

Assessment Guide Doctoral Programmes for Higher Education Institutions



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Higher Education Institution (HEI):	
Degree Awarding Institution (if relevant):	
Programme name:	
Degree awarded:	
Type of Accreditation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concept Accreditation¹ • Initial Accreditation² • Re-accreditation³
Projected study time and number of ECTS credits/national credits assigned to the study programme:	
Capacity Load (maximum number of study places):	
Programme cycle starts in:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Winter semester • Summer semester • Both winter and summer semester • Other start date: ...
For re-accreditation: last accreditation period	

¹ A concept accreditation applies if the concept of a study programme is supplied but the programme has not yet started.

² Initial accreditation applies if a study programme is running but is not accredited yet.

³ Re-Accreditation applies if the programme is currently accredited.

Principles for the Assessment

FIBAA is a European, internationally oriented agency for quality assurance and quality development, implementing accreditation procedures at HEIs on the basis of internationally recognised quality criteria. The fundamental assessment criteria for this are based on the principles of the [Bologna Declaration](#) as they were laid down in 1999 and later modified. Because of its close proximity to the business world, internationality and employability of graduates are of particular importance for FIBAA. FIBAA conducts the accreditation process with a claim to providing high quality work, transparency, and support for sustainable quality development at HEIs.

FIBAA carries out concept accreditations of new doctoral programmes as well as initial accreditations and/or re-accreditations of ongoing doctoral programmes. All accreditations take place based on FIBAA's own quality requirements, which once fulfilled, results in the awarding of the FIBAA quality seal for doctoral programmes. A non-fulfillment of one of the quality criteria leads to accreditation which is subject to a particular condition. The deadline for the fulfilment of the condition is usually nine months and can be, in duly substantiated cases, either shortened or extended (maximum once by six months).

Additionally, a doctoral programme should be, in the event of its concept accreditation in which only its concept is presented, evaluated like an ongoing programme.

Furthermore, FIBAA awards its FIBAA premium seal for established doctoral programmes, which already have graduates and can present excellent quality that clearly exceeds the quality criteria of FIBAA in both curriculum and teaching within the framework of the accreditation procedure. This award confirms that a doctoral programme as a whole clearly outperformed the quality requirements. It gives interested parties, doctorates, graduates, higher education institutions and the job market reliable information about the outstanding quality of the programme.

In the initial accreditation and re-accreditation of established programmes, the following aspects must be given particular attention:

- evaluation of the programme's success, using various means, including interviews with graduates and alumni-tracking studies,
- review of the calculations of the student workload in the individual modules/courses,
- assessment of evaluation results,
- analysis of the statistical data relating to enrolment rate, examination results, graduation rate, first-year student count, and the percentage of foreign students.

As part of the re-accreditation procedure, the measures taken by the HEI in order to comply with the recommendations given in connection with the earlier accreditation must be reviewed together with all major changes concerning the study programme (i.e. changes to programme content, modularisation/ECTS, staff, equipment, cooperation agreements, etc.).

Quality Profile

Assessment Levels	Excellent	Exceeds the Quality Requirements	Meets the Quality Requirements	Fails to meet the Quality Requirements	n.r.
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Key:

The Quality Levels define to what extent the FIBAA Quality Requirements have been met:

Fails to meet the quality requirements – Does not achieve the given standards.

Meets quality requirements – Achieves the given standards.

Exceeds the quality requirements – Surpasses the given standards.

Excellent – Significantly surpasses the given standards to the extent that the Doctoral Programme can be regarded as an outstanding example of best practice regarding the criterion in question.

n.r. – not relevant

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0 FURTHER INFORMATION

0.1 Information on the Institution(s)

Please describe your institution and give an outline of the programmes offered. Give an account of where the programme seeking accreditation is integrated within the range of programmes offered by the department or the institution of higher education respectively.

0.2 Further development of the doctoral programme, statistical data and evaluation results (for accreditation and re-accreditation), implementing recommendations of already completed accreditation (for re-accreditation)

Please describe:

- for initial accreditation (if students already graduated) and re-accreditation: the development of the programme, the changes which have had an effect on the programme (i.e. programme content, structure, staff etc.), the statistical data concerning number of applicants, number of first-year students, percentage of foreign students, student success rate, average duration of study, and average final grade (see [the FIBAA sample](#) for this). Please also present the results of evaluations and the measures taken as a consequence of the statistical data and evaluation results.
- for re-accreditation: measures to implement prior recommendations.

1 GOALS AND STRATEGY

1.1 Objectives of the Doctoral Programme (Asterisk Criterion)

Please list and justify the qualification objectives of the study programme and relate them to the aspired qualification, as well as to the requirements of the national qualification framework.

Meets quality requirements

The doctoral programme corresponds to the goals of the European and national qualification framework. The doctoral programme and the pursued qualification and competency goals are matched with each other.

Exceeds quality requirements

Furthermore, the subject-related and multidisciplinary possibilities to achieve the objectives have been systematically discussed. The pursued qualification and competency goals are being continuously further developed by taking into account the international research developments.

1.2 Positioning of the Doctoral Programme in the education market

Please give reasons for the positioning of the programme on the education market (regional/national/international).

Meets quality requirements

The doctoral programme is positioned convincingly in the postgraduate education market due to the described profile and the pursued qualification and competency goals.

Exceeds the Quality Requirements

Furthermore, the positioning in the education market was analysed, the attractiveness of the programme with regard to the pursued qualification and competency goals are demonstrated convincingly.

1.3 Positioning of the Doctoral Programme in the Job Market for Graduates (Employability)

1.3.1 in the research fields

Please give reasons for the positioning of the doctoral programme in the research fields (national, international) with special focus on professional qualification for science and research.

Meets quality requirements

The doctoral programme with special focus on professional qualification for science and research is positioned convincingly due to the described profile and the pursued focus of research.

Exceeds the Quality Requirements

Furthermore, the positioning in research fields was analysed. The competitiveness of the programme with regards to the pursued qualification and competency goals is stated.

1.3.2 outside the research fields

Please give reasons for the positioning of the doctoral programme outside the research fields.

Meets quality requirements

The doctoral programme is also strongly positioned outside the science and research field by taking into account the professional qualification for employment due to the described profile and the pursued focus of research.

Exceeds the Quality Requirements

Furthermore, the positioning outside the research field was analysed. The competitiveness of the programme with regards to the pursued qualification and competency goals for employment outside the science and research fields is stated.

1.4 Positioning of the Doctoral Programme in the Strategic Concept of the Higher Education Institution

Please give reasons for the positioning of the doctoral programme in the strategic concept of your higher education institution.

Meets quality requirements

The goal oriented integration of the programme in the strategic concept of the higher education institution is described and presented in a comprehensive manner.

Exceeds the Quality Requirements

Furthermore, the integration of the programme in the strategic concept was convincingly substantiated. The programme presents a consequent continuation of the higher education strategy in the focus of research. The corresponding setting of priorities of the higher education institutions are verified.

1.5 Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities

Please describe the concept of gender equality and the promotion of equal opportunities implemented by your higher education institution in the doctoral programme.

Meets quality requirements

The higher education institution fulfils its tasks in this doctoral programme by promoting gender equality and the enforcement of general prohibitions on discrimination. A claim for disadvantage compensation for disabled students in terms of temporal and formal requirements in the programme as well as for all concluding or accompanied certificates of achievement and within the framework of aptitude testing procedures is ensured.

Exceeds the Quality Requirements

There is an anti-discriminatory concept which is being constantly further developed. The programme management actively promotes equal opportunities and gender equality.

2 ADMISSION

2.1 Admission conditions and procedures (Asterisk Criterion)

Please describe the admission conditions and procedures.

Meets quality requirements

Admission conditions and procedures are properly defined and transparent.

Exceeds the Quality Requirements

Furthermore, they correspond to the profile development goals of the higher education institution.

2.2 Selection procedure

Please describe the selection procedure used in the doctoral programme.

Meets quality requirements

The selection procedure satisfies the legal requirements.

Exceeds the Quality Requirements

A selection procedure, which is targeted to the programme goals, is applied.

2.3 Transparency of the Decision on Admission

Please describe the way the decision on admission is justified, documented and communicated.

Meets quality requirements

The decision on admission is based on transparent criteria and it is clearly communicated; rejections are reasoned. The responsibilities are clearly regulated.

Exceeds the Quality Requirements

Not applicable.

3 IMPLEMENTATION

3.1 Structure

3.1.1 Structural Setup of the Doctoral Programme (Asterisk Criterion)

Please provide an [overview of the curriculum](#), which shows the modular structure of the programme based on the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS).

Please provide the following information as well:

Projected study time	
Number of Credit Points (CP)	
Workload per CP	
Number of modules/courses	
Number of contact hours	

Meets quality requirements

The structure corresponds with the objectives of the doctoral programme and it properly connects the range of courses with the research tasks of the doctoral students.

Exceeds the Quality Requirements

Not applicable, due to formal criteria.

3.1.2 Doctoral Degree Regulations (Asterisk Criterion)

Please describe the way in which the doctoral degree regulations comply with the structural requirements for the programme (goals, degree, duration, mentoring, examinations, dissertation etc.).

Meets quality requirements

The structural requirements of the doctoral programme are accounted for by taking into account the national and higher education specific requirements in a doctoral degree regulation.

Exceeds the Quality Requirements

Not applicable, due to formal criteria.

3.1.3 Status of the Doctoral Students

Please describe the legal status of the doctoral students.

Meets quality requirements

In terms of law and of fact the status is regulated properly.

Exceeds the Quality Requirements

The status benefits the integration of doctoral students in the research fields.

3.1.4 Module/Course Description (Asterisk Criterion)

Please describe how the study contents are documented.

Meets quality requirements

The range of courses/modules are described according to content, scope/duration, requirements, required reading, degree and the qualifications/competencies (outcome oriented) to be achieved.

Exceeds the Quality Requirements

Not applicable, due to formal criteria.

3.2 Contents

3.2.1 Logic and Conceptual Consistency (Asterisk Criterion)

Please give reasons for the conceptual consistency and inner logic of the doctoral programme.

Meets quality requirements

The concept of the doctoral programme (profile elements, unique selling points etc.) and the concrete implementation of the learning objective are matched with each other. The competency concerning enhanced participation in the research field is the issue at the heart of the implementation.

Exceeds the Quality Requirements

Furthermore, the implementation enables the actual research developments to be integrated into the curriculum and suitably involves the individual setting of priorities of the doctoral students.

3.2.2 Science and Research Based Teaching (Asterisk Criterion)

Please describe the indicators (publication, achieved projects etc.) which help to find out, how the science and research based teaching in the doctoral programme is up-to-date. Please give concrete examples.

Meets quality requirements

The teaching presents the current status of scientific knowledge in accordance with objectives and it takes into account the associated relevant research.

Exceeds the Quality Requirements

Furthermore, the current research status is being discussed in suitable lecture forms and pushed ahead through the interaction of doctoral students and scientists.

3.2.3 Focus of the Curriculum on Qualification and Competency Development (Asterisk Criterion)

Please describe in which way the aspired qualification and competency development are realised.

Meets quality requirements

The modules/events are aimed at qualification and competency development and are sensible linked to one another. The goals of a doctoral degree according to the national qualification framework are fulfilled.

Exceeds the Quality Requirements

Furthermore, the doctoral programme promotes consequent competence of methods and the ability to carry out independent research.

3.2.4 Technical Offers

Please describe the technical offers of the course.

Meets quality requirements

The offer covers the relevant requirements of discipline to achieve the pursued research competency of the doctoral students. It corresponds with the focus of research of the scientists and doctoral students involved in the programme. The courses on different research methods and approaches to science are part of the curriculum.

Exceeds the Quality Requirements

Furthermore, the offer of additional events/opportunities individually enhances the contents to achieve the pursued qualification and competency objectives.

3.2.5 Multidisciplinary Qualifications (Asterisk Criterion)

Please describe the way the multidisciplinary qualifications are communicated in the doctoral programme.

Meets quality requirements

Multidisciplinary qualifications in the doctoral programme are communicated in a target appropriate manner. It especially enables the doctoral students to discuss the knowledge gained in the specialised fields with their colleagues, to present it in front of an academic audience and to communicate it to laymen. It promotes the ability to manage a team and

to carry forward the social, scientific or cultural progress in their respective professional environment.

Exceeds the Quality Requirements

Furthermore, the promotion of multidisciplinary qualifications is systematically practiced throughout the overall course of the doctoral programme.

3.3 Examination Procedures

3.3.1 Examinations (Asterisk Criterion)

Please describe the type and level of performance in the examinations.

Meets quality requirements

The examinations are composed in such a manner that the achieved qualifications and competencies can be determined and assessed. This includes, above all, that the certificates of achievement aim for a systematic understanding of the research discipline and the control of the research methods which are applied in this field of research. In addition, the certificates of achievement are aimed at a contribution of research which expands the frontiers of knowledge and withstands a national/international assessment carried out by scientists.

Exceeds the Quality Requirements

Furthermore, the certificates of achievement take into account the results of enhanced participation in the research fields with special focus placed on form and content.

3.3.2 Organisation of the Examination Procedure

Please describe the organisation of the examination procedure.

Meets quality requirements

The examinations are properly organised in terms of number, distribution, process, form registration etc. The disadvantage compensation is regulated.

Exceeds the Quality Requirements

Not applicable, due to formal criteria.

3.4 Didactic Concept

3.4.1 Logic and Comprehensibility of the Didactic Concept (Asterisk Criterion)

Please describe the didactic concept of the doctoral programme.

Meets quality requirements

The didactic concept of the doctoral programme is developed in accordance with the objectives. It is particularly aimed at enabling doctoral students to be able to carry out critical analyses, evaluations and syntheses of new and complex ideas.

Exceeds the Quality Requirements

Furthermore, it is particularly characterised by the systematic derivation from the qualification objectives.

3.4.2 Diversity of the Teaching Methods

Please describe which teaching methods are applied in the doctoral programme.

Meets quality requirements

A mix of methods - irrespective of the teaching objectives and curricular requirements - the modules/courses are executed according to the didactic concept.

Face to face, distance learning

Exceeds the Quality Requirements

The mix of methods promotes enhanced participation in research fields to a great extent.

3.4.3 Networking of the Doctoral Students

Please describe the scientific networking among the doctoral students.

Meets quality requirements

In accordance with the objectives, the programme promotes the exchange of experiences and research results among the doctoral students and it contributes towards the broadening of the research based knowledge.

Exceeds the Quality Requirements

The interaction of the doctoral students is organised in a theme oriented manner.

3.4.4 Scientific Supervision

Please describe the regulations and the practice of the scientific supervision provided for doctoral students.

Meets quality requirements

Being allocated to a supervisor/assessor both in fact and in law secures a continual and intensive professional, methodological and scientific supervision of the doctoral students. A corresponding planning in the time budget is ensured.

Exceeds the Quality Requirements

The individual supervision is regulated through an agreement between higher education institutions, supervisors and doctoral students. The supervision is continuously further developed through quality assurance measures.

3.5 Professional Competencies/ Employability (Asterisk Criterion)

Please describe the way the professional qualification (related to the occupational field) of graduates is assured through the doctoral programme?

Meets quality requirements

The doctoral programme is intended to convey the doctoral students with professional qualification in the scientific and research oriented fields of activity. In doing so, the professional qualification is aimed both at a research oriented activity (including teaching) as well as a practical vocational activity.

Exceeds the Quality Requirements

Furthermore, through the individual options the doctoral programme also enables a specific setting of priorities for the pursued professional qualification.

4 SCIENTIFIC ENVIRONMENT AND FRAMEWORK CONDITIONS

4.1 Teaching Staff

4.1.1 Structure and Number of Teaching Staff (Asterisk Criterion)

Please describe the structure and number of teaching staff for the doctoral programme.

Meets quality requirements

The structure and number of teaching staff corresponds with the requirements of the doctoral programme. The necessary professional breadth and depth in scientific education and the research sponsorship of the doctoral students is ensured. The contractual situation of the teaching staff guarantees a continuous execution of the doctoral programme. A balanced gender ratio is pursued among the teaching staff.

Exceeds the Quality Requirements

Furthermore, the integration of researchers and guest lecturers from other institutes and institutions are systematically established.

4.1.2 Scientific Qualification of the Teaching Staff (Asterisk Criterion)

Please give an overview of the scientific qualification of the teaching staff and their research activities.

Meets quality requirements

The scientific qualification of the teaching staff corresponds to the national requirements. The scientific qualifications are consistent with the focal points of this programme and the strategic planning of higher education institutions. The research activities correspond with the orientation of the doctoral programme and they support the scientific education of the doctoral students.

Exceeds the Quality Requirements

Furthermore, the higher education teachers characterise themselves through a specific, animated publication activity as well as activities in professionally relevant scientific organisations and they enjoy their high-level of recognition in the science sector.

4.1.3 Pedagogical Qualification of the Teaching Staff (Asterisk Criterion)

Please give an overview of the pedagogical qualification of the teaching staff.

Meets quality requirements

The pedagogical qualification of the teaching staff corresponds to the task and it has been proven.

Exceeds the Quality Requirements

Furthermore, the higher education institution provides regular supervision of the teaching staff and it places great value on several years of successful supervisory experience.

4.1.4 Internationality of the Teaching Staff

Please give an overview of the internationality of the teachers.

Meets quality requirements

A considerable number of teachers have relevant experience in international research and/or teaching abroad.

Exceeds the Quality Requirements

Almost all teachers have relevant international experiences in research projects and/or teaching activities abroad.

4.1.5 Internal Cooperation within the Faculty (Asterisk Criterion)

Please describe the cooperation of the teaching body or the institutes of the faculty in this programme in order to promote the development of doctoral students.

Meets quality requirements

There are regular events concerning programme coordination in the faculty which take place.

Exceeds the Quality Requirements

An integrative approach exists through diverse joint events and numerous research and/or practical projects which are cooperatively carried out.

4.2 Cooperation and Partnerships

4.2.1 Scientific Integration of the Doctoral Students (Asterisk Criterion)

Please comment the importance of cooperation with higher education institutions and other scientific establishments, e.g. networks, for the doctoral programme and namely in terms of a scientific integration of the doctoral students and their mobility.

Meets quality requirements

Cooperations with higher education institutions and other scientific establishments are an integral part of the programme. The doctoral students are encouraged to participate in relevant conferences or to take part in other scientific events and establishments.

Exceeds the Quality Requirements

Scientists and doctoral students regularly participate in inter-university research projects. The participation of the doctoral students is a part of the programme.

4.2.2 Networking of the Scientists

Please give an overview of the networking of scientists in their discipline which are involved in the programme.

Meets quality requirements

The scientific networking has a recognisable benefit for doctoral students.

Exceeds the Quality Requirements

Furthermore, the scientific networking is institutionally secured.

4.3 Programme Management

4.3.1 Structural Organisation (Asterisk Criterion)

Please describe the structural organisation/decision-making process in the doctoral programme.

Meets quality requirements

The structural organisation, the decision-making processes, competencies and responsibilities are established and implemented accordingly. Those involved are included in the decision-making process.

Exceeds the Quality Requirements

Furthermore, the complaints procedures and the possibility to lodge a complaint are transparent and known, core processes and responsibilities are established.

4.3.2 Management Support

Please describe the management support for doctoral students and the teaching staff.

Meets quality requirements

Management support concerning the allocation of tasks and persons are transparent and efficiently guaranteed both qualitatively and quantitatively.

Exceeds the Quality Requirements

Furthermore, the doctoral students and the teaching staff are sustainably promoted through the support of management in their teaching and research tasks.

4.3.3 Documentation of the Doctoral Programme (Asterisk Criterion)

Please describe the way the doctoral programme is documented.

Meets quality requirements

The requirements in terms of content, structure, design, duration, study process and examinations are recognised through suitable documentation and publication. The interested parties also have access to the documentation in electronic form and it provides transparency.

Exceeds the Quality Requirements

The doctoral programme is extensively described and updated.

4.4 Material Resources

4.4.1 Quality of the Classrooms and Working Places (Asterisk Criterion)

Please give an overview of the number and interior equipment of the classrooms as well as of the number and the technical equipment of the working places specifically available for programme participants at the higher education institution.

Meets quality requirements

The quantity, quality and IT equipment of the classrooms correspond to the necessities described for the programme. The requirements for disabled students are adequately taken into account. A sufficient number of workplaces are available for the doctoral students. The technical equipment corresponds to the requirements.

Exceeds the Quality Requirements

Furthermore, the equipment corresponds to the modern, multimedia-based requirements. New ergonomic knowledge is taken into account for equipment planning. Separate rooms which ensure an undisturbed working environment are specifically available for use to those participating in the programme.

4.4.2 Equipment (Literature, Magazines, Databases) for the Library (Asterisk Criterion)

Please describe the access to necessary literature.

Meets quality requirements

A reference library is available. Literature, magazines and databases are up-to-date and current in terms of the study contents and research activities of the doctoral students.

Online access for technical literature is guaranteed. Outside of the university the doctoral students have digital access to a large section of the technical literature. The most important databases are accessible totally free of charge.

Exceeds the Quality Requirements

Furthermore, the financial means made available and the present personnel permanently guarantee the useful development of the portfolio. The research interests of the doctoral students are taken into account. There are specific consulting and research opportunities. All databases which are relevant for the doctoral programme are free of charge and are even accessible online outside the university.

4.5 Finance Planning and Financing

4.5.1 Finance Planning and Financing of the Doctoral Programme (Asterisk Criterion)

Please describe the finance planning and financing of the programme.

Meets quality requirements

In accordance with the objectives, the finance planning takes into account the staff planning for scientific employees/doctoral positions. The necessary financial basic equipment and financing security are guaranteed for the period of accreditation.

Exceeds the Quality Requirements

Not applicable, due to formal criteria.

4.5.2 Financial Support and Scholarship Programmes

Please describe the financial support for the doctoral programme (scholarships, staff positions) through your higher education institution.

Meets quality requirements

In accordance with the objectives the higher education institution guarantees the financial protection of the doctoral students.

Exceeds the Quality Requirements

Furthermore, the higher education institution actively promotes the support of the doctoral students through third parties (foundations, public promotion programmes, third-party funds etc.) and ensures that the doctoral students can sufficiently concentrate on the doctoral degree.

5 QUALITY ASSURANCE

5.1 Quality Assurance in terms of Contents, Processes and Results (Asterisk Criterion)

Please describe the quality assurance procedure for the doctoral programme in terms of contents, processes and results.

Meets quality requirements

There is a quality assurance procedure in place which is systematically used for continuous monitoring and the further development of quality in terms of content, processes and results. The responsibilities are clearly defined.

Exceeds the Quality Requirements

Furthermore, the quality assurance procedure is specifically aimed at promoting the young researchers.

5.2 Inclusion of Quality Assurance in a Superordinate Quality Concept (Asterisk Criterion)

Please describe the way the quality assurance of the doctoral programme is integrated in the quality concept of your higher education institution.

Meets quality requirements

The quality assurance of the doctoral programme is systematically embedded in the quality concept for the research of the faculty and the higher education institution.

Exceeds the Quality Requirements

Furthermore, the embedding of quality assurance and development of the programme in the quality concept of the faculty and the higher education institution are regularly examined and adjusted, if required.

5.3 Evaluation by Doctoral Students

Please describe the evaluation procedure by doctoral students.

Meets quality requirements

There is a regular evaluation concerning the implementation of the programme carried out by the doctoral students according to a predefined procedure; the results are discussed internally and find their way into the process of quality development.

Exceeds the Quality Requirements

Furthermore, the evaluations, including catalogue of measures, are discussed with doctoral students, and representatives from the sector also take part. Teachers, doctoral students and representatives of the research practice participate in the evaluation procedure.

5.4 Evaluation by Supervisors

Please describe the evaluation procedure by supervisors.

Meets quality requirements

There is a regular evaluation of the implementation of the programme carried out by supervisors according to a predefined procedure; the results are discussed internally and find their way into the process of quality development.

Exceeds the Quality Requirements

Furthermore, the results/knowledge achieved from the evaluation, including the catalogue of measures, are summarised in a report and documented within the higher education institution.

5.5 Evaluation by Third Parties (Graduates, external Peers, Stakeholders etc.)

Please describe the external evaluation procedure.

Meets quality requirements

There is a regular external evaluation according to a predefined procedure; the results are discussed internally and find their way into the process of quality development.

Exceeds the Quality Requirements

Furthermore, the evaluations, including the catalogue of measures are discussed with doctoral students, and representatives of the vocational practice take part in discussions. Teachers, doctoral students and representatives of the research practice participate in the evaluation procedure.