



BROCHURE

DOCTORAL SCHOOL IN HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES



DSHSS | DOCTORAL SCHOOL
IN HUMANITIES AND
SOCIAL SCIENCES

2026

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I. List of Useful Acronyms and Terms

ADR	<i>Autorisation à diriger des recherches</i> – authorization to supervise Doctoral candidates at the UL
AFR	AFR is one of the FNR’s funding schemes and provides funding for PhD projects. Grants are awarded in the form of an employment contract with the host institution, rather than in the form of a scholarship. See website for more details: https://www.fnr.lu/funding-instruments/afr/
BED	<i>Bureau des études doctorales</i> – or Office of Doctoral Studies (email: phdstudies@uni.lu). The BED manages the admission requests for new candidates, the CET nomination, the DEA, the CET reporting, joint supervision agreements and the defence procedures. All ECTS-related matters, conflict resolution, training offer, and general PhD candidate and supervisor support are instead managed by the respective Doctoral Schools
CET	<i>Comité d’encadrement de thèse</i> = Thesis supervision Committee. Each Doctoral thesis written at the UL must be supervised by a CET
Co-tutelle	Joint supervision. Joint Doctoral degree with two different institutions, of which one is the University of Luxembourg. Doctoral candidates in co-tutelle have two supervisors, one from each institution involved
DEA	Doctoral Education Agreement – a document that describes and regulates the rights and obligations of the Doctoral candidate and the (co-supervisors). It has to be finalized at the latest 6 months after the initial admission date of the Doctoral candidate and is done so through supervisor initiation
DPD	Doctoral Programme Director – heads one of the four Doctoral programmes at the DSHSS
DS	Doctoral School
DSHSS	Doctoral School in Humanities and Social Sciences
DTU	Doctoral Training Unit

ECTS	European Credit Transfer System – or in brief, credits
ETA	Excellent Thesis Award – any doctoral candidate may be nominated by their jury following the successful completion of their defence to be considered for this award
FHSE	Faculty of Humanities, Education and Social Sciences
FNR	Fonds National de la Recherche Luxembourg/Luxembourg National Research Fund. Website: https://www.fnr.lu/
PRIDE	PRIDE is the FNR’s main programme for funding PhD research in Luxembourg. It aims to support the development of critical mass in key research areas, by attracting excellent PhD candidates to Luxembourg and offering them high quality research training
RTP	Research Training Plan – an appendix in the Doctoral Education Agreement containing the research training plan agreed by the CET and the Doctoral candidate
SN	Service Now (aka SNow), PhD portal where all documentation is archived, and credits awarded
SPA	Study Programme Administrator
UNILU	University of Luxembourg
VRR	Vice Rector for Research

1. Key Contacts

Office of Doctoral Studies	phdstudies@uni.lu
DSHSS Admin Team	dshss@uni.lu
Transferable Skills Team	ts@uni.lu
Luxembourg Career Centre	careercentre@uni.lu
Luxembourg Alumni Centre	alumni@uni.lu
Support and Well-Being Services	UMatter@uni.lu
Ombuds	ombuds@uni.lu
Dean of the FHSE Faculty	robert.harmsen@uni.lu
Vice-Dean of the FHSE Faculty	janne.flengler@uni.lu
Head of the DSHSS	lena.steveker@uni.lu
Vice-Head of the DSHSS	Nomination ongoing
DSHSS Doctoral School Facilitator	laura.spadon@uni.lu
DSHSS Study Programme Administrator	merima.bahovic@uni.lu
Doctoral Programme Director Education	michelle.proyer@uni.lu
Doctoral Programme Director Humanities	Nomination ongoing
Doctoral Programme Director Psychology	robert.kumsta@uni.lu
Doctoral Programme Director Social Sciences	robin.samuel@uni.lu
Faculty Teaching Finance	fhse_teachingfinance@uni.lu

Welcome from the Head of the Doctoral School



The DSHSS recruits Doctoral candidates from all over the world, and we are pleased to be a multilingual, multinational and an interdisciplinary Faculty. We are committed to your training and to ensuring that your research journey is of the highest standards.

The University of Luxembourg currently has over 1,100 Doctoral candidates, of whom approximately 220 are in the DSHSS, spanning a variety of cultures and nationalities. Our supervisory body comprises 170 academics from diverse disciplines and backgrounds, involved in your supervision and spread across more than 12 disciplines. We recruit only the best and the brightest, with some of the strongest backgrounds in their specialisms in Europe and beyond. We encourage interdisciplinarity and within our Doctoral School, we support students in becoming involved and part of this thriving community.

Our goal is to support your growth into independent scholar-researchers capable of making critical and innovative contributions to knowledge. The core academic skills we hope you will develop include critical thinking, mastering and applying research methods and design, conducting effective data analysis, academic writing, and publishing, all the while adhering to ethical and responsible research standards.

We encourage you to become acquainted with the University of Luxembourg's policy on ethics of research, which you can find at [Ethics and Integrity](#)

As a key member of staff or as a Doctoral candidate, we have extremely high expectations of you. We encourage you to develop your analytical skills, your critical thinking, your communication, and methodological skills. We want you to make significant contributions to all the sectors of employment, whether academia or the private sector. We know that Doctoral candidates are a key component of a successful knowledge economy, and as such will in future be leaders of our society across all domains.

We would also like you to move beyond the boundaries of your own discipline and broaden your horizons through research work and competitive projects.

Our purpose is to make everybody feel welcome. If you should need it, you can always find someone in our School who will support you with advice on any problems that might arise, large or small, academic, or personal.

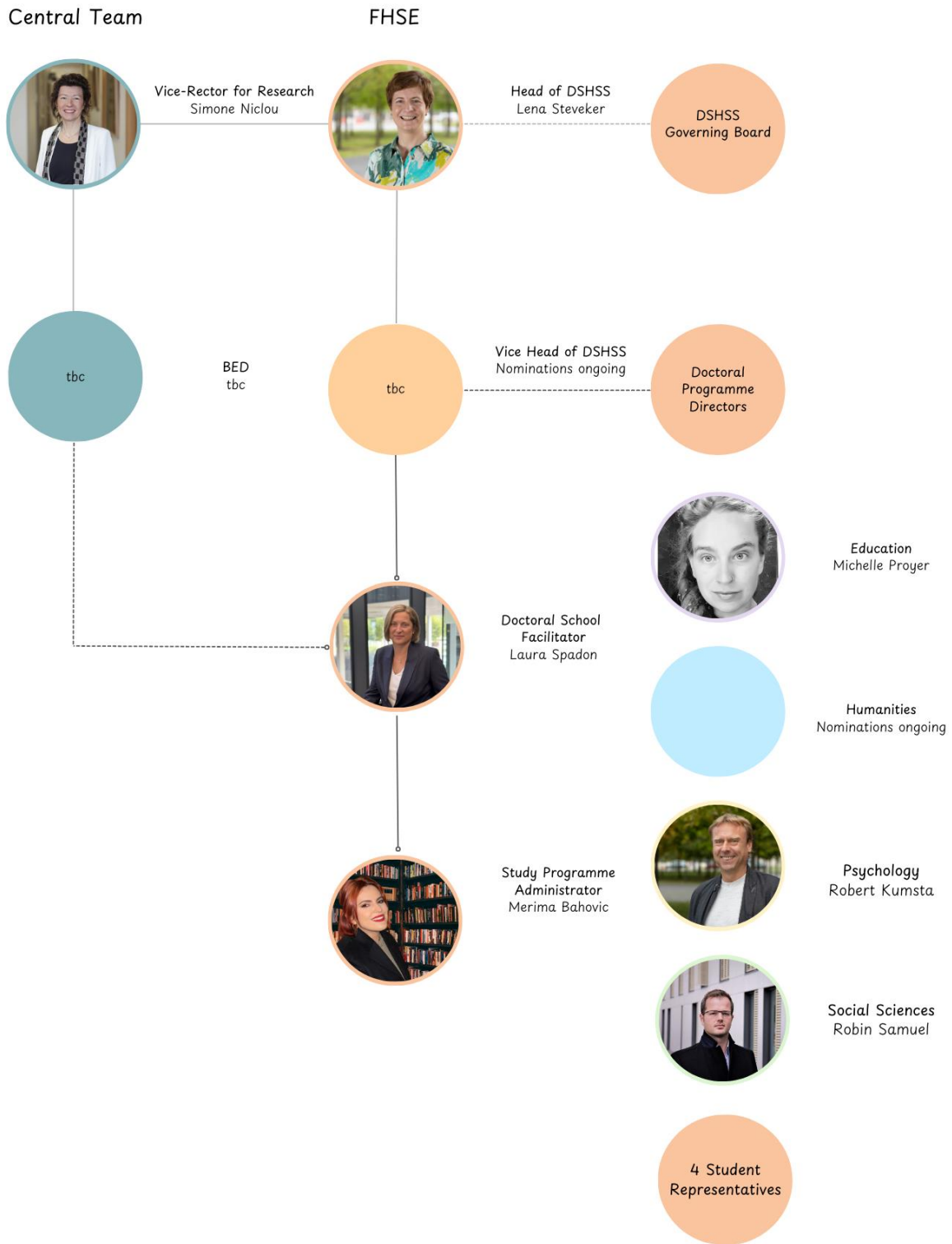
This handbook is your introduction to your Doctoral School, your learning environment, and the research community as well as to key policies and tools you will need in your Doctoral candidate journey within our Faculty. It should be read in conjunction to the central PhD brochure.

We look forward to welcoming you to the DSHSS, and my colleagues and I wish you a very enjoyable and rewarding start to your PhD journey!

Prof. Lena Steveker

Head of the Doctoral School in Humanities and Social Sciences

DSHSS Structure



In her capacity as Head of the DSHSS, Prof Lena Steveker consults centrally with the VRR, Prof Simone Niclou.

- Prof Simone Niclou is assisted by the BED (Bureau d'Études Doctorales). As VRR, she sets the general strategic guidelines for Doctoral Education in conjunction with the faculties.
- The DSHSS sits in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, and in this context the Head of the Doctoral School reports to The Governing Board of the DSHSS.
- The Head of the Doctoral School is assisted by the Vice-Head of the DSHSS and by a Doctoral School Facilitator and a Study Programme Administrator.

Doctoral Programme Directors head up the four distinct programmes offered by the School: Education, Humanities, Psychology, and Social Sciences.

1. The DSHSS Structure

1.1. The Doctoral School Team

Lena Steveker – Head of the Doctoral School

Lena Steveker joined the University of Luxembourg in September 2020. Her research interests are early modern English literature and culture as well as contemporary British fiction and popular culture. Lena holds a Doctoral degree from the Friederich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg. Before coming to Luxembourg, she taught at Saarland University and at Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen, and she was a visiting research fellow at the University of Sussex.

Nomination ongoing – Vice-Head of the Doctoral School of Humanities and Social Sciences

Laura Spadon – Doctoral School Facilitator

With over 15 years of experience as an HR specialist in the private sector in London, Laura transitioned to academia in 2015, taking on teaching and programme management roles. She is an active member of both the UK Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development and the Higher Education Academy. Laura has also taught English at University College London and other higher education institutions.

In her current role, Laura is dedicated to ensuring the smooth coordination, management, and development of the doctoral school and its policies. She works closely with the Dean of the Faculty, the Head of the Doctoral School and the VRR team to maintain high standards

of effectiveness, efficiency, and quality. Laura's work is supported by a Doctoral Programme Administrator, who assists her in the day-to-day operations.

Merima Bahovic - Doctoral Programme Administrator

Merima holds a Master's degree in Contemporary European History and has managed the Moodle platform and course programme for the Doctoral School in Humanities and Social Sciences for five years as a student assistant. She currently holds the role of Study Programme Administrator. Her professional experience also encompasses various internships in language teaching and pharmacy.

Merima conducts the various tasks for all the Doctoral School programmes, including digital transformation, Moodle, planning, system and database updates, ECTS validation, transcripts and the organisation of defences.

1.2. The Doctoral School Governing Framework

1.2.1. The Governing Board

The DSHSS is regulated by a Governing Board comprising the Dean of the Faculty, the Heads of Department, the Doctoral School, the four Doctoral Programme Directors (DPDs), a representative of the Luxembourg Centre for Contemporary and Digital History (C2DH), and the Student Representatives. The Governing Board meets **at least once a year** to discuss matters and policies related to the Doctoral School and to approve new policies and procedures.



1.3. The Doctoral Programme Directors

The DSHSS has 4 Doctoral Programme Directors. Their role is to:

- Oversee and approve the course programme for their specific stream
- Approve new Doctoral Candidate recruits and their project proposals
- Support the Head of the DSHSS in formulating policies and procedures
- Co-sign the Doctoral Education Agreement (DEA) for the candidates in their Doctoral Programme
- Approve ECTS credits for Doctoral candidates in their stream
- Participate in committees for the selection of Research Grant candidates and Excellent Thesis Award winners as well as other awards (for example, the Rolf Tarrach award).

1.3.1. Doctoral Programme Director Education – Michelle Proyer

Michelle Proyer joined the University of Luxembourg in May 2024 as Professor of Inclusive Education. Before that, she worked at the University of Vienna in Austria, where she also coordinated the teacher education program as well as the BA and MA in Inclusive Education. Her teaching and research focus on inclusive education both in and out of school, and on inclusion as a societal effort.

In her role as program director, she looks forward to the opportunity to join, learn from, and support an experienced interdisciplinary team. Teaching and supervision are central tasks in the academic profession but too often receive less appreciation than they deserve. She is committed to supporting students and colleagues during this important stage of their careers.

1.3.2. Doctoral Programme Director Humanities – Nominations ongoing

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1.3.3. Doctoral Programme Director Psychology – Robert Kumsta

Robert Kumsta joined the University of Luxemburg in May 2021. He studied psychology at the University of Trier, Germany, and received his Ph.D. in Psychobiology from the University of Trier in 2007. Following his post-doc positions at the Social, Genetic & Developmental Psychiatry Centre, Institute of Psychiatry, King’s College London, and the Laboratory for Biological and Personality Psychology at the University of Freiburg, he was Professor and Chair of Genetic Psychology at Ruhr University Bochum. His main research interests concern long-term consequences of childhood adversity on health and behaviour, with a particular focus on the mechanisms of biological embedding of psychosocial experience.

1.3.4 Doctoral Programme Director Social Sciences – Robin Samuel

Robin Samuel is Full Professor of Youth Studies at the University of Luxembourg. Since 2020, he has served as Head of the Centre for Childhood and Youth Research and Head of the Youth Studies Research Group. Before joining UNILU in 2016, he conducted research at the universities of Basel, Bern, Cambridge, Edinburgh, Johannesburg, Pretoria, and Stanford.

Robin’s research interests include youth, digitality, health and well-being, sustainability, and research methods. He leads theory-driven projects involving the collection and analysis of large-scale datasets and the application of advanced statistical techniques. In addition, some of his work employs experimental designs and qualitative methods.

He has served on a range of teaching and research steering committees and supervised several Ph.D. theses. Building on this experience, Robin aims to foster an inclusive doctoral programme grounded in internationally recognised research standards, while remaining responsive to UNILU’s context and valuing methodological and epistemological diversity.

1.4 Student Representatives

DSHSS student representatives are an integral part of the Doctoral School. Each programme has a representative, rotating mostly every two years. Student Reps represent the Doctoral candidates in their specific Doctoral Programme, give feedback to the Dean and the Head of the Doctoral School at Governing Board meetings, and assist Doctoral candidates with any queries they might have. They are also responsible for representing the four different Doctoral Programmes at meetings with the Vice Rector for Research, which typically occur annually.

2. Community and Representation: Your Voice, Your Space

Every two years, you will vote for a Student Representative within your Doctoral School programme. Your Student Representative will meet with other Doctoral School representatives every term and will be encouraged to pass on your experiences, suggestions, and queries. We work to act on your feedback as much as we can, and this has resulted in improvements to your assessments, teaching, and events. Should you be interested in supporting or becoming a Student Rep please do not hesitate to contact the Doctoral School Facilitator.



Doctoral Candidates in our School also have access to their own dedicated PhD room on the Mezzanine Floor of the Maison des Sciences Humaines (room number: M00-025210) just opposite the DSHSS Doctoral School Office (room number: M00-25180). All students including self-funded individuals have access to this space.

This is a dedicated room managed by doctoral candidates and accessible only to you. It provides a workspace and an ideal area for networking and building a sense of community and belonging among PhD students, who often work in isolation.

The proximity to the Doctoral school office will also facilitate better communication between Doctoral candidates and the Doctoral School administration.

Notice boards are provided for you to add posters, and any information to keep students informed and engaged. We welcome any feedback on the use of the PhD room, which you should refer in the first instance to your dedicated Student Rep.

A specific digital feedback box has been set up for doctoral candidates to give the DSHSS constructive feedback on courses, credits, and any other matter. **It is intended for constructive input and not for lodging complaints.** You can access it here: [Feedback Box – Fill out form.](#)



2.1. Academic Writing Cafés

You are encouraged to develop your academic writing skills not only by attending language courses at the University of Luxembourg and other Doctoral candidate specific writing courses, but also by organizing and facilitating Writing workshops. The library can at your request hold a space for Doctoral candidates in the DSHSS once a week should you want to use a common space for writing. You can either participate in a writing workshop and/or help to find facilitators that can guide you in this process. The librarian specialists can be contacted for bookings at “Ask a librarian” askalibrarian@uni.lu

In the past, 3 to 4 students have taken the lead and organised writing retreats in Youth Hostels in Luxembourg. If you want to do this, please contact the dshss@uni.lu and discuss how you can get involved!

2.2. Good Scientific Practice / Research Ethics

At the link [Ethics and Integrity](#) you can find a Moodle page with different types of resources (either sponsored by the University or free of access) to get started with Research integrity, Ethics & Good Scientific practice.

A large variety of formats is available: Epigeum e-learning modules (with a University of Luxembourg subscription), MOOCs (with free registration), interactive tutorials with role plays, videos, articles, other guides, etc.

2.2.1. Epigeum

As Research integrity courses are compulsory, they are often oversubscribed. The Central BED Team have therefore made an online offer available via the provider Epigeum. Epigeum is a professional online course platform, run by Oxford University Press. The choice for this resource was made in collaboration with the Doctoral Schools and this e-learning fully

complies with ethics training requirements to undertake one course on this topic, as per University study regulations.

You will need to complete the following modules:

- Research integrity - Core
- Research integrity - Supplementary: Conflict of interest
- Research integrity - Supplementary: Intellectual property

Other supplementary modules are also available, and you can take them if you are interested. You can download a certificate for the Research Integrity (Core training) once you have completed all the modules. For the supplementary courses, you can download each individual certificate once modules are completed. All certificates can be downloaded directly from the platform. To gain access to Epigeum, you first need to create your account. The account needs to be created with a UNI email address format to be recognized on the platform. Link: [Epigeum](#). Please contact the DSHSS for login details.

2.2.2. Other Good Scientific Practice Courses

The DSHSS organises two-day Good Scientific Practice courses for a limited number of students per course. These courses are typically run by an external facilitator and complement the Epigeum offer by going into much more detail on ethics and ethical practices in research. The courses are advertised on Moodle, and you can register when they become available.

2.2.3. Use of AI tools

The use of AI tools to enhance academic results and facilitate advanced research, especially within specific academic fields, has wide potential. In Doctoral education, both Doctoral candidates and their supervisors are expected to uphold the highest standards of academic excellence and research integrity in their academic pursuits. The key to doing so for all parties is to acknowledge the use of AI tools by communicating it clearly.

Clear communication and mutual agreement between candidates and their supervisory committees (CETs) regarding the intended uses of AI tools is of the essence. It calls for a detailed explanation, as well as proper citation, of any instances where AI tools have been employed in the creation of academic work. Any use of AI must comply with the rules of Academic Conduct. See link: [Academic Conduct](#).

The AI Policy is at [Appendix 6](#).

2.2.3.1 DEA

In compiling your DEA, a section should be added where the uses of AI tools for each specific thesis project are anticipated and agreed between supervisors, the CET, and the Doctoral Candidate. They should be adapted to the local disciplinary requirements and the project at hand. In acknowledging this, the DSHSS would like to recognize that there is no one-size fits all approach and that what seems right for some projects may not be right for others. The supervisor should encourage the PhD to discuss what uses of AI they foresee in a mutual discussion between the parties.

2.2.3.2 CET

As the main Doctoral candidates' supervisory body, the CET needs to ideally conduct a brief oral assessment of the written work (co-)designed by generative AI to verify the authorship and scientific work of the PhD, **at every CET meeting**. The PhD needs to explain how they have used AI tools in their research and thus avoided scientific misconduct and plagiarism. Their explanation is then ideally summarized and reported in a specific section of the official CET report and added to the system on the Doctoral candidate's profile.

2.3. Strand Colloquia

Each year, every Doctoral Programme at the DSHSS runs several Strand Colloquia open to disciplinary and, if allowed by the lead lecturer, non-disciplinary Doctoral candidates. You will be expected to present your research work regularly and receive feedback from your peers. Strand Colloquia are essential for you to build knowledge of your discipline as well as meet other Doctoral candidates in your year of study and other experts in your area. This is a key community building opportunity, and you are encouraged to register on one as soon as you start your PhD studies. You need to attend your chosen Strand Colloquium regularly, signing a register of attendance. Strand Colloquia entitle you to 2 disciplinary ECTS, which are however awarded at the end of 6 full semesters of attendance or three full years. Attendance to a Strand Colloquium is mandatory. During your Doctoral studies, you can also choose to attend a second, optional Strand Colloquium, for which 2 ECTS can be obtained after 4 full semesters of attendance.

2.4. Socials

Every year we endeavour to organize at least one PhD social. Everybody is welcome as it is a great way to create your network and to find out about initiatives and funding availability at

the DSHSS. If you have an idea for an event that could benefit your peers, please do not hesitate to contact your specific DPD.

2.5. Conflict resolution

The success of our Doctoral School relies on positive professional relationships amongst all stakeholders. This creates an enabling environment allowing for the free exchange of ideas and the facilitation of learning. However, conflicts can naturally arise due to different perspectives or misunderstandings. University of Luxembourg staff (including PhDs) are expected to abide by the University Code of Conduct at all times. However, in case a conflict arises, or a problem you feel cannot be solved with the help of the supervisor and / or your supervisory committee (CET), you can address the Go-to-team see link: [Go-to-team](#)

Your query will be dealt with the utmost confidentiality. It can concern topics such as:

- Work/academic environment and performance
- Research-related concerns
- Misunderstandings between supervisor and supervisee due to character clashes
- Issues of authorship
- Issues related to a CET evaluation
- Clarification of rules and procedures
- Conflicts of interest

Its applicability is excluded when:

- Any one Doctoral candidate or supervisor addresses the formal hierarchy in the Doctoral School and Faculty with a grievance, including the Head of the Doctoral School, the Dean of the Faculty, Human Resources, and internal Staff Delegation, Rectorate and Vice-Rectorate.
- Any circumstances where there are violations of the law or of the University policy, including cases of:
 - Unlawful acts (criminal or civil)
 - Harassment
 - Bullying
 - Discrimination
 - Safety concerns

Alternatively, you can also address the Ombuds, ombuds@uni.lu

2.6. Student Support Services at U_Matter

U_Matter is committed to ensuring your well-being throughout your time at the University of Luxembourg. Whether you are facing academic stress, personal challenges, or simply need someone to talk to, U_Matter is here to help. Our range of services includes:

- **Mental Health Support:** Confidential counselling and psychological services to help you manage stress, anxiety, or any personal issues you may encounter.
- **Health Services:** Access to medical advice and support, ensuring your physical health is taken care of while you are studying.
- **Social Support:** Assistance with social integration, helping you to build a strong community on campus and beyond.
- **Emergency Assistance:** Resources and guidance in case of emergencies, ensuring you have the support you need in critical situations.

Workshops & Events: Regular workshops, events, and initiatives designed to promote mental well-being, resilience, and a balanced lifestyle.

U_Matter is your go-to resource for maintaining both your mental and physical health, so you can make the most of your University experience. Remember, your well-being matters to us! The contact is Umatter@uni.lu

3. Doctoral Programmes

3.1. Doctoral Programme in Education – DPD: Michelle Proyer

The Research Programme in Education focuses on understanding and fostering learning. Students will gain insights into the complex interplay of the multiple factors that can influence learning processes. The programme scrutinizes learning processes from both a systems' and a learner's perspective. Concretely, different educational systems will be presented, critically compared, and analysed according to various criteria (e.g. structure, performance) using diverse data sources (e.g. internal and external evaluations) and methodologies. Further, current challenges of educational systems such as multilingualism (teaching languages, family languages), heterogeneity (based on students sociodemographic, educational, behavioural, or linguistic profiles) and the use of digital learning/assessment tools will be addressed.

The programme also offers opportunities to focus on specific topics by actively participating in reading groups (e.g. numerical cognition) and (inter)disciplinary colloquia. Crucially, the programme offers numerous methodological courses on measurement theory

(test/questionnaire design), qualitative and quantitative data analysis as well as theorizing and manuscript preparation.

Overall, the programme will help students to develop theoretical knowledge in their specific research domains, be able to position their projects at the meso- and macro level, acquire differential methodological and analytical skills and practice in presenting scientific research in oral and written form.

3.2. Doctoral Programme in Humanities – DPD: Nomination ongoing

The Doctoral Programme in Humanities offers students the possibility to explore the Humanities, dealing with historical, social, and cultural systems of meaning: how they are represented in literature, the arts, and the media, reflected in historical processes, linguistic phenomena, and cognitive structures, and shaped through ideological, ethical, and aesthetical practices. Drawing from sources as diverse as literary texts and social media data sets, from medieval scripts to AI-enhanced artworks, the Humanities investigate the workings of sociocultural practices, the (hidden) power relations they include, the ideological agendas they promote, and the hermeneutic challenges they entail. The programme supports students in developing the self-reflexivity, the critical thinking and the theoretical complexity that defines the Humanities. The disciplines that contribute to the programme of the Humanities strand of the Doctoral School are literary studies and linguistics of English, French, German and Luxembourgish, history, and philosophy. The programme also remains open to neighbouring disciplines, offering interdisciplinary courses that emphasize the field's diverse methodological, theoretical, and conceptual matters, including the history of thinking about culture, language, and society.

3.3. Doctoral Programme in Psychology – DPD: Robert Kumsta

The Doctoral Programme in Psychology provides an overview and in-depth training in contemporary theory and research in the behavioural sciences, primarily focusing on three areas: health, human development and learning processes. In the area of health, we address determinants and mediators of health behaviours and mental health outcomes, and interventions to improve health through modifying behaviour or personal relationships. The domain of human development is viewed from a life-span developmental perspective with particular emphasis on analysis and promoting positive aging (e.g. autonomy, coping with care dependency) and on the role of cultural and cross-cultural factors for human development. In the field of learning processes higher-order cognitive processes (e.g. numeracy, language) and their development are highlighted as well as cognitive adjustment and learning strategies. In the sub-area of teacher and student learning, we examine teaching practices, and theories and practices of educational measurement, assessment,

and evaluation. Educational technology will be explored from the perspective of computer-based assessment. In summary, the programme aims to deepen students' theoretical and methodological understanding and stimulate critical and constructive thinking on current topics in psychological research. Students are provided with the necessary disciplinary and inter-disciplinary skills and knowledge to understand, critically compare, further develop, and apply the different approaches of psychological research.

3.4. Doctoral Programme in Social Sciences – DPD: Robin Samuel

Societal challenges are evolving rapidly, and our doctoral programme in Social Sciences gives a more synergetic, interdisciplinary perspective on this matter. Social science is a set of disciplines (notably demography, political sciences, policies, geography, sociology, socioeconomics, education, etc.) that offer methods, measurements, understandings, as well as innovative solutions to social issues. We propose a range of courses for junior researchers and Doctoral candidates that highlight the prominent position of social sciences in our young but successful international University. The research domains of the Social Science disciplines at the University of Luxembourg explore overlapping themes including the impact of inequalities, migration, the socioeconomic consequences of labour market transformation, changes in financial institutions, youth integration, the impact of social difficulties on populations' health, comparative ageing, and public health policies. We must mention also crucial topics: spatial development and urban planning issues, the consequences of educational reforms, the dynamics of European political and economic integration, and social policies and their consequences for the sustainability of welfare regimes or wellbeing. We support active collaboration with Luxembourg research institutes inside and outside the Faculty (LISER, etc.) to share advanced training opportunities for a new generation of social scientists with a highly competitive profile for international universities and public or private research institutions, official bodies and NGOs.

4. Doctoral Candidate Lifecycle Components

4.1. Dissertation and ECTS (credit) Acquisition

Unless you are on a part-time basis, the time to complete your thesis is 48 months or 4 years from the date of admission. Typically, Doctoral candidates are hired for 36 months, which can be extended for an additional 12 months if the CET is in agreement and with prior Faculty budget approval. You will have an additional 4 months to complete your defence (maximum allowed 52 months). The minimum number of months after which a candidate can defend is 36 months. Prior to your last supervisory committee meeting, you will also need to acquire 20 ECTS, in the following categories:

- 5 ECTS in disciplinary/interdisciplinary courses
- 5 ECTS in Transferable skills courses
- 10 ECTS in any category of your choice

ECTS can be acquired not just by attending courses, summer schools and conferences, but also by completing outreach activities. To find out more about the ECTS acquirement policy, please consult [Appendix 1](#) in this brochure.

4.2. Part-time Doctoral candidates

Part-time students have 8 years (96 months) to complete their doctoral studies. The same rules apply for ECTS acquisition. The minimum number of months after which a candidate can defend is 36 months. The maximum number of months allowed for the defence is 100.

4.3. Extension of Studies

Intermediary CET meetings are scheduled when a request for a suspension of studies is made, such as for maternity leave, sickness, or other reasons as outlined in article 49 bis of the study regulations:

- in case of force majeure,
- limited period of up to one year
- Note that no suspension can be granted retroactively or based on circumstances that no longer apply

The doctoral candidate is not entitled to acquire ECTS credits, during the suspension period and cannot participate in student representative elections or act as a student representative. If a suspension of doctoral studies is being requested, it is important to consider the maximum duration of the work contract, which is 60 months if applicable. For further guidance, please reach out to the HR department (if you are on a contract) and the BED (PhDStudies@uni.lu) if you are self-funded only.

4.4. Doctoral candidates in joint supervision (co-tutelle)

The University may enter into an agreement with one or more foreign higher education institutions to award you a doctorate recognised by the relevant authorities in that country. International co-supervision of doctoral studies is governed by art. 37 (9) of the University law.

Under this arrangement, you must follow the rules regarding doctoral studies and conduct your research under the responsibility of a supervisor in each country/institution. The supervisors undertake to exercise their supervisory responsibilities jointly. Your research is

carried out over alternating periods at the institutions concerned in accordance with the arrangements laid down in the joint agreement.

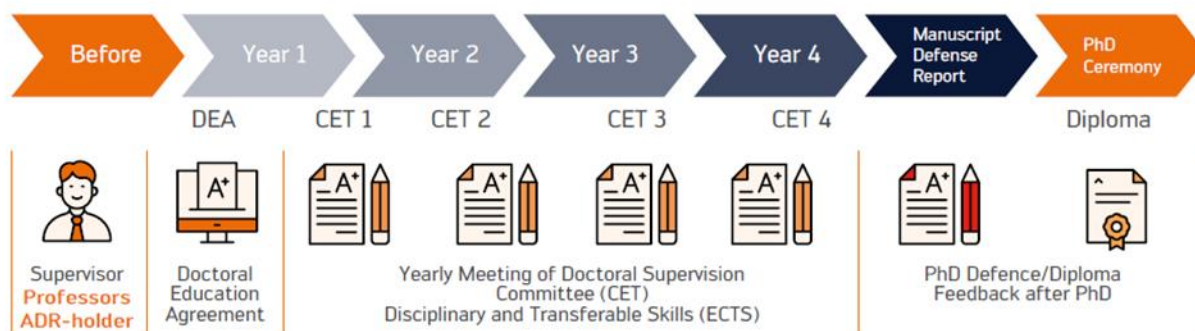
The Rector appoints a Thesis Supervision Committee for the duration of your studies. The Thesis Committee for the thesis defence is selected based on a balanced proportion of members from each institution appointed jointly by the contracting institutions and includes experts from outside these institutions. As a Doctoral candidate in joint supervision, you still need 20 ECTS at the University of Luxembourg. **Up to 10 ECTS can be recognised for activities you have undertaken at the Partner University.** The remaining ECTS will need to satisfy the general rules for ECTS recognition at our Doctoral School.

You can also participate in the Research Grant calls from our DSHSS once a year. This is open to all candidates at the DSHSS on a competitive basis. However, you cannot request funding for travel to and from the University of Luxembourg or for any co-tutelle activities.

To discuss co-tutelle arrangements, you must contact the BED office at phdstudies@uni.lu. Any co-tutelle agreement should be initiated by the supervisor prior to admitting a candidate and needs to be signed within 12 months of the candidate joining.

4.5. Suggested Actions Each Year

It will help if you plan a flexible timeline of what you expect to do each year of your studies and revise it regularly with your supervisor. Please consult the annual DSHSS Course Catalogue on Moodle to find out which courses are available to you.



Year 1 – suggested actions

- Complete the Doctoral Education Agreement with your supervisor. This must be done **within the first six months** of you starting at the University of Luxembourg. It must be signed by you, your supervisor (s) and your DPD, and the external expert if there is one
- If you are in a co-tutelle, you will need to ensure this is signed by both institutions within 12 months of your starting date (contact phdstudies@uni.lu)

- Attend your first CET meeting at the end of the first year. Ensure that you meet all the CET members
- If you are an employee of the University, attend the compulsory HR induction
- Review the induction presentation online
- Attend the PhD Induction days organised by the BED (contact phdstudies@uni.lu)
- Log on and register on Moodle for courses
- Register and attend compulsory courses, including a Strand Colloquium and Good Scientific Practice, also known as Research Ethics
- Take Research Methods Training: courses to be agreed with your supervisor
- Meet regularly with your supervisor
- Investigate availability and access to sources of research
- Acquaint yourself with the European Credit Transfer System validation on Service Now

Ensure you are aware of the GDPR regulations in place at the Uni.lu (see [Data Protection Office - University of Luxembourg | Uni.lu](#)) and the Ethic review panels, see link at [Ethics Review Panel - University of Luxembourg | Uni.lu](#)

Years 2 and 3 - suggested actions

- Maintain regular contact with supervisor
- Provide detailed research, including field of research if applicable
- Attend your second / third CET meeting
- Get involved in any social event with other PhDs
- Acquire ECTS

Year 4 - suggested actions

- Maintain regular contact with supervisor
- Attend your final CET meeting 4
- Ensure you submit your work for plagiarism checks through iThenticate (contact phdstudies@uni.lu for access credentials)
- Submit your thesis via the upload link provided by Service Now
- Contact the DSHSS to organize your defence

4.6. Moodle

Moodle is the University's learning platform where you can register on courses. It is essential that you log on as soon as you start with us as a Doctoral candidate so that you can access and enrol in your required courses and communicate with the course professors in charge. When you log in for the first time, you will receive a one-time password from the IT Moodle

Team. You can then access Moodle with your student email or your uni.lu email if you are an employee of the university and change your password. Should you experience issues with accessing this key platform, please contact the DSHSS Admin Team at dshss@uni.lu.

4.7. Teams – A dedicated PhD Team workspace

The DSHSS have created a dedicated Microsoft Team and SharePoint with individual channels for all the different four programmes available. We add all new PhDs to the Team when they join – however, if you experience some issues in accessing this resource, please let us know and we will endeavour to solve it. You can find the SharePoint space at this link [W_FHSE PHDs - Home \(sharepoint.com\)](#).

4.8. Credit System and Service Now European Credit Transfer System

Whilst you work with us you are required to gain a **minimum of 20** European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System – credits (in brief ECTS). You can do so by engaging in course work as well as thesis work. This is so that you can develop skills and useful knowledge for your thesis, whilst at the same time gaining a solid basis of the context of your research, within your specific discipline, the scientific community and society in general. Course work helps you with networking but also gives you specific hard and soft skills that employers are keen to see in their recruits, for example presentation skills, data analysis and interpretation, report writing skills, and even pitching ideas. The DSHSS and the four Programmes organize a variety of disciplinary/ interdisciplinary and transferable skills (TS) courses. TS courses are also organized by the Transferable Skills Team in the University Competence Centre [ULCC](#) open to all PhDs. You can contact them at ts@uni.lu for more information. Please refer to [Appendix 1](#) for the full DSHSS policy on ECTS.

4.8.1. How to gain ECTS recognition and validation

Service Now is a university platform you can use to request ECTS registration and validation. The requests are approved by your supervisor, the DS admin and then finally, the DPD. You will only need to request validation of non-UL courses on this platform. All UL Courses are **automatically** inserted by the DSHSS Team. Please go to [Appendix 2](#) for detailed instructions on how to access and request ECTS.

5. Thesis Language, Formats and Defence

5.1. Language Requirements at the DSHSS

The language of your thesis can be English, German, Luxemburgish, French or any other language provided the supervisor is fluent in the language of your choice. The choice of language for your dissertation needs to be authorized at the Rectorate level. Candidates applying to any programme at the Doctoral School of Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Luxembourg will be required to demonstrate the following Language skills:

- English language skills: as a minimum B2 level of the CEFR
- Language used for thesis: as a minimum C1 level of the CEFR

These language skills can be demonstrated by providing one of the following:

- an internationally recognised test certificate
- proof of graduation from a Bachelor or Master programme taught in the respective language
- a diploma from a secondary school where the language was (one of) the main languages of instruction
- evidence of your status as a native speaker of the said language

Regarding the Multilingualism Policy of the University, all Doctoral candidates of the DSHSS are encouraged to work on their skills in at least two of the University's languages during their studies.

5.2. Thesis formats

You can write your thesis in the format of a monograph or use separate but connected scientific articles to form what is known as a cumulative thesis. It is the responsibility of the CET, however, to ultimately decide which format your dissertation should take, and any specific demand regarding the articles assembled in a cumulative thesis (e.g. the eligibility of the chosen journals).

The decisions of the CET should be in line with the specific programme guidelines below, but they can depart from them if a specific case calls for it. The criteria for the validity of a cumulative thesis formulated in the guidelines for the individual Doctoral Programmes and/or disciplines are minimum requirements only.

All CETs must guarantee that the quality of the work meets international standards in the respective field of research. Requirements for individual theses may exceed what is

foreseen in these guidelines and might be individually adapted by the CET. The table below indicates the most common formats used for each Programme (see [Appendix 3](#) for more detail):

PROGRAMME

Doctoral Programme in Education
Doctoral Programme in Humanities
Doctoral Programme in Psychology
Doctoral Programme in Social Sciences

USUAL FORMAT REQUESTS

Cumulative Thesis
Monograph (cumulative also possible but rarer)
Cumulative Thesis
Monograph or Cumulative Thesis

