations by doctoral students and the positive assessment issued by the supervisors in annual reports (detailed analysis of data in point 5).

Ad. 4) reliability of the mid-term evaluation

The mid-term assessments ran smoothly in the second half of October 2022, after the formal completion of the second year by eligible doctoral students (5 individuals). The doctoral students submitted mid-term reports on time (that is, one month before the scheduled mid-term assessment).

Mid-term evaluations were carried out in accordance with the procedures.

In March 2022 the director of the school, together with the head of individual academic disciplines, i.e. literary studies, philosophy and history, agreed on the composition of the committees. They were unanimously positively assessed by the DSH Research Council at the RC meeting on 07.04.2022). On 20 May 2022 the director of SDNH sent a request to HM Rector of the University of Białystok for the appointment of a Committee for the mid-term evaluation at the Doctoral School of Humanities of the University of Białystok. By the decision of 28 June 2022 the Rector of the University of Białystok appointed a committee at the Doctoral School of Humanities to carry out the mid-term evaluation of doctoral students who began their education at the doctoral school in the 2020/2021 academic year.

All the information, committee compositions, legal acts (including rules for the organization of the Commission's work, rules for conducting the mid-term evaluation), dates of evaluation and meetings as well as the results of the mid-term evaluation were posted on the DSH website

<https://szkolydoktorskie.uwb.edu.pl/nh/ocena-srodokresowa/>, relevant information and materials (including mid-term reports, rules for conducting the mid-term evaluation) were sent to the Commission within statutory time by electronic means (30 days before the evaluation).

The dates of the meetings were given two months in advance and posted on the DSH website (discipline: history discipline - 17.10.2022 at 10:00; discipline: literary studies -

19.10.2022 at 11:00; discipline: philosophy - 19.10.2022 at 11:00)

Ad. 5) *effectiveness of doctoral education*

Assessment of the effectiveness of doctoral students' education is based on data on their academic activity, curriculum implementation and the degree of implementation of the Individual Research Plan, including the degree of advancement of the doctoral dissertation. Data was obtained from the Annual Reports of Doctoral Students.

Number of doctoral students who submitted reports in the 2021/22 academic year – 25 students, including those from the first year: 1 student, the second year: 13 students, the third year: 5 students.

Based on the data contained in the annual reports, the academic activity of doctoral students in the 2021/22 academic year is as follows:

- a) Number of academic articles in journals and monographs published in the 2021/22 academic year: **28 (895 points)**
- b) Number of reviewed articles: **11**
- c) Number of articles submitted for publication: **26**
- d) Participation in national conferences: **30**
- e) Participation in international conferences: **12**
- f) academic and popularizing activity: 24 texts and lectures popularizing humanities
- g) Number of grants in which doctoral students participate: **6**
- h) Number of submitted grant applications: **3**
- i) Number of completed research internships: **7** (including one internship abroad)
- j) Organizational activities for the University of Białystok (including assistance in conference organization): **18**
- k) Yiddish course – 1 person
- l) Hebrew course – 1 person

This illustrates the high effectiveness of doctoral education at the DSH of the University of Białystok. Everyone completed the education program, completed the mandatory classes planned for the academic year. At the same time, doctoral students show a high level of academic activity, publish articles (often in highly ranked journals), participate to a satisfactory degree in academic conferences, engage in organizational and popularizing activities. Attention is drawn to the participation in numerous methodological workshops,

trainings, organized by both the University of Białystok and other entities (it is worth noting that all invitations to workshops, trainings, conferences are published on the DSH website; the information is also sent to doctoral students' email addresses in the university domain). A few outstanding doctoral students are grant executors (including for their supervisors), members of scientific societies and clubs, journal editorial boards, local government. To a lesser extent, doctoral students apply for external grants.

The effectiveness of education is also confirmed by the assessments of the progress of the doctoral dissertation preparation made by the Supervisors in the Annual Reports of doctoral students. Out of the 25 doctoral students who submitted reports, the highest, i.e. exemplary, grade was obtained by 19 students (including 12 first-year students, 5 second-year students, 2 third-year students); 6 doctoral students received a satisfactory grade (1 first-year student and 5 third-year students). The supervisors did not give a failing grade, indicating lack of progress on the doctoral dissertation and the implementation of the Individual Research Plan, to any of the doctoral students. Nevertheless, it can be noted that the supervisors of third-year doctoral students postulated in the annual reports that their students need to make more intensive progress as far the advancement of the dissertation is concerned (the same comments appeared sporadically in the opinions of the members of the Research Council).

Assessment of the quality of academic supervision of and support for the academic activity of doctoral students was made on the basis of questionnaires assessing the quality of education at the doctoral school (Annex 3b of the Senate Resolution). The questionnaire concerning the doctoral school was completed by 11 students (34.62%).

Along with the questionnaire (3b) regarding the doctoral school, doctoral students should also complete the University of Białystok evaluation questionnaire (Annex 3a of the Senate Resolution). No one completed this survey at the DSH.

Table 1. Overall assessment of education at the Doctoral School of Humanities

Specification	Strongly agree	Mostly agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mostly disagree	Strongly disagree
	number of doctoral students				
Considering all the aspects of the educational process, are you satisfied with your education at the doctoral school?	8	1	1	0	1
Do you think that the availability and quality of educational resources and specialized equipment is sufficient?	6	2	2	0	1

Do you think that the way of conducting classes and teaching methods are generally appropriate?	5	3	2	1	0
Do you think that the selection of additional courses (extra-curricular courses, etc.) is sufficient?	0	6	4	1	0
Was the substantive support received during the doctoral thesis writing process sufficient?	5	4	0	1	1
Was the substantive support received during the implementation of other elements of your individual research plan sufficient?	2	4	0	2	3

Summary: based on the evaluation questionnaire (Attachment 3b)

Table 2. Overall assessment of elements of education at the Doctoral School of Humanities

Individual elements of the education process	Very good	Good	Average	Bad	Very bad	Not applicable
	number of doctoral students					
Lectures	8	2	1	0	0	0
Classes	8	2	1	0	0	0
Seminars	9	0	1	0	1	0
Extra curricular courses	7	1	3	0	0	1
Laboratory classes	1	0	1	0	0	9
Internship	5	1	1	0	0	4

Summary: based on the evaluation questionnaire (Attachment 3b)

An extensive answer was given to the question: *What do you think should be changed in the first place to improve the overall quality of education in your doctoral school?*

Three people stated that the school office should be open longer on days when classes are held, e.g. one day a month.

Summary: based on the evaluation questionnaire (Attachment 3b)

Doctoral students indicated that the courses could include such components as elements of psychology, statistics, public speaking, or practical application of methodology and its tools in the doctoral student's academic activity. One suggested increasing the scholarship to the minimum wage, so that the doctoral student does not have to choose between work and study and can fully dedicate their time to academic activity and research.

Ad. 2) the quality of the teaching infrastructure (classrooms, audiovisual equipment, Internet access) and its adaptation to the number of doctoral students

The Doctoral School of Humanities does not have its own educational facilities. The school is located in the building of the Faculty of Philology. These are two rooms, one of which houses the Chair of Interdisciplinary Philological Research, headed by the director of DSH. This is a small seminar room for approx. 10 people (room 145) and the other room is the school office (room 85). The majority of classes are held at Plac NZS 1 in the building of the Faculty of Philology, the Faculty of History and International Relations, and in the rooms which are at the disposal of the

Institute of Philosophy. Soft skills courses are taught at the Campus.

Table 4. Assessment of the quality of didactic infrastructure used in the educational process

Infrastructure used in the educational process	Very good	Good	Average	Bad	Very bad	Not applicable
	Number of doctoral students					
Lecture halls	1	6	3	0	1	0
Classrooms	2	6	3	0	0	0
Audiovisual and multimedia equipment	1	5	3	0	1	1
Laboratory equipment	1	3	0	0	0	7
Internet access	1	6	3	0	1	0

Summary: based on the evaluation survey (Appendix 3b)

In general, doctoral students rated the quality of the didactic infrastructure positively. The lack of evaluation in the *Laboratory equipment* category results from the specific character of the school and lack laboratory classes.

Table 5. Evaluation of information on education on the website

Availability of the website regarding	Strongly agree	Mostly agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mostly disagree	Strongly disagree
	Number of doctoral students				
The curriculum	7	2	1	0	1
Class schedule	8	3	0	0	0
Opportunities to travel to other universities as part of doctoral exchange programs	5	3	1	1	1
Conferences, seminars, trainings addressed to doctoral students	4	5	1	0	1
Opportunities to participate in competitive projects, obtain grants, or secure scholarships	6	5	0	0	0

Summary: based on the evaluation survey (Appendix 3b)

The doctoral students also evaluated syllabuses. The small number of respondents certainly does not allow for unambiguous conclusions to be drawn. However, even with a small number of questionnaires, the responses *neither agree nor disagree* and *strongly disagree* are concerning. The director of the DSH discussed the quality of the syllabuses with the lecturers already during the academic year, which improved their quality.

Table 6. Evaluation of syllabus content

Do course syllabuses provide information about	Strongly agree	Mostly agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mostly disagree	Strongly disagree
	Number of doctoral students				
The content of the courses	5	5	1	0	0
Course readings	5	4	1	0	1
Assessment criteria	5	4	1	0	1

Summary: based on the evaluation questionnaire of the doctoral school (Attachment 3b).

The DSH website is regularly improved and updated. It clearly conveys the most important information in an accessible way. It can be accessed from the main university website through the tab: Doctoral Schools.

Doctoral students – according to the survey – visit the school's website several times a week, some people visit it several times a month, and the school office several times a semester, some people visit it several times a month.

The evaluation of the school office is illustrated in Table 8:

Table 8. Evaluation of the school office

Specification	Strongly agree	Mostly agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mostly disagree	Strongly disagree
	Number of doctoral students				
Do the working hours of the school office allow for the handling of issues?	5	2	1	3	0
Is the following information provided by the office staff in a comprehensive way: - information regarding the course of education - information on scholarships	7	2	1	0	1
	7	2	1	0	1

Summary: based on the evaluation survey (Appendix 3b)

Doctoral students did not make any comments regarding improvements to the school office work.

The work of the school office was assessed well and very well, one person did not express an opinion, one person answered definitely no. The majority of doctoral students is satisfied with the service and ways of providing information by an employee of the school office. Three students pointed out that the working hours of the school office did not meet their needs. The school director will try to solve this problem next semester.

Ad. 4) Organization of classes:

The organization of classes at the school followed the curriculum and the organization of the academic year at the University of Białystok. Class schedules were provided to doctoral students in advance. Doctoral students' enrolments for soft skills development courses were accepted. Major problems with the organization and completion of courses were not reported.

Conclusions (recommendations for the EQT):

Monitoring of education standards at the Doctoral School of Humanities is carried out in accordance with the law and the requirements set by the Rector of the University of Białystok and the Director of the DSH. They should be assessed as correct. In order to improve the quality of education, the Team recommends the following actions:

- systematic verification of the development, updating and uploading of syllabuses to the USOS system,
- ensuring the correctness of syllabus preparation regarding intended learning outcomes and their verification methods.
- greater objectivity of supervisors in assessing the achievements and capabilities of doctoral students they work with,
- greater involvement of supervisors in academic activities of their doctoral students, as well as encouraging inter-university and international integration of the students,
- greater involvement of doctoral students and supervisors in obtaining external funds.

Implementation of the recommendations of the EQT and UEQT from the previous academic year:

The recommendations of EQT and UEQT have been – to a large extent - implemented. The majority of supervisors approach supervising doctoral students with great responsibility.

3. EVALUATION OF CLASSES

Assessment of the quality of classes at the DSH at the University of Białystok is carried out according to the criteria set out in Resolution No. 2614 of the Senate of the University of Białystok of November 27, 2019 on the internal system of ensuring the quality of education at the University of Białystok (§ 6,7,8) and Order No. 45 of the Rector of the University of Białystok of November 27, 2019 on the principles of evaluation of academic teachers by students and doctoral students at the University of Białystok.

Pursuant to §7 of Resolution No. 2614 of the Senate of the University of Białystok of 27.11.2019, the director of the doctoral school has the right to observe classes conducted in doctoral schools. Observations may also be carried out by a person authorized by the director, provided he/she is a member of the Research Council of the doctoral school. In the second semester of 2021/2022 two foreign language classes (foreign language for general purposes as well as foreign language for specific purposes) were observed, which, in the opinion of the school director who was observing them, brought unambiguously positive results. The academic teachers conducting these classes showed high professionalism and were able to create a great atmosphere during the classes, conducive to discussion and development of linguistic, communicative and academic competences. The observations of classes conducted by doctoral students as part of internships were also very positively assessed (number of observed classes: 5).

The high quality of classes is also confirmed by questionnaires completed by doctoral students in the USOS system. A total of 46 opinions were given. Some classes were not evaluated by any doctoral student (this applies, for example, to one-to-one classes, including the majority of doctoral seminars – probably because of issues of anonymity).

20 out of a total of 42 academic teachers conducting classes at the school were assessed.

Table 3. Assessment of the quality of classes in the opinion of doctoral students

Specification	Response average (grades from 1,0 to 5,0)
The teacher was well prepared for classes	4,95
Teacher's punctuality	5,00
Clarity of the material being taught	4,89
Interesting way of conducting classes	4,79
Attitude towards the student (respect)	5,00
Encouraging independent thinking	4,84
Objectivity of evaluation	5,00
Clarity of assessment criteria	5,00
Availability of the teacher during duty hours	4,89

Summary: based on a class assessment questionnaire

The average rating of classes given by doctoral students in individual categories is 4,93. Incidentally, notes of 3 or 4 did appear, but many lecturers received 5 in all categories. In the assessment of the quality of classes, the highest score was given to the following categories: *punctuality of the teacher, attitude towards the student (respect), clarity of credit criteria and how well the teacher was prepared for classes*, while the lowest score was given to an *interesting way of conducting classes and encouraging independent thinking*.

There were positive comments about classes being conducted in a very attractive way, with the help of activating methods. What was also emphasized was that teachers were well prepared and exhibited a positive approach to doctoral students, extensive practical knowledge, and professionalism. There were no negative comments about academic teachers. One student stated that the course is not very useful in practice.

Conclusions (recommendations for the EQT):

The team requests that doctoral students be encouraged to fill out more questionnaires and add comments. This will enable the Education Quality Team to make an in-depth assessment of the quality of classes at the DSH and correct any shortcomings if necessary.

Implementation of the recommendations of the EQT and UEQT from the previous academic year:

The director of the DSH encourages students to fill out questionnaires, but ultimately only a small number of doctoral students fills them out.

4. MONITORING THE CONDITIONS OF EDUCATION AND ITS ORGANIZATION

Monitoring the conditions of education and organization of studies at the DSH at the University of Białystok is carried out according to the criteria contained in Resolution No. 2614 of the Senate of the University of Białystok of November 27, 2019 on the internal system of ensuring the quality of education at the University of Białystok (§9). The evaluation covered:

- library resources, in particular updating them taking into account the needs of academic teachers, doctoral students and their access to computer databases,
- the quality of the teaching infrastructure (classrooms, their audio-visual equipment, Internet access) and whether it is sufficient given the number of doctoral students,
- availability and transparency of information on education, in particular information on curricula, course syllabuses, class schedules, certificates granted to the unit, international doctoral cooperation, etc.,
- Organization of classes

Doctoral students made no comments on the assessment of the conditions of education and the organization of studies (Annex 3b).

- Ad.1) *library resources, in particular updating them taking into account the needs of academic teachers, doctoral students and their access to computer databases,*

Respondents report that they use the resources of the University Library several times a month, and the resources of some other library (including the Podlasie Regional Library) several times a month. Departmental libraries are usually visited several times a year.

To sum up, the doctoral students rated the *efficiency and friendliness of service* as the best and as the lowest *the availability of new items in library collections and opening hours* of both libraries.

Table 4. Evaluation of selected aspects of the use of the University Library and departmental libraries

Selected aspects of using libraries	University Library	departmental libraries at the university
	Rating from 1.0 to 5.0, where 1 is the lowest, and 5 the highest	
Availability of basic literature	4.2	4.4
General resources of the library collections in the field of study	4.4	4.2
Availability of new items in the library collections	5.0	4.0
Library service efficiency	5.0	5.0
User-friendliness	5.0	5.0
Opening hours	4.4	4.0
Studying conditions (especially the reading room)	4.1	4.6
Accessing electronic databases	4.8	4.8

Summary: based on the evaluation questionnaire (Attachment 3b)

Ad. 3) availability and transparency of information on education, in particular information on curricula, course syllabuses, class schedules, certificates granted to the unit, international doctoral cooperation, etc.

Information on education, including legal acts in force at the school is, in accordance with statutory obligations, published in the Public Information Bulletin and – above all – on the DSH website, where users can find, among others, Ministerial Acts, University Senate Resolutions, Rector's Orders, Announcements and Decisions of the DSH Director, DSH Regulations, the DSH curriculum, admission rules, as well as information on other current issues. In addition, e-mails are sent to doctoral students and academics by the school secretary or directly by the director of the DSH.

Conclusions (recommendations for the EQT):

- encourage doctoral students to express their opinions in surveys,
- attention should be paid to adapting the rooms to the type of classes, especially in the case of classes requiring computer workstations,

Implementation of the recommendations of the EQT and UEQT from the previous academic year:

- supervisors and doctoral students are taking steps to secure external funding for academic research, however, greater activity in this area is still needed. Some doctoral students participate in the grants of their supervisors; doctoral students should make even greater use of both external funds and those at the disposal of the doctoral school for academic purposes (queries, academic contacts, active participation in conferences).
- the quality of syllabuses was significantly improved;

5. MONITORING SUPPORT FOR DOCTORAL STUDENTS IN THE LEARNING PROCESS

Monitoring of support for doctoral students in the learning process at the DSH follows the criteria contained in Resolution No. 2614 of the Senate of the University of Białystok of November 27, 2019 on the internal system of ensuring the quality of education at the University of Białystok (§11). Assessment and analysis includes:

- didactic support (including appointment of a year mentor, internship mentor, duty hours of academic staff),
- academic support (including activities of research clubs and camps, organization of student/doctoral conferences, participation in conferences),
- material support (including scholarships, accommodation in student dormitories),
- other forms of support (including support for doctoral students with disabilities),
- availability of information on forms of support.

Duty hours of academic staff took place at the home faculties and online (in the summer semester). Dates of duty hours of academic teachers can be found in the USOS system. Academic staff have their duty hours every week for at least one teaching hour. Students can contact their academic teachers, the school office as well as the school director via e-mail. The director personally addresses doctoral students' detailed questions and doubts via university mail.

Academic support for doctoral students is carried out in the environment created by the school. Supervisors have been appointed for all doctoral students and seminars are held, where concepts and research results are presented. Meetings between the director and the supervisors regarding support for doctoral students at the school and meetings with doctoral students regarding individual research plans were organized.

Financial support means, among others, that doctoral students receive a scholarship in the amount of PLN 2372 gross before mid-term evaluation and PLN 3084 gross after mid-term evaluation. The scholarship is paid monthly without delays (on the 24th of each month). As part of the funds allocated by the Rector of the University of Białystok for the school, the director allocated a pool of funds for academic activities of doctoral students (approx. PLN 1000 for each doctoral student. They can apply for financing for conference expenses or academic publications in journals and other publications from the ministerial list.

In the winter semester, doctoral students completed the course: *Forms of financing the humanities*. The course was run by dr Radosław Poniak, who has extensive experience in obtaining grants. This is a good basis for doctoral students to apply for research or teaching grants themselves. This will enable them to increase the scale of financing for their own research.

The DSH regularly informs about various forms of educational support for doctoral students – information is sent by e-mail and posted on the DSH website.

Conclusions (recommendations for the EQT):

- taking steps to intensify the grant activity of doctoral students, drawing the attention of supervisors and doctoral students to the requirement of seeking new sources of funding for doctoral research activities, such as funding for internships and foreign visits; also participation in the ERASMUS program.

Implementation of the recommendations of the EQT and UEQT from the previous academic year:

Doctoral students hardly ever apply for grants and other external funds and only a few participate in the Erasmus program.

6. EVALUATION OF THE MOBILITY OF DOCTORAL STUDENTS AND THE DEGREE OF INTERNATIONALIZATION OF EDUCATION

Assessment of the mobility of doctoral students and the degree of internationalization of education at the Doctoral School of Humanities is carried out according to the criteria contained in Resolution No. 2614 of the Senate of the University of Białystok of November 27, 2019 *on the internal system of ensuring the quality of education at the University of Białystok* (§10). Assessment and analysis includes:

- student/doctoral student exchange under agreements between national and foreign universities in the area of

student/doctoral student mobility programs,

- a formalized system of rules for crediting the achievements of students/doctoral students – points and grades,
- use of experience gained by students/doctoral students during education at other universities in terms of improving the quality of education (e.g. making the didactic offer more attractive, changing the way classes are conducted),
- opinions provided by incoming students/doctoral students (Polish and foreign) on the process of studying at the University in relation to their expectations in this regard (e.g. organizational matters, teaching system, student/doctoral student – academic teacher relations),
- participation of students/doctoral students in classes conducted by visiting professors or classes conducted in foreign languages.

Degree of internationalization:

In the 2020/2021 academic year there was no exchange of doctoral students under inter-university agreements. However, the mobility of doctoral students and the degree of internationalization of education improved, compared to the previous academic year. It is worth emphasizing that:

- one of the doctoral students took part in an international exchange (as part of Erasmus+) and participated in classes at St. Cyril and St. Methodius University of Veliko Tarnovo in the summer semester.

- a doctoral student went to do archival research in the State Archives in Tallinn in the period 11.04-10.05.2022,

- doctoral students participated in **12 international conferences (including** the 5th international "Racism, Nationalism and Xenophobia Conference", 11-12.07.2022), including those organized at our University (e.g. 8th World Congress on Polish Studies – Borderlands (Pogranicza) 10-12.06.2022; 10th International Symposium Intercontinental Dialogue on Phraseology – 20.11.2021)

- doctoral students' involvement and assistance in the organization of international conferences (e.g. the *Vilnius and Vilnius Region of the 19th century: language, literature, culture* conference – Vilnius, 13.09 -14.09.2022).

- doctoral students display mobility in other academic units, participate in seminars, academic meetings, lectures, including at other doctoral schools (e.g. a series of meetings in English GradTalks – at the Adam Mickiewicz University)

- a doctoral student took part in the 20th International Yiddish Seminar in the summer semester,
- specialised language courses (depending on the discipline) are held at the DSH in accordance with the program. They are conducted by academics with extensive experience and aim to improve, above all, specialised foreign language skills.

MOBILITY ASSESSMENT

Mobility at the national level is confirmed by participation in internships, queries, training, and summer schools trips, including:

- a doctoral student who performed archival research at the State Archives in Suwałki from 29.11-1.12.2021,

- a doctoral student who took part in the 4th edition of the Białystok Summer School of Women's History in Augustów in the summer semester,

The mobility of doctoral students is also confirmed by active participation (with presentations) at numerous national conferences. In the 2021/22 academic year doctoral students took part in **30 nationwide conferences**, including:

- a doctoral student who took part in and delivered a paper at the academic conference "Man in a border situation" combined with publication in a peer-reviewed academic monograph in a publication from the ministerial list from 21-22.01.2022,
- a doctoral student who participated in and delivered a paper at the National Academic Session "Social crises and overcoming them in the 20th century" organized at the Faculty of History of the University of Warsaw on 24-25.02.2022,
- a doctoral student who took part in the National Academic Conference "Magical Practices and Witchcraft in the Cultures of the World" organized by the Academic Club of Comparative Studies of Civilization of the Jagiellonian University, at the Chair of Comparative Studies of Civilization of the Faculty of Philosophy of the Jagiellonian University on 20-21.05.2022
- doctoral students actively participated in the 10th National Student-Doctoral Conference of Modern Historians "Studies on the Society of Modern Europe", from 26.05 till 28.05.2022.
- a doctoral student participated in the conference "POST-SOVIET STATES IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS (1991-2021)" organized by the Faculty of History and International Relations of the University of Białystok on 11-13.05.2022,
- a doctoral student participated in a conference and delivered a paper "Abuses of Civic Militia officers in the light of complaints of the inhabitants of the Sokółka district in the years 1946-47" in the summer semester,
- a doctoral student took part in the conference "Medicina antiqua, mediaevalis et moderna. History – Philosophy-Religion III" organized by the Jan Kochanowski University in Kielce on 7-8.06.2022,
- doctoral students took part in and delivered papers at the 7th Academic Conference "Faces of War. Tools of war." on 9-10.06.2022,

Conclusions (recommendations for the EQT):

- the scale of international activity of doctoral students should be further increased,
- the scope of internationalization at the school should be further extended, e.g. through greater participation of doctoral students in lectures by visiting professors;
- doctoral students should be encouraged to take advantage of foreign trips / events, for example as part of the ERASMUS program.
- taking actions to increase academic and training mobility in the area of international contacts (compulsory two-week academic internships, planned in the Individual Research Plan, may be carried out by doctoral students as part of the foreign trips for a minimum 60-day internship from the Erasmus program).

Implementation of the recommendations of the EQT and UEQT from the previous academic year:

The conclusions from the previous year were partially implemented. An Erasmus tab was created on the school's website; letters informing and encouraging doctoral students to use the program were sent in March 2022. However, it is still necessary to motivate doctoral students and their supervisors to obtain external funds and take advantage of, for example, the ERASMUS program.

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(signature & stamp
of the Director of the Doctoral School

