

Annex to the Tuning Validation Brochure:

## **Report on Third Cycle Studies in History**

*Draft*

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## Introduction

This is a draft for discussion. It gathers materials created over the past three years regarding the third cycle of studies in the Bologna structure, that is the 'doctoral' cycle, leading to a Ph.D or similar degree.

Since the Bologna conference of ministers held in Berlin, and especially after Bergen (May 2005), the 'third cycle' has become officially a part of the Bologna process. As such, it takes its place in the general structure that guides the efforts of legislators, academics and administrators engaged in the quest for quality in higher education -- in countries even more numerous than the 45 that have already signed the Bologna agreements.

The European History Network, formerly known as CLIOHnet and at present as CLIOHnet2, has cooperated with the Tuning Educational Structures in Europe project to develop guidelines and reference points for History courses and curricula in all European contexts. The History Subject Area Group of the Tuning project is formed of CLIOHnet2 members. The History Subject Area Group has analysed the differences in the doctoral programmes in the countries represented in Tuning. CLIOHnet2 has added to this analysis data on still other countries.

Furthermore, the History Network has given rise to a Sixth Framework Network of Excellence, CLIOHRES.net, which includes ninety doctoral students from 31 countries as official members. These doctoral students too have analysed the very differing systems in which each of them are operating, and have had the opportunity of discussing their findings together in an Assembly held during the CLIOHRES Plenary Meeting in Reykjavik on 9 December 2006. CLIOHnet2 doctoral students too presented data on their doctoral programmes which was considered at the Reykjavik meeting.

The findings of the doctoral student Assembly are summarised in reports elaborated by the students themselves, and the data on which they are based are now analysed by other members of both Networks and by the Tuning Subject Area Group.

This draft has been prepared to facilitate the discussion with a view to arriving in January 2007 at a finalised version for publication. Contributions to the discussion from the participating Networks and from the academic community and the public at large are welcome. They can be uploaded on the [www.clioh.net](http://www.clioh.net) or [www.CLIOHRES.net](http://www.CLIOHRES.net) websites or sent to coordinating team of the Networks following the indications given on the sites.

## **The 'Doctoral Paradox'**

Bologna initially was seen as being 'about' recognition for mobile students. Today the role of the reforms entailed under the name of the Bologna Process have a much broader scope, and are intended to facilitate 'mobility' in a vaster sense: of employment, of studies, of thought and of mind. The idea that Europe has the duty of developing its great potential in the fields of knowledge, culture and research has become commonplace: how to meet the challenge is the object of reflection and debate as well as many projects and workshops.

Recognition projects address how the tools of recognition (the Diploma Supplement, for example) should be used to facilitate understanding of Bologna degrees in partner countries. Is the first cycle degree that a student holds sufficient to ensure access to the second cycle in another country? Diffidence, ignorance and mistrust are certainly much reduced with respect to the 'pre-Bologna' period. But even today, Universities and recognition agencies may look with unmerited diffidence at students coming from other countries.

There is however an exception: the doctoral degree. Almost everywhere, the doctoral degree is accepted, as long as it has been granted by a reputable University. The doctoral degree is the 'research degree', the degree that retains its high academic value; the bulwark of academic excellence -- that mystic quality which professors and faculty councils Europe-wide sometimes claim to see as endangered by the 'Bologna process'. The 'doctor' has certainly carried out original research and is prepared to continue to do so. The 'doctor' will be able to teach in a University and will be able to form other doctors in due time.

And yet, when we look more closely at how a student obtains his or her doctorate in various countries and in various Universities in those countries, we are surprised to find striking differences. It is true that all systems ask their doctoral candidates to present a piece of original research, but at that point, truly, similarity ends.

Paradoxically, doctoral degrees are the those most easily accepted by academics as equivalent -- whereas in fact they may vary amongst themselves even more greatly than did the undergraduate pre-Bologna degrees.

The differences are of many sorts: legal length, length in practice, whether or not there is a 'taught part' of the degree programme and if there is, its nature; entry requirements; levels of support and criteria for receiving it; whether or not credits are used; the supervisory structure; whether or not the candidate has teaching duties, how long the written dissertation must be, how the final discussion or approval takes place; what the prospects of employment are -- the list goes on, and variation is very marked. Added to the variations in the formal requirements for obtaining the third cycle degree, there are others: in many countries doctoral studies are in a period of transition. Working students may live far from their supervisors whom they may rarely see. Nearly everywhere students are concerned -- many are dissatisfied -- by what they perceive as a lack of organisation, a lack of strategies for developing methodological and conceptual tools, a lack of useful and broad competences for future employment -- as well as with lack of support by their professors and contact with their peers.

Overall, it seems fair to say that although resistance to applying Tuning and Bologna criteria to the third cycle may be strong, it is important to look closely at this rapidly changing reality, using the tools and the methodologies developed for the first two Bologna cycles in order to improve the fate of our doctoral students -- who will -- or should -- become one of the greatest resources of our continent, the intellectual elite of the future.

## **The Surveys**

The History Networks have carried out several surveys and intend to extend them in the future. The original analysis of third cycle studies in History took place in the Tuning Subject Area Group, where the members had the privilege of being able to compare the situations in their many countries around a table, viva voce. On the basis of the results obtained and the questions asked, a first questionnaire was prepared and distributed, among Tuning and CLIOHnet partners.

This questionnaire admittedly centred on structures and systems, rather than on students' expectations and perceptions of their experience. In fact, it was sent to academics to develop a picture of the varying formal, normative and practical structures in the different countries. Questions dealt with were:

- legal and actual length of studies
- entry requirements
- kind of support
- organisation of doctoral studies (schools, departments...)
- supervisory structure
- use of credits
- taught part of studies
- research periods abroad
- typology of the dissertation
- requirements for defence of the dissertation

and the like.

The questionnaire and answers regarding specific countries are included in Annex 1 to this report.

Subsequently, the thinking of the Tuning Subject Area and CLIOHnet2 members developed and brought them to reflect on various questions from a point of view much closer to the student. These were for example:

- what competences are actually useful to young people attempting to make their way in the environment of academic research or forced to look for employment elsewhere?
- what chances of employment do new 'doctors' in History have?
- do they have competences which can be useful in non-academic employment, if that should be their temporary or permanent destiny?
- are these competences that they naturally develop doing their research work? or are should other activities be promoted to foster those competences?
- can potential employers be made aware that doctors in History have very great abilities which may be useful to them, even if their sector of activity is not historical research?

Further elements were introduced into the reflection of the Tuning Subject Area Group and CLIOHnet2 members because of the discussion on the doctoral cycle as relating to the Dublin Descriptors and the EQF. They also looked with interest at the findings of the other Subject Areas, the other Thematic Networks and particularly those belonging to HUMAN PLUS, the Archipelago of Humanistic Thematic Networks, with whom structured sharing of Tuning findings took place.

In the debate about the EQF concern was expressed that many who receive doctoral degrees are basically not employable except in very narrowly specialised branches of research. Instead, theoretically, a more advanced level of study should bring with it a broadening of knowledge and understanding and greater ability to face with intelligence the great problems that challenge society, not only in Europe.

So new levels of questions were introduced into the questionnaires sent to the CLIOHnet2 and CLIOHRES doctoral students: questions concerning their expectations for further employment; the competences they are judged on at present; the competences they already build in the course of their doctoral studies and how they think that the existing programmes can be improved.

The answers to the questionnaires are reproduced in Annex 2 to this report.

## **The Results of the Student Survey**

The first results are based on a group of 67 questionnaires received from third cycle History students. The students come from 29 countries. Since the countries participating in the Networks are more numerous, in the near future we should receive further data. However, from the questionnaires already submitted, we can see – alongside some instructive areas of divergence -- a series of matters on which the students' evaluations largely coincide, or at least tend to form recognisable patterns.

The data received describes in some cases the post-Bologna situation; in others a situation not yet modified by the Bologna process, and in the rest a transition period.

## **Gender and Age**

In addition to answering the questions about their studies, the students were asked to indicate their age, sex and what languages they read and speak.

Not all did so: of the 58 that gave their age and sex a slight majority is male (32 to 26). Whether or not this difference is significant is a good question; but it is surprising because the questionnaires were sent to slightly more women. What does seem to indicate a possibly significant difference is the age distribution. Although the total extension of the men's ages is greater (from 23 years to 56 years of age in the case of the men and from 23 years to 48 in the case of the women), most of the male doctoral students fall between 26 and 30, whereas the women are distributed along a much flatter curve, and the majority falls between 28 and 33. This may indicate different choices made because of maternity (explicitly mentioned by several female students), or more in general adapted to different choices and constraints.

## **Length of studies by law and in practice**

It is not a surprise to find that in all countries the legal number of years (sometimes defined as a minimum) for doctoral studies in History is exceeded in practice. There is no exception to this rule. Only a few countries have a maximum number of years after which the student may no longer take the degree.

With the exception of Portugal (where the implementation of Bologna will no doubt change the situation) most countries foresee 3 years and a few 4; in practice the estimates of the time necessary to complete the degree go from 4 to 10 years, with most estimated times of 4 to 5 years. A few countries place a maximum number of years (IT) or fine students who do not get their degree within a set time (Romania), but in most cases it is the lack of financial support after a certain number of years that makes it impossible for students to prolong their studies further.

## **Entrance requirements**

As to entrance requirements, only one country, Ireland, allows persons not holding a second cycle degree to enrol in the third cycle, although this requirement is somewhat attenuated in the UK by the possibility of entry with a 1 year Masters. All other countries require a first cycle (180-240 ECTS) and second (120 ECTS) degree.

Having said this, we can identify three types of conditions for enrolment. In a very few countries anyone or nearly anyone holding a second cycle degree can enrol in doctoral studies (ES or theoretically CH); in most countries the potential doctoral student must present a research project or proposal for his/her dissertation, find a willing supervisor (professor or tutor) and be approved by a faculty or department committee (or in some cases by a research board or the academic senate). There are a few cases where having support is the limiting factor (in SE it is necessary to demonstrate having support for 4 full years in order to enrol). In a few, there is a true *numerus clausus*, in which there is local or national competition for a fixed number of places. This is the case in Italy, and in substance also in Hungary, where a fixed percentage of graduates of the second cycle may enrol in the third. In both the Hungarian and the Italian case, one half of the persons excepted receive a stipend, the other half do not. It is obvious that the more rigid selection procedures (national competition with oral and written exam in the Italian case) are connected with the fact that a stipend is given, albeit only to percentage of those who are victorious in the competition.

### **Overall judgement on current programmes**

Of the 67 students who submitted their questionnaires, there are very few who give unqualified approval to the current organisation of doctoral studies in their country. Complete satisfaction is expressed only by two Serbian students and one Swedish student (although all three have criticisms to offer elsewhere in the questionnaire). Most give a nuanced judgement. The elements most commonly mentioned are: lack of guidance and supervision; lack of contact with other students and other scholars; lack of serious methodological preparation. It is clear from the answers that these same factors are seen both in a positive and a negative light: freedom and lack of guidance go together, and students seem to be torn between their enjoyment of the freedom that goes with original research and their discomfort or fear of the responsibilities that freedom entails. The length of the dissertation is questioned in some cases (e.g. Spain), and some students express their desire for more selective entry criteria – evidently fearing the inflation of numbers and the lack of posts in the academic world. Individuals give a different shading to their answers [“Very free. Time-consuming but better than having to obey a professor who knows nothing about it”; “everything can be improved”; “should be better organised, but freedom is valuable too”].

### **Employment prospects**

It is taken for granted (in almost all cases) that the reason for doing doctoral studies is to be able to undertake an academic – research career in the higher education sector. It is also taken as an unquestioned fact (except in a very few cases) that it will be very difficult and in practice impossible to find such employment. The exception is those who already teach at the university: in their case, receiving the third cycle degree will improve their situation. Other possible employment prospects are, first of all, teaching in schools; then working in museums, archives, international bodies or elsewhere. Here too though the prospects of teaching are good for those who already have a post: the third cycle degree will improve their status and their pay. Those who do not already teach express the fear that they will not be able to find places because having a doctorate they ‘cost more’ to the schools, which will hence prefer to hire someone else (unless the candidate hides his/her doctoral title).

### **Competences gained at present**

Students have a very good understanding of the competences gained by doing the research for their dissertation, and are fairly eloquent in describing them. The question gave a number of examples, with the intention of assisting the students to imagine kinds of competences that they may not habitually consider. As result there was possibly an overemphasis on the competences used as examples themselves. Nonetheless, answers yield a number of elements which are not inevitably achieved through the production of a research dissertation alone. These are for example:

“Ability to analyse, to express thoughts, make interdisciplinary connections”; Analyse historical problems in a critical and interdisciplinary way, synthesizing results so as to bring new solutions and conclusions”; “conceptual thinking, organisation of work, time and resources, presentation in public”; “working in teams”; “Systemic and integrated analysis of empiric and theoretical data”; “analyse fragmentary data and prospect new interpretations”; “self-discipline and art of organising”; “ability to lead a project”; “ability to present complex materials in a structured way”; “experience in publishing articles and organising meetings”; “experience in how to survive financially as a scientist” are some of the competences mentioned.

When asked how their doctoral work is judged by the academics in charge, the students quite unanimously state that the criteria are implicit, because no one tells them what the criteria are. The criteria they imagine that their supervisors or doctoral committee use are for example, amount of work done (pages written, number of archives consulted); structure of dissertation; clarity of presentation; coherence and consistence of conclusions; language ability; knowledge of up-to-date tendencies and debates; ability to develop an argument coherently; ability to analyse partial evidence; ability to understand different thought patterns and the like.



## **The Desiderata**

It is clear that in our doctoral survey, as in all human endeavor, it is difficult to imagine exactly what we want when we do not have it, just as it is difficult to imagine not having what we already have and take for granted.

History doctoral students and their professors all consider that the doctoral thesis and the research that leads up to it is the crowning glory of a course of study: and indeed, students and professors alike describe the many key competences -- and very important ones -- that students acquire by preparing and successfully defending a dissertation. These competences are not only 'critical analysis'; ability to interpret fragmentary evidence and to give it narrative form, and the like, but also self discipline, organisation of time and ability to deal with bureaucracy: all useful competences indeed.

Nonetheless, whether or not they believe that they will be able to undertake an academic or research career, almost all students would like more competences, some of which would help them to write a better dissertation, and some of which are relatively independent of the skills connected with the dissertation.

There is quite an area of agreement in our doctoral students' desires for improvement in their programmes. This comprises understandable desires for more financial support; that the period of support include maternity leave; that the selection process be more rigorous.

The most strikingly generalised request is for more methodological, theoretical and technical courses, seminars and/or workshops. Students stress that these should not be impromptu discussions by senior staff, but rather high-level structured seminars, carefully prepared, in which real discussion can take place. Students want independence -- but independence with intelligent support.

Many students declare that they are lucky because their own supervisor is excellent: but even in this case they would like more structured support from a school rather than from a single person.

## **The Assembly and its Findings**

We had the opportunity of assembling the nearly 90 doctoral students who participate in the Network of Excellence CLIOHRES. We decided to ask them to discuss the results of the survey. The Assembly was held in the University of Iceland, Reykjavik, during the Second Plenary meeting of CLIOHRES Net, and the two doctoral students from the host University, Olafur Rastrick and Erla Hulda Halldorsdottir, were responsible for organising it. They created a grid for discussion, based on 12 questions, which were not identical to those in the questionnaire:

### **Preliminary questions for doctoral student assembly**

1. Should there be a taught part of doctoral programs? What should that consist of?
2. Should teaching be a part of doctoral programs?
3. Should advisors/supervisors be actively involved at every stage of the research? Are they at present?
4. What kind of involvement on behalf of advisors/supervisors is most useful or beneficial for the doctoral student?
5. Should doctoral courses focus more on other skills than academic research as a large proportion of the students will not go on to academic positions after graduation? If so, what types of competences are currently ignored in the doctoral programs?
6. Participation in networks like CLIOHRES - what's in it for doctoral students? What kinds of skills and competences does participation enhance?
7. What specific problems have we, as doctoral students, encountered in working within CLIOHRES? How can they be rectified?
8. Are we, as doctoral students, acquiring sufficient guidance and encouragement from the seniors in the network, such as in preparing, discussing and writing our articles?
9. Should there be given time at TWG meetings to present and discuss our individual doctoral projects?
10. Should there be time given to special doctoral student sessions at the TWG meetings? What should happen there?
11. What competences and skills should be gained by writing a doctoral thesis?

12. Should there be a limit to the length of thesis? Do we believe that it is more prestigious to write longer than shorter thesis? Should thesis be published prior to the defence?

These questions covered some of the basic issues that seemed to emerge from the Survey: the length of the thesis, whether there should be a taught part of the doctoral programme; and the optimal role of the supervisor or advisory committee.

There were also – as can be seen above – a number of questions having to do specifically with CLIOHRES and the doctoral students role in it.

These had not been included in the questionnaires, which were addressed to students through CLIOHnet2, not all of whom are members of CLIOHRES. This part of the discussion gave significant results, though, showing how important working in an international Network is for meeting the needs and desiderata of today's doctoral students in History.

The Assembly broke up into 6 discussion groups, each responsible for discussing and reporting on 2 of the questions. Later, 6 rapporteurs presented the findings of their discussion group to the CLIOHRES Plenary. The six summary reports can be found below, in Annex 4.

### **EQF and the Dublin Descriptors**

The Bergen Conference (May 2005) adopted the overarching framework for qualifications in the EHEA, comprising three cycles (including, within national contexts, the possibility of intermediate qualifications), generic descriptors for each cycle based on learning outcomes and competences, and credit ranges in the first and second cycles.

The general descriptors for the Third Cycle, elaborated by the Joint Quality Initiative on the basis of the so-called Dublin Descriptors read as follows:

"Qualifications that signify completion of the third cycle are awarded to students who:

1. have demonstrated a systematic understanding of a field of study and mastery of the skills and methods of research associated with that field;
2. have demonstrated the ability to conceive, design, implement and adapt a substantial process of research with scholarly integrity;
3. have made a contribution through original research that extends the frontier of knowledge by developing a substantial body of work, some of which merits national or international refereed publication;
4. are capable of critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis of new and complex ideas;
5. can communicate with their peers, the larger scholarly community and with society in general about their areas of expertise;
6. can be expected to be able to promote, within academic and professional contexts, technological, social or cultural advancement in a knowledge based society.

We may observe that doctoral programmes in History at present focus largely on points 2 and 3. The students' requests for a more carefully planned and executed taught section seems to correspond to the realisation that points 1 and 4 may not always be developed to the necessary extent. Competences which they desire and believe are useful for further employment are those under points 5 and 6. This indicates that doctoral programmes in History should stress broad orientation in the area of historical debate and in that of scientific and intellectual debate in general; ensure that students' general awareness of historical and historiographical problems is as great as their ability to do very specific research projects; and communication -- oral and written - for various categories of interlocutors.

### **Recommendations**

All considered, it seems that the consultation both with History doctoral students and with staff confirm the general lines decided in Bergen by the Ministers of Education of the countries involved in the Bologna Process.



They also confirm the recommendation that was made in Berlin that "Networks at doctoral level should be given support to stimulate the development of excellence and to become one of the hallmarks of the European Higher Education Area". Networks such as CLIOHnet2 and CLIOHRES.net are certainly the most important way in which the deficiencies recognised in the supervisory structure of doctoral programmes today can be remedied.

At Bergen, Ministers approved the following:

... doctoral level qualifications need to be fully aligned with the EHEA overarching framework for qualifications using the outcomes-based approach. The core component of doctoral training is the advancement of knowledge through original research. Considering the need for structured doctoral programmes and the need for transparent supervision and assessment, we note that the normal workload of the third cycle in most countries would correspond to 3-4 years full time. We urge universities to ensure that their doctoral programmes promote interdisciplinary training and the development of transferable skills, thus meeting the needs of the wider employment market. We need to achieve an overall increase in the numbers of doctoral candidates taking up research careers within the EHEA. We consider participants in third cycle programmes both as students and as early stage researchers. We charge the Bologna Follow-up Group with inviting the European University Association, together with other interested partners, to prepare a report under the responsibility of the Follow-up Group on the further development of the basic principles for doctoral programmes, to be presented to Ministers in 2007. Overregulation of doctoral programmes must be avoided.

The importance of this endeavour is confirmed, and must be translated into terms which are specific to our subject area.

CLIOHnet2, CLIOHRES and the Tuning History Subject Area Group are elaborating the final version of their recommendations and this Draft is a tool towards that final elaboration.

Some initial recommendations are the following:

- The use of the Tuning methodology and ECTS tools for the third cycle is advisable and will allow better communication between countries, with students and with employers, and improvement in existing programmes;
- Credits should not be awarded to doctoral dissertations *per se*, but they should be used as a measure of students' time as a tool for organising doctoral studies in a better way than at present;
- Credits should be awarded to the taught part of doctoral studies;
- There should be a taught part of doctoral studies, but it should not be so extensive that it undermines the students' possibility of having extended periods to devote entirely to their research;
- The taught part should be methodologically varied and provide a broad array of interactive, group and self guided activities (It should not consist of lectures by professors on their own specialty);
- The taught part should be designed to meet the students' request to have more general theoretical and methodological knowledge, in order to forge tools for their own specific research;
- Students should not be directed by one supervisor; the more highly structured doctoral school guarantees better guidance and more dependable supervision;
- Doctoral dissertations should be consistent pieces of original research, but not exceedingly long: the point is to acquire and to be able to demonstrate possessing the competences necessary for doing professional scholarly research. Quantity in itself is not quality;
- Students should be encouraged to use all opportunities for acquiring an international dimension in their studies. In particular the extreme usefulness of the History Networks

and their potential for forming pan-European doctoral school needs to be further explored and developed.

Report prepared by Ann Katherine Isaacs, University of Pisa

Annexes:

Annex 1: Questionnaires from Staff (Tuning History SAG)

Annex 2: Reports from Doctoral Students' discussion groups (of the FP6 Network of Excellence CLIOHRES.net)

a. Group 1

b. Group 2

c. Group 3

d. Group 4

e. Group 5

f. Group 6

Annex 3: Excerpt from forthcoming paper by Julia Gonzalez, Ann Katherine Isaacs, Robert Wagenaar, *Applying Tuning Methodology to Third Cycle Studies*.

## ANNEX 1: Tuning Questionnaires from Staff

### COUNTRY: AUSTRIA

**1. What degree (or diploma) is required to enter the 3rd cycle?**

A master's degree (Magisterdiplom) in history or related field

**2. Is there any selection? (financial support, acceptance by a scientific commission, numerus clausus etc.)**

No. The process runs like this: a student decides to do a doctorate and needs to find a professor as patron; if he/she accepts the topical proposal it can be submitted to the study dean who usually accepts it without too much discussion. There are no grants attached and thus also no financial requirements for admittance to a doctoral program.

**3. Length of Studies:**

- **by law:** two years
- **in practise:** three to four years

**4. Is there a taught part? If yes, what sort of learning activity? (research seminars, colloquium, congresses etc.)**

Course requirements are distributed in the following way: 8 contact hours in the field of the dissertation topic (Pflichtfach); 4 contact hours in a related field (Wahlfach).

**5. Are credits allocated? If yes, how many?**

Each of the contact hours is allocated 2 points, i.e. altogether 24 ECTS points; each semester's research and work on the dissertation is allotted 24 ECTS points per semester; the whole program therefore carries 120 ECTS points.

**6. What is the normal dimension (number of pages) of the final thesis or dissertation?**

On the average 250 to 400 pages (not absolutely decreed)

**7. How is the commission composed which evaluates the thesis?**

There are two evaluators of the thesis (Gutachter) and in the final rigorous exam (Rigorosum) a commission of three professors examines the candidate for a period of at least two hours.

**8. Is there a scale of evaluation?**

Yes, the usual from 1 to 5, 1 meaning very good/outstanding and 5 meaning unsatisfactory/failing.

**9. What key competences are taken into consideration to evaluate the work?**

Concrete key competences are not demanded or officially listed. Solid research skills and diligent use of primary sources and decent writing skills are expected.

**10. Are credits allocated to the thesis? If yes, how many?**

Yes, altogether 96 ECTS credit points.

**11. Is there a specific organization inside the university which is in charge of the doctoral programmes?**

There is a director of doctoral studies in every faculty of the university.

**12. Are 3rd cycle students involved in teaching activities?**

Possibly, but very rarely.

**13. Are 3rd cycle students constrained as to mobility?**

Nothing compulsory, but some students spend time abroad, usually at archives.

Prepared by Siegfried Beer, this questionnaire pertains specifically to doctoral studies at the Karl-Franzens-University of Graz. However the situation in Graz is probably fairly typical also for other Austrian universities as well.

COUNTRY : **BELGIUM** (Flanders)

**What degree (or diploma) is required to enter the 3rd cycle ?**

A second cycle degree is the condition (in the old structure: licentiate, engineer, physician, ...; in the new structure: master).

In theory it is possible to enter the third cycle with a first cycle degree. The scientific capacities have then to be proven in advance. As far as I know (and also the administration of my university) this never happens in practice.

**Is there any selection? (financial support, acceptance by a scientific commission, numerus clausus...)**

The first step is the acceptance of a scientific and more or less elaborated project by a promoter. In some disciplines (mostly humanities) a candidate can start with this doctoral research, even if he has no 'position' at the university. This was more common a generation ago than it is today.

When the candidate wants financial support, he has to be or assistant at the university (or at a hogeschool) or he has to be the beneficiary of a research grant (by national of university means). Positions as assistant are of course limited and are the result of the staff policy of the university and the faculty. Candidates, applying for a position as assistant, have to agree with research work for a doctorate. They can have 3 mandates of two years. At the end of every mandate, there is an evaluation, a.o. about the progress of the doctoral research.

The selection procedure for research grants is very strict (success rate: 20 %). Candidates must first try at the national level. When they a positive evaluation but not accepted for financial reasons, they can try at the university level. The number of accepted candidates can be more or less doubled that way.

Financial constraints lead as a consequence automatically to selection.

**Length of the studies:**

- by law : 4 years (the reason why assistants at the university have 6 years is because they have also other work to dot for the department).
- in practice : very different form faculty to faculty (longer in humanities than in exact sciences). I guess: 4.5 years in exact sciences; 5 à 6 years in humanities.

**Is there a taught part ?**

In some universities the taught part is compulsory; in others it is optional (decided by the faculty – not by the doctoral student). Generally, the taught part is more and more introduced since a couple of years. In Ghent the minimum – if introduced by the faculty – is 20 credits, but most faculties have a larger taught part.

**If yes, what sort of learning activity (research seminars, colloquium, congresses ...) ?**

“Traditional courses” are rare and limited (sometimes: methodology of research). Each doctoral student has a commission (headed by the promoter), responsible for the guidance of the progress of the doctoral student (he has to report at least – but mostly more - once a year). That commission recommends on the learning activities of the doctoral student: the programme is more or less individually decided.

**Are credits allocated? If yes how much ?**

See above.

**What is the normal dimension (number of pages) of the final thesis or dissertation ?**

There are a lot of differences between faculties. There are no regulations by law or at the university or faculty level. In exact and medical sciences the number of pages is more less than in humanities.

**How is composed the commission who discusses the thesis ?**

As said above, the “commission of guidance” is established at the very beginning of the research. Only half of them can be member of the jury afterwards. The jury consists of 4

or 5 professors; at least one of them has to be an outsider (from another university; mostly also from another country). The members of the jury meet +/- 1 month after the day the candidate delivered his results of the faculty. A written report of every member of the jury is discussed in presence of all professors of the department. At the end, the whole group decides whether or not the candidate is accepted to the oral defence. Two or three weeks later, the oral defence takes place. This is always open for public. Normally, between 80 and 100 persons are present (colleagues, students, faculty staff, family). The student has to present the results of his work in a presentation of 20 minutes. The members of the jury ask then questions and discuss with the student. The examination takes two hours.

**Is there a scale of evaluation ?**

This is a decision at the level of the university. Since a couple of years, all Flemish universities have decided to delete the scale of evaluation and just to conclude with pass or fail. "Fail" at the end of a public session is very rare: weak candidates are not accepted at the oral part of the examination or are even advised not to deliver their work to the faculty.

**What key competences are taken into consideration to evaluate the work ?**

The Decree on Higher Education (April 2003) describes very clearly the competences for professional bachelors, for academic bachelors and for masters (general competences; general scientific competences; scientific competences for the discipline); but not for the third cycle.

- ability to produce – **in a certain period of time** - an original research which can be published
- ability to retrieve a documentation with primary sources
- implication in the **scientific** background and debates **of the discipline**
- ability to present and discuss scientifically founded opinions in front of peers
- ability to integrate a research team

**Are credits allocated to the thesis? if yes how much ?**

No (or maybe better: not yet).

**Is there a specific organization inside the university which is in charge of the doctoral programmes ?**

At the central level, the Department of Research keeps records of the progress of the candidates and ask for explanation when the research is not finished in the normal period. At the faculty level, a Research Board is examining and commenting the yearly progress reports of the doctoral students.

**Are 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle students involved in teaching activities ?**

- Possibly: in most cases. One of the reasons of the lack of matching between the official and the real period for the research is that doctoral students are involved too much in activities of the department (a.o. teaching activities). At the faculty and university level, the administration and board is taking care of this misuse (sometimes by the professors, sometimes by themselves) of doctoral students.
- Obligatory: not officially.

**Are 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle students constrained to mobility ?**

It is not obligatory, but strongly advised and most doctoral students do go abroad for a certain period. It is proven that a stay abroad during the research period increases the chances on the academic labour market afterwards.

The new law on Higher Education (April 2003) makes double or joint degrees for the third cycle possible (condition: an agreement between the two institutions and a stay of at least six months at 'the other' university).

Prepared by Luc François, Ghent University



## Doctoral Studies: HISTORY

### COUNTRY: GERMANY

#### 1. What degree (or diploma) is required to enter the 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle?

A master's degree (Magisterdiplom) in history or related field

#### 2. Is there any selection? (financial support, acceptance by a scientific commission, numerus clausus etc.)

No. The process runs like this: a student decides to do a doctorate and needs to find a professor as patron; if he/she accepts the topical proposal it can be submitted to the study dean who usually accepts it without too much discussion. There are no grants attached and thus also no financial requirements for admittance to a doctoral program.

#### 3. Length of Studies:

- **by law:** most financial supporters limite the support to 2-3 years
- **in practise:** three to four years

#### 4. Is there a taught part? If yes, what sort of learning activity?

Usually the students take part in a regular colloquium of PhD-students and report their tutors about once a year

#### 5. Are credits allocated? If yes, how many?

Up till now there are no credits attached to the 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle and most institutions are unwilling to introduce such a system.

#### 6. What is the normal dimension (number of pages) of the final thesis or dissertation?

On the average 250 to 300 pages (not absolutely decreed)

#### 7. How is the commission composed which evaluates the thesis?

There are two evaluators of the thesis (Gutachter). The final examen is either a rigorous exam (Rigorosum) or an open discussion where the student is asked to defend his thesis (Deputation). The exam-commission usually is composed of three professors, the exam takes between one and two hours.

#### 8. Is there a scale of evaluation?

Yes, the scale runs from rite (3), cum laude (2), magna cum laude (1) to summa cum laude, which in some institutions is given only under special conditions (f.i. another evaluator or the agreement of all evaluators in all parts of the exam)

#### 9. What key competences are taken into consideration to evaluate the work?

Concrete key competences are not demanded or officially listed. Beside the quality of an original contribution to scientific progress solid research skills and diligent use of primary sources and decent writing skills are expected.

#### 10. Are credits allocated to the thesis? If yes, how many?

No (cf. answer to question 5)

#### 11. Is there a specific organization inside the university which is in charge of the doctoral programmes?

Usually not, but many universities now are on the way to build up special programs for certain research groups (graduate schools).

#### 12. Are 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle students involved in teaching activities?

Sometimes, it depends on the constitution of the faculty or the above mentioned "graduate schools"

#### 13. Are 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle students constrained as to mobility?

Nothing compulsory, but some students spend time abroad, usually at archives. A growing number of students do not live nearby their university but at another place, coming to their tutor only once or twice a year.

Prepared by Lucian Hölscher, University of Bochum, the questionnaire refers to the situation at most German universities

**COUNTRY: DENMARK**

**What degree (or diploma) is required to enter the 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle ?**

A research profile Master with a good mark is required (minimum “10” in scale running from 00-03-5-6-7-8-9-10-11-13).

**Is there any selection? (financial support, acceptance by a scientific commission, numerus clausus...)**

The standard way to enroll as a doctoral student is to acquire a ph.d. scholarship by working out a project proposal (including research plan), which must be assessed and accepted first by the national Danish Research Academy for Historical Studies, then by the national Danish Research Council. The selection is made once or twice a year. Only a limited number of scholarships are available. Scholarships may also be acquired from private funds.

When accepted the doctoral student is assigned a supervisor and employed at the department for 3 years. The progress of study is evaluated by the student and his/her supervisor in semi-annual reports.

**Length of the studies:**

Length of studies by law: 3 years (amounting to 180 ECTS) – in practice often 4-5 years.

**Is there a taught part ?**

The doctoral student must attend courses and seminars amounting to about 30 ECTS. He/she is also encouraged to present his/her work at conferences and seminars.

**What is the normal dimension (number of pages) of the final thesis or dissertation ?**

The normal length of the Ph.D. dissertation is about 3-400 pages.

**How is composed the commission who discusses the thesis? Is there a scale of evaluation?**

The judging committee is composed by three professors, one from the doctoral student’s home department who chairs the committee, plus two from outside (national or foreign universities or research institutions). The supervisor of the dissertation is not a member of the committee but is allowed to attend the committee’s meetings (this, however, rarely happens).

The committee will write a preliminary evaluative report by which the dissertation is either rejected (to be revised) or accepted to be formally defended. Following a formal public defence in which the doctoral student will discuss his/her work with the members of the committee and answer questions ex auditorio, he/she is finally awarded the Ph.D. degree and receives the final evaluative report.

There is no scale of evaluation, only passed/failed.

**What key competences are taken into consideration to evaluate the work ?**

**Are credits allocated to the thesis? if yes how much ?**

According to the general rules for doctoral programmes in Denmark the history Ph.D. student must show him/herself able to:

- complete an independent scientific project
- employ scientific methods applying to the discipline
- produce a research contribution of international standards within the disciplinary field

**Is there a specific organization inside the university which is in charge of the doctoral programmes ?**

Inside the university, at the departmental level, a Ph.D. co-ordinator is responsible for the doctoral programme.

**Are 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle students involved in teaching activities ?**

The doctoral study programme contains obligations of teaching and/or other dissemination of knowledge amounting to about 30 ECTS. Doctoral students may also be invited to join administrative bodies (the department’s board of studies or the like).

**Are 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle students constrained to mobility ?**

Doctoral students are encouraged to spend time at foreign universities but it is not obligatory.

Prepared by Henrik Jensen, University of Roskilde.

## COUNTRY: ESTONIA

### **What degree (or diploma) is required to enter the 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle?**

A master's degree (*magister atrium*, MA)

### **Is there any selection? (financial support, acceptance by a scientific commission, numerus clausus etc.)**

Yes. A student should find a professor as supervision, write a working plan for research and study. A commission (5-6 professors of history department) have a conversation with candidates. The commission assess candidates CV and plan (topic), after what will be created a list of preferences (they have to get over min. points). There grants starts after first year of studies. Department of history take app. 4-10 doctoral students per year (related with the number of grants). The respective professor *ordinarius* is responsible for the provision of good study and research conditions.

### **Length of Studies:**

- **by law:** four years
- **in practise:** four-six years

### **Is there a taught part? If yes, what sort of learning activity? (research seminars, colloquium, congresses etc.)**

Prior to admission of the doctoral student, a doctoral programme contract is concluded between the doctoral student, supervisor(s) and the professor. As an annex to the doctoral programme contract, the doctoral student compiles an individual study plan, in co-operation with the supervisor, by 30 September at the latest. The Rector approves the formats for the doctoral programme contract and the doctoral student's individual study plan.

Students of history are participating on the doctoral seminars (one meeting per month), 12 ECTS points for optional courses in history or related fields, individual meeting with supervisor (8 ECTS).

### **Are credits allocated? If yes, how many**

The progress of doctoral students shall be reviewed by the end of the spring semester of each academic year, except in specialities with summertime fieldwork where the review shall be carried out by the beginning of the next academic year. The review shall focus on the fulfilment (expressed in credits) of the students' individual study plans. Review outcomes shall be entered in the studies information database. The whole program therefore carries 120 ECTS points.

### **What is the normal dimension (number of pages) of the final thesis or dissertation?**

On the average 200 to 400 pages (not absolutely decreed)

### **How is the commission composed which evaluates the thesis?**

There are min. 6 evaluators of the thesis (committee consisting of owners of the Ph.D. degrees) and so called open (formal) defence of thesis (book) by participation of two opponents (one from outside of institution). During the formal public defence the doctoral student will discuss his/her work with the members of the committee and answer to the questions of the opponents. Finally he/she will be awarded the Ph.D. degree (*doctor philosophiae*).

### **Is there a scale of evaluation?**

It was abolished 2-3 years ago, now only - pass/failed. (In practice: when the thesis is recommended by evaluators for defence there have not been failed papers)

The main stages of the defence procedure are the following:

- a) presentation by the applicant (*lectio praecursoria*),
- b) academic discussion between the applicant and the opponents,
- c) sequel to the discussion (members of the council and members of the audience may ask questions and express their opinion).

### **What key competences are taken into consideration to evaluate the work?**

Research skills and use of primary sources and writing skills are expected. Published articles before is not demanded anymore, but strongly recommended. The Ph.D. thesis should be published as a book or print-ready manuscript. It is possible to compose thesis consisting three articles (min.) published in the highly rated journals.

**Are credits allocated to the thesis? If yes, how many?**

Yes, altogether 100 ECTS credit points.

**Is there a specific organization inside the university which is in charge of the doctoral programmes?**

There are different doctoral schools in the Tartu university.

**Are 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle students involved in teaching activities?**

Students have to do so called academic practice at university. Which means to deliver several lectures or seminars under supervision of professor.

**Are 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle students constrained as to mobility?**

Nothing compulsory, but some students spend time abroad, usually at archives.

Prepared by Eero Medijainen, University of Tartu.

## COUNTRY: FINLAND

### 1) What degree (or diploma) is required to enter the 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle?

It's necessary have the degree of MA (in Finnish: filosofian maisteri) to enter the third cycle.

### 2) Is there any selection?

Traditionally only a discussion with the professor has been requested. If the professor has recommended the student to the faculty after this (i.e. the student's MA-thesis has been good), the student has been accepted automatically. This year the procedure will be slightly changed: there will be introduced four deadlines for applications per year and everyone will have to present a written research plan. The decision will be made on the basis of a discussion and the written documentation and depends greatly on the professor's decision which will then be confirmed by the faculty.

### 3) Length of the studies

Formally there is no minimum or maximum number of years. In practice, making the doctoral dissertation takes a number of years. In most cases post-graduates are working fulltime (e.g. as assistants at university) and only part of their time can be used for making the dissertation. Anything up to 10 years might be considered quite normal.

In many departments almost all post-graduates do an intermediate degree of Licentiate of Philosophy between MA and PhD while in some other departments hardly any do it. It is a kind of early version of the doctorate. Its aim is to help in writing the doctoral dissertation (and it can be very useful, indeed) but writing this version takes its time (especially if this version is in Finnish and the final dissertation in English as rather often happens in history). The Bologna system will be introduced in Finland on the 1<sup>st</sup> of August this year, but also after that the degree of Licentiate of Philosophy will continue to exist.

In the 1990's a new system of graduate schools was introduced. They last for four years. Only few history post-graduates have been in practice able to do the doctorate in four years.

### 4) Is there a taught part?

There are no other real courses which would be intended to post-graduates except for the seminar. It is, however, possible to make also some book exams (e.g. on philosophy of history or methodology) and to write articles/essays. It is also possible to take courses of MA-level from other subject areas/departments when they are linked to the research topic and the professor accepts them.

### 5) Are credits allocated?

Yes. See the answer number 10.

### 6) What is the normal dimension of the final thesis?

It is very difficult to say as there is quite a lot of variation depending on the topic and the traditions of the department. The minimum could be something like 200 printed pages and the maximum anything up to 500-600. Earlier it was required that the dissertation had to be printed as a book before it was accepted, but nowadays it just has to be published. Therefore it is possible to publish the dissertation e.g. as a CD or in the Internet.

### 7) How is composed the commission who discusses the thesis?

I suppose that Phil.Lic-thesis is not very interesting in this context therefore I will describe only the procedure of the PhD-thesis.

Firstly, the faculty nominates two persons to examine the manuscript of the PhD thesis. When they have given an approving written statement, a public discussion can be arranged. Usually in the public defence of doctoral dissertation there is one opponent and a kind of chairman (called *custos*), but it is possible to have also more opponents. The faculty nominates three persons to make the final evaluation of the thesis. If there has been only one opponent and the chairman in the public defence, an additional third person will be nominated. (These persons can be the same who gave the first written approval, but they can be also quite different persons. Usually at least

the opponent comes from outside the own department/university while the chairman usually is the professor of the department).

**8) Is there a scale of evaluation?**

Yes: approbatur, lubenter approbatur, non sine laude approbatur, cum laude approbatur, magna cum laude approbatur, laudatur.

**9) What key competences are taken into consideration to evaluate the work?**

Ability to produce an original piece of research and to develop further historiographical debate.

**10) Are credits allocated to the thesis?**

Yes. So far Finnish credits have been used and just now the faculty is about to decide on the amount of ECTS credits. The final decision has not been done yet, so there can be modifications.

The system should be, however, more or less like this:

- Phil.Lic. degree (optional): 150 ECTS consisting of 60 ECTS of seminars, courses, essays etc. + 90 ECTS the thesis.

- PhD degree (obligatory): 240 ECTS consisting of 60 ECTS of seminars, courses, essays etc. + 180 ECTS the thesis.

NB. If the student has made the 60 ECTS of other studies in the Phil.Lic. -phase, he/she doesn't need to make them any more in the PhD-phase.

**11) Is there a specific organization inside the university which is in charge of the doctoral programmes?**

No.

**12) Are 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle students involved in teaching activities?**

Usually yes (they don't teach all the time, but deliver lectures on their own topic every now and then). A small amount of teaching can be even obligatory (in graduate schools and in research projects financed by the Academy of Finland).

**13) Are 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle students constrained to mobility?**

Officially no, but in practice it depends on their research topic. If they are studying other than national history, it is very difficult to imagine how they could do it without staying abroad for quite extensive periods of time.

Prepared by Taina Syrjämaa, University of Turku.



*COUNTRY* : **FRANCE**

**What degree (or diploma) is required to enter the 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle?**

A research profile Master is required.

No financial support required, no *numerus clausus*, but a scientific commission examines the candidates who can be refused if the scientific level is considered as insufficient. So master must be obtained with a good mark (minimum 14/20)

**Length of the studies :**

- by law : 3 years (doctoral grants are allocated for 3 years, no more)
- in practice : 4-6 years (but from the 4<sup>th</sup> year the student has to obtain the authorisation by the doctoral authorities ; if the student has a parallel job, the authorisation is automatically given).

From 2004, credits have been introduced to validate academic activities: participation to research seminars, papers, colloquiums, teaching experience, placements and so on. Around 20 credits are necessary to be allowed to present the final dissertation. But not all the universities has adopted this reform.

It is not yet decided if 180 credits will be allocated to the whole doctoral programme, but it is likely to come. In this case, the major part of the credits will be allocated to the final thesis.

In history the doctoral thesis has 400 pages minimum, but some thesis reach 1200 pages....The thesis is discussed by a jury composed by minimum 3 professors, but the normal number is 5 or 6 . By law the director(s) of the thesis is (are) member(s) of the jury, but external professors (it means also foreign professors) are required.

Before the discussion, two members of the jury – excluded the director(s)- write a “pre-rapport” which allows the candidate to present his work. So the discussion has always a positive issue.

The scale of evaluation:

- Mention honorable (it means the thesis is not very good...)
- Mention très honorable (it is correct but there are some basic defaults)
- Mention très honorable avec félicitations (it is really good)

**Key competences :**

- ability to produce an original research which can be published
- ability to retrieve a documentation with primary sources
- implication in the historiographical background and debates
- ability to present and discuss scientifically founded opinions in front of peers
- ability to integrate a research team

The doctoral programmes are managed by the “Ecoles doctorales” which must obtain the accreditation from the Ministry. They are composed by the research laboratories. They are a component of the universities, but different from the faculties. They have their own organization and resources, and distribute the doctoral grants.

3<sup>rd</sup> cycle students can be involved in teaching activities, but there is a very hard selection. The students who have a doctoral grant can be “allocataires Moniteurs” ; the others can be A.T.E.R (= Attaché temporaire d’enseignement et de recherche).

The 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle students are strongly encouraged to pass some time in foreign institutions, but it is not yet obligatory.

Prepared by Jean-Luc Lamboley, University Pierre Mendès-France of Grenoble

## COUNTRY: ICELAND

### **What degree (or diploma) is required to enter the 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle ?**

MA in history.

### **Is there any selection? (financial support, acceptance by a scientific commission, numerus clausus...)**

No. The process is the following: a student decides on a professor and if he/she accepts the proposal the department ratifies that decision without too much discussion. There are no grants attached to the doctorate and thus no financial requirements for admittance.

### **Length of the studies:**

- **by law:** Minimum four years, maximum seven.
- **in practice:** Six to seven years.

### **Is there a taught part? If yes, what sort of learning activity (research seminars, colloquium, congresses ...)?**

There are no specific courses for the doctorate and most students design reading courses with the assistance of their supervisor. Another option is to go abroad and take courses in another university, which is not common. There is an irregular seminar for all doctoral students of the Faculty of Arts, but no required participation or contributions.

### **Are credits allocated? If yes how much ?**

Coursework is supposed to be 40 ECTS.

### **What is the normal dimension (number of pages) of the final thesis or dissertation ?**

300-400 pages.

### **How is the commission composed who discusses the thesis ?**

Each student has a doctoral commission with a supervisor and two other members, usually from within the university. After a thesis has been submitted for defense another commission is formed to evaluate the work. This commission has three members, usually two from within the university and one from abroad.

### **Is there a scale of evaluation ?**

No.

### **What key competences are taken into consideration to evaluate the work ?**

Rigorous research skills with diligent use of primary resources and decent writing skills. The thesis is published before the defense.

### **Are credits allocated to the thesis? If yes how much ?**

The thesis is 200 ECTS.

### **Is there a specific organization inside the university which is in charge of the doctoral programmes?**

No, each faculty takes care of its programme.

### **Are 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle students involved in teaching activities?**

Possibly, but it is not common.

### **Are 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle students constrained to mobility?**

They used to be required to go one year abroad, but now it is only recommended. Some of them do this, some not.

Prepared by Már Jonsson, University of Iceland, Reykjavik

## **COUNTRY : IRELAND**

### **Qualification:**

A good 2.1 honours degree is required by students beginning a Ph.D. Some students upgrade from an MA (one-year) or M.Phil (two-year) to a Ph.D, but the same entry standard pertains.

### **Selection:**

Most history departments in Ireland have post-graduate boards which approve applicants to Ph.D. Also the candidate has to find a supervisor willing to take him/her as a student on the topic they wish to study.

There is financial support - small grants from county councils, some scholarships in the gift of the university and state awards (government of Ireland scholarships) made by the Irish Council for Research in Humanities and Social Sciences. The last two categories are well-remunerated but highly competitive.

### **Length:**

The length of study for a Ph.D is three years but in practice the research and writing up often takes longer. There is a high drop out rate. The average completion time is 4-5 years.

### **Teaching:**

The Ph.D is entirely a research project. The student is encouraged to do research on primary sources and to come up with original material and insights. There is no taught component though students are encouraged to attend research seminars, appropriate skills training, academic papers and conferences. It is often an introspective, lonely experience.

Credits are not allocated as yet.

### **Examination:**

At UCC the thesis is normally 80,000 words. However requirements vary between Irish universities.

The candidate is examined orally by an external examiner who is held to an expert in the field, by an internal examiner and by the candidate's supervisor.

Competences tested are originality, research ability, knowledge and contribution to the historiography of the topic.

### **Organisation:**

At Cork we have departmental graduate studies committees which oversees this process and at university level our programme is administered the examinations board.

### **Teaching activities:**

Some students get the chance to tutor undergraduates. They are selected for these tasks. It is not a right or obligation.

### **Mobility:**

3<sup>rd</sup> cycle students are not constrained to stay in Cork. Sometimes travel is essential to undertake their research. However, so far very few have taken advantage of our connections with partner universities in other European countries.

Some information on best practice has been produced by the Irish Universities Quality Board. This can be found in Ph.D form at their website [www.iuqb.ie](http://www.iuqb.ie) under 'sectoral projects' heading.

Prepared by Hiram Morgan, National University of Ireland, Cork

## Doctoral Studies: HISTORY

COUNTRY: ITALY

### What degree (or diploma) is required to enter the 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle?

Second cycle degree or the old Laurea degree designed in conformity to regulations of the university system in force up to October 1999)

### Is there any selection? (financial support, acceptance by a scientific commission, numerus clausus etc.)

Yes. Each University publishes a call that states the number of positions available for each Ph.D. program and the number of scholarships offered, which cannot be less than one half of the positions. Since 1999 it is possible to offer enrolment in doctoral studies without offering a scholarship, in order to increase the number of Ph.D.s without financial charge. The applicants sit a written and an oral examination. Applicants are then ranked on the examination results, and offered enrolment accordingly. \*\*

### Length of Studies:

- by law: 3-4
- in practise: 3-4

Most doctoral programs last 3 years – but few, like Mathematics, last 4. Extensions are granted in special cases to finish one's own research, or in case of maternity, military service, or grave illness\*\*

### Is there a taught part? If yes, what sort of learning activity?

The availability of formal graduate courses and seminars varies a lot among individual Departments and Universities. The taught part is usually organized in cycles of conferences or special seminars with both external experts and internal staff providing topics for a shared discussion. In some circumstances doctoral students are asked to prepare presentations related to their research topic and discuss them together with external experts in the field and/or with peers.

As a pure example the University of Bologna doctoral school in the Humanities had the following average hours of formal teaching/learning distribution per year:

<i>Humanities</i>	59,7	9,4	79,6	33,1	181,7
<b>Overall total</b>	<b>60,3</b>	<b>46,7</b>	<b>64,8</b>	<b>352,2</b>	<b>524,0</b>
<b>Scuola di Dottorato</b>	<b>Total hours courses</b>	<b>Total hours teaching.</b>	<b>Total hours seminars</b>	<b>Total hours laboratory activities</b>	<b>Total</b>

The table below reports our assessment of the importance given by Ph.D. supervisors to the development of professional skills during the doctoral program:\*\*

1 - not at all important; 2 – of average importance; 3 – extremely important

Skill	Mark	Course available?
Management	1	NO, few exceptions
Communication	2	NO
Foreign language ability	2	NO, few exceptions
Computer literacy	2	NO, few exceptions
Teaching	2	NO
Presenting	2	NO
Use of resources (e.g. libraries)	2	NO
Time management	2	NO
Interview technique/job	1	NO

**Are credits allocated? If yes, how many?**

In very few doctoral schools, mostly not.

**What is the normal dimension (number of pages) of the final thesis or dissertation?**

200-300 (can be much more depending on the type of work).

**How is the commission composed which evaluates the thesis?**

The commission is composed by three external examiners chosen by the Council of 10-12

Professors who are in charge of the Doctoral study programme (they can come only from one Department within the institution or from more Departments or Universities in case the programme is offered jointly by more than one Department/Institution). External examiners are chosen on the basis of their expertise within the field/topic of the Doctoral dissertation to be assessed.

**Is there a scale of evaluation?**

No. The council of Departmental Staff writes an evaluation of the thesis work and of the overall activity of the doctoral candidate, in order to present him/her to external commission. The commission writes a short evaluation about the thesis work.

**What key competences are taken into consideration to evaluate the work?**

Key competences can be different depending on the type of research work, the most common are:

- the ability to contribute with an original research to the advancement of knowledge;
- the updated knowledge of the historiographical debate and of the scholarly literature on the chosen topic;
- the competence in source criticism;
- the ability to present results in a structured, complete, documented and accurate written form;
- the ability to discuss research methodologies and results of one's own research with experts of the field.

**Are credits allocated to the thesis? If yes, how many?**

No

**Is there a specific organization inside the university which is in charge of the doctoral programmes?**

The Council of Departmental Staff which has been appointed to take responsibility for the Doctoral students is the formal body which is in charge with the Doctoral Programme. Recently many universities have created the so called 'Doctoral Schools', these group the different Doctoral Programmes in broad disciplinary areas, like Doctoral programmes in the Humanities, or in the Social Sciences etc . However Doctoral Schools do not have specific responsibilities for the individual doctoral students but function mainly as coordinating bodies. This may be different according to the different Universities regulations.

**Are 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle students involved in teaching activities?**

It depends very much on the different contexts and internal University rules. Doctoral students usually do not have course responsibilities but they can. In some Universities they have responsibility for modules within course units. More often doctoral students are involved in teaching activities to support or integrate a main course unit (tutorials, working groups etc.) teaching learning activities and assessment. It is on a voluntary basis and the law explicitly states that it should be a limited involvement and it should not affect their main training towards research.

**Are 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle students constrained as to mobility?**

It depends very much on the different Departments and contexts. In some cases Doctoral programmes foresee a specific co-tutoring activities and students are encouraged or even obliged to carry a specific part of their activity abroad.

Doctoral students who are supported by a scholarship receive a further amount of 50% more for the months in which they are abroad. No more than 50% of the studies can be carried out abroad.

Some institutions encourage mobility by allocating special substantial additional grants for young researchers-doctoral students (Bologna 2004/5 1/3 of the doctoral students in the Humanities take a study period abroad for an average of 4 months: 102 students on a total of 333).

\*\* (taken from the document written by the Italian Association of Doctoral Students and PhD doctors and published for the EuroDoc: EURODOC is the European Council of doctoral candidates and young researchers. <<http://www.eurodoc.net>>).

EURODOC's objectives are:

- To represent doctoral candidates and junior researchers at the European level in matters of education, research, and professional development of their careers.
- To advance the quality of doctoral programmes and the standards of research activity in Europe.
- To promote the circulation of information on issues regarding young researchers; organize events, take part in debates and assist in the elaboration of policies about Higher Education and Research in Europe.
- To establish and promote co-operation between national associations representing doctoral candidates and junior researchers within Europe.

Prepared by Carla Salvaterra, University of Bologna



## COUNTRY: THE NETHERLANDS

### **What degree (or diploma) is required to enter the 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle?**

Masters degree or “doctorandus diploma” (= former system)

Is there any selection? (financial support, acceptance by a scientific commission, *numerus clausus* etc.)

**Yes, acceptance by an academic commission. Graduate students receive a sort of salary for 4 years.**

Length of Studies:

- **by law: 4 years**
- **in practise: 5/6 years**

### **Is there a taught part? If yes, what sort of learning activity?**

Yes, graduate students participate in a national network of graduate students working within a certain sub-discipline (e.g. 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century history). They meet every 6 weeks during one day, attending seminars which are useful to their individual research.

Are credits allocated? If yes, how many?

**no**

What is the normal dimension (number of pages) of the final thesis or dissertation?

**Between 200 – 600 pages, mostly around 350.**

How is the commission composed which evaluates the thesis?

**At least one expert from another university, three professors from the same or related fields of our own university, + the promoter/tutor.**

Is there a scale of evaluation?

**Only when it is a cum laude dissertation**

### **What key competences are taken into consideration to evaluate the work?**

Originality/authenticity of the thesis; research skills; assessment of literature and primary sources; historiographical reflection; use of theories/theoretical concepts; structure of the dissertation; transparency in writing.

Are credits allocated to the thesis? If yes, how many?

**No**

Is there a specific organization inside the university which is in charge of the doctoral programmes?

**Graduate school of the Research Institute of the Faculty of Arts (in case of history)**

### **Are 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle students involved in teaching activities?**

Very little, although most of them want to teach because of their future opportunities, however the dean of the Research Institute wants them to finish their thesis in four years and therefore often won't give them permission.

### **Are 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle students constrained as to mobility?**

No, they are allowed to do their research and writing anywhere they want, they don't have to be in their office from 9 – 5. Often they spend time abroad for archival research.

Prepared by Tity de Vries, University of Groningen

**COUNTRY: NORWAY**

What degree (or diploma) is required to enter the 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle ? Master degree.

Is there any selection? (financial support, acceptance by a scientific commission, numerus clausus...) Normally, financial support is required, as well as acceptance by a scientific committee.

Length of the studies:

- by law : 3 years
- in practice : 3 – 5 years

Is there a taught part ? Yes

If yes, what sort of learning activity (research seminars, colloquium, congresses ...) ? Research seminars, presentation of papers, research schools etc.

Are credits allocated? If yes how much ? Yes, 30 credits

What is the normal dimension (number of pages) of the final thesis or dissertation ? 300.

How is composed the commission who discusses the thesis ? Three scientific members, in least one of them, but normally two, coming from another institution, preferably one of the members outside Norway.

Is there a scale of evaluation ? No.

What key competences are taken into consideration to evaluate the work ?

*“§ 6.1 Level and form*

The dissertation must be an independent, scientific piece of work of international standard and high academic standard with respect to the research questions, examination of concepts, methodological, theoretical and empirical basis, documentation and form of presentation. The dissertation must contribute to the development of new academic knowledge and be of an academic standard appropriate for publication as part of the scientific literature in the field in question”.

Are credits allocated to the thesis? if yes how much ? No.

Is there a specific organization inside the university which is in charge of the doctoral programmes ? Center for the Study of Sciences and the Humanities is responsible for 15 credits, a doctoral commission is often found at faculty level, while at department level a member of staff is normally responsible for doctoral studies.

Are 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle students involved in teaching activities ?

- Possibly - yes
- Obligatory - no

Are 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle students constrained to mobility ? No.

Prepared by Geir Atle Erslund, University of Bergen

COUNTRY : SWEDEN

**1.What degree (or diploma) is required to enter the 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle ?**

1. At present the minimum requirement is a BA with a major in History. At least a one-year Master degree will be required in near future.

**2.Is there any selection? (financial support, acceptance by a scientific commission, numerus clausus...)**

Doctoral students can ONLY be accepted if they can be fully financed for four years by the Faculty or by some other external body (research council, etc). The selection is made once a year, if there are available positions for doctoral students. A council at the departmental level makes the preliminary selection. The applicant is required to write a research plan for a thesis. The council assesses the applicant's research plan and other qualifications and ranks the applicants. The board of the department makes the final decision as to which doctoral students are accepted. The department is required to take into consideration the gender distribution of the doctoral program striving to maintain a balanced ratio. Normally two to three doctoral candidates are accepted each year.

**3 . Length of the studies:**

- by law : 4 years, however, the study period can be prolonged if the student is teaching or doing other work within the department (see question 11). Prolongation is also granted for, sickness, military service, parental leave, etc.
- in practice : 5-6 years

**4. Is there a taught part ? If yes, what sort of learning activity (research seminars, colloquium, congresses ... ) ?**

Are credits allocated? If yes how much ?

The doctoral student must take courses amounting to 60 ECTS, some of which are taught, some not. The learning activity is generally discussion seminars. The students must also participate in research seminars 2-4 times a month, and they are expected to present one or two papers a year in these seminars. The doctoral student is required to present at least one paper at an international conference. These activities, however, are not awarded credits.

**5. What is the normal dimension (number of pages) of the final thesis or dissertation?**

A normal thesis is about 200-300 printed pages i.e. in published book form). Occasionally the theses are more voluminous, very seldom shorter than 200 pages.

**6. How is the commission composed that discuss the thesis?**

6a. The doctoral student has two appointed supervisors, a full professor and an associated or an assistant professor.

6b. The thesis is cleared for publication by the professors of the department.

6c. One external specialist in the field is appointed to take the main responsibility of examining the thesis (an opponent). In addition a commission of 3-5 persons is appointed. One member represents the department, the rest are from other departments or from other universities. Their task is to decide if the thesis (after a public disputation) may pass or not.

**7. Is there a scale of evaluation ?**

The thesis is only passed or failed. No further grades are given.

**8.What key competencies are taken into consideration to evaluate the work?**

The student's:

- ability to produce original research which can be published
- ability to document research results using primary sources
- ability to understand and implement historiographical background and debates
- ability to present and discuss scientifically founded opinions in front of peers

**9.Are credits allocated to the thesis? If yes how much ?**

The entire doctoral program consists of 240 ECTS credits of which 60 are allocated to course work. Although formally no credits are allotted to the thesis by default the thesis is 180 ECTS credits.

**10. Is there a specific organization inside the university which is in charge of the doctoral programmes ?**

No

**11. Are 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle students involved in teaching activities ?**

There is no obligatory involvement and students may only teach (or for instance do administrative work) up to a maximum of 20% of their time.

**12. Are 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle students constrained to mobility?**

Mobility is not obligatory but encouraged.

Prepared by Gyorgy Novaky, John Rogers, University of Uppsala

## COUNTRY : PORTUGAL

In Portugal doctoral degrees is legislated by the government in national law (Decreto-Lei nº 216/92, October 13th 1992). Items like eligibility, generic competences or composition of thesis' juries are regulated by law and therefore must be followed by all Portuguese universities. Each University, however, has the necessary autonomy to establish its own doctoral regulations. Aspects like the nomination of supervisors, the length of studies or the fees vary from university to university. In the following we refer to the general law and identify where appropriate what are local regulations.

A doctoral degree can be obtained in 3 different ways:

Type 1. Academic career: teaching staff can be hired without the PhD (as assistant professors) and then have a maximum of 8 years to obtain it, while teaching and participating in academic life; a special leave can be obtained for up to three years to finish the thesis, but only if the person has been teaching for at least two years; no fees.

Type 2. Thesis registration: any person eligible can, by general law, ask an University to be accepted as a doctoral candidate; a supervisor must have been contacted previously by the candidate and accepted the supervision in writing; the Faculty's scientific council will have to approve the research plan and the supervisor. There is no maximum number of years although the inscription of the theme is valid only for 5 years (general law), but it can be renewed; at the Faculty of Letters the fees are currently 700 Euros a year.

Type 3. Doctoral Programmes (seminars, ECTS, fees). At the Faculty of Letters of the University of Coimbra, the doctoral programmes were proposed at the end of 2003 and approved by the ministry in January 2005; In others Universities (New University from Lisbon) they are implemented since 1998; at the faculty of letters the fee for a full doctoral programme is normally 6000 Euro, but can change from specific programme to another

### **What degree (or diploma) is required to enter the 3rd cycle ?**

A Master degree or a graduate final mark of 16 (in scale of 0-20) or equivalent, is required.

A significant scientific, academic or professional curriculum in the doctoral program subject area can override the normal requisites, by approval of the Scientific Commission/Council.

### **Is there any selection? (financial support, acceptance by a scientific commission, numerus clausus.)**

The Scientific Commission examines the candidates. At the Faculty of Letters of the University of Coimbra the fee to attend a doctoral programme is of 6000 Euros (1500 regarding the taught part; 1000 each subsequent year). Many students apply for a grant to the Science and Technology Foundation (Fundação para a Ciência e Tecnologia).

### **Length of the studies:**

type 1 (academic carrer): To those who are at the Academic career (teaching and preparing the doctoral thesis at the same time) the usual length is of 6+2 years by national law.

type 2 (no taught part, just candidate and supervisor): the law says that the registration for doctorate lasts 5 years. In practice people can renew.

type 3 (with taught part): Each university decides the length of studies. In Coimbra the regulation defines 5 years, although in some cases, justified by the supervisor, the Scientific Council can extend the limit for two more years.

### **Is there a taught part?**

Yes in type 3: from 3 to 4 semesters' seminars. One or two of the seminars should be in different subjects from the program speciality. Some of the speciality seminars can be substitute by research activity or courses offered by other Departments of the University or Faculty. There is also the possibility of attending seminars from other Portuguese or foreign universities, approved by the Scientific Group Commissions and authorized by the Scientific Council.

At the last seminar the student is expected to present the dissertation plan. Until the final approval of the curricular part the student has to select from the Professors evolved at the programme, the dissertation director. The plan and supervisor are submitted to the approval of the scientific council of the Faculty. In some cases the Scientific Council can accept a co-orientation regime with an outside professor.

**If yes, what sort of learning activity (seminars, colloquium, congresses) ?**

Classes, research seminars, conferences, congresses, colloquium, etc

**Are credits allocated?**

Yes

**If yes how much ?**

At the Faculty of letters of University of Coimbra the all taught part should add from 30 to 40 credits . The seminars are evaluated within the following qualitative scale: Reprovado (failed); Aprovado com Bom (approved with Good); Aprovado com Muito Bom (approved with Very Good).

**What is the normal dimension (number of pages) of the final thesis or dissertation ?**

The recommendation at the Faculty of Letters of the UC is that the thesis should not exceed 450 pages.

**How is composed the commission who discusses the thesis ?**

By law, the thesis is discussed by a jury composed by: the rector of the University, who presides the discussion, a minimum of 3 professors, 2 of them external, Portuguese or foreign; the director of the thesis.

**Is there a scale of evaluation ?**

The final evaluation is expressed in terms of Refused/Approved. According to each university doctoral programme regulations, it is possible to attribute a qualification to the approved candidate. This would normally be a two, or three level distinction.

**What key competences are taken into consideration to evaluate the work?**

Innovative and original contribution to the progress of Science; high level of knowledge in a specific subject area; ability to realize scientific independent research.

**Are credits allocated to the thesis?**

No

**Is there a specific organization inside the university, which is in charge of the doctoral programmes?**

Not at the Faculty of Letters where doctoral matters are handled by the regular Scientific Group Commissions propose to the Faculty's Scientific Council.

Each (type 3) doctoral programme has a Supervision Commission (composed by the total of the professors cooperating on it). The Scientific Commission appoints the coordinator. The Programme will be evaluated each six years in order to assess quality and introduce the necessary changes.

After the curricular part, the orientation includes a seminar per month with the thesis director.

**Are 3rd cycle students involved in teaching activities ?**

Teaching activities are obligatory to those who are at the Academic career (type 1). By law they have a 3 years leave to complete the dissertation.

**Are 3rd cycle students constrained to mobility?**

They are advised to attend seminars at different universities, Portuguese or foreign.

Prepared by Joaquim Carvalho, University of Coimbra

**COUNTRY: SPAIN (University of Valencia)**

**1) What degree (or diploma) is required to enter the 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle?**

Up to now is required to be graduate (*licenciado*), what means to get a 5-year degree. In next future the requirement will be to have passed 300 ECTS (180/240 BA + 120/60 MA).

**2) Is there any selection? (financial support, acceptance by a scientific commission, numerus clausus...)**

Doctorate studies are carried out under the supervision and academic responsibility of a department or research institute. A commission formed by professors of the doctorate programme makes the selection of candidates. The maximum number of students admitted can vary in every programme, but is around 25. However, only few History doctorate programmes reach this quantity of students. No financial support is required. Only few doctorate students have postgraduate grants.

**3) Length of the studies:**

- **by law :**
- **in practice :**

By law, the minimum duration of these studies is 2 years, although students are allowed to complete the taught part of the programme in two years and the research part in one more. After the completion of this period, doctoral students get the Diploma of Advanced Studies (DEA in Spanish) by passing an oral presentation of the knowledge acquired and its links with their own research projects before an examining board. Nevertheless, to be clear, they have still to write their final thesis and this takes some additional time. So, the whole length of doctorate studies up to the public presentation of the thesis can be 4, 5 or 6 years.

**4) Is there a taught part?**

**If yes, what sort of learning activity (research seminars, colloquium, congresses ...)?**

**Are credits allocated? If yes, how much?**

Doctorate studies are structured in courses and seminars up to completion of a minimum of 32 credits (not ECTS). These learning activities cover fundamental methodological courses and related courses and seminars in which students must participate and present some papers. (In practice, about 7-9 courses or seminars in two years). On the other hand, students can complete courses from other programmes, provided they do not exceed 5 credits. The taught part of the programme takes approximately 2/3 of the total amount of credits. The research work takes the remainder.

**5) What is the normal dimension (number of pages) of the final thesis or dissertation?**

No less than 300-350 pages up to 1.000-1.200 pages.

**6) How is composed the commission who discusses the thesis?**

The board is composed by 5 members, all doctors. A maximum of two can be professors of the department in charge of the doctorate programme. The three others are external specialists who come from other universities or research centres (even foreign countries). These members are selected by the Doctorate Commission of the University from among a list of 10 specialists proposed by the department responsible for the programme.

**7) Is there a scale of evaluation?**

Failed, Passed and Passed *Cum Laude*. In practice the doctoral student is not allowed to present the final thesis without permission of his/her tutor, so there are not failed thesis.

**8) What key competences are taken into consideration to evaluate the work?**

- ability to produce an original research which can be published
- ability to present and discuss scientifically founded opinions in front of peers
- ability to document research results using primary sources
- ability to understand and implement historiographical background and debates

**9) Are credits allocated to the thesis? if yes, how much?**



No.

**10) Is there a specific organization inside the university which is in charge of the doctoral programmes?**

Yes, the Doctorate Commission of the University. This is a large council constituted by representatives from all Faculties.

**11) Are 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle students involved in teaching activities?**

- Possibly

- Obligatory

Only students with doctoral grants who have completed the taught part of the programme are involved in teaching activities, but just if they want to participate.

**12) Are 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle students constrained to mobility ?**

It's not obligatory.

Prepared by Jorge Catalá Sanz, University of Valencia

### **ANNEX 3: Reports from Student Discussion Groups held at Assembly of CLIOHRES Doctoral Candidates in Reykjavik, 9 December 2006:**

a. Group 1:

#### ***Question 1 and 2 – Teaching as part of doctoral programmes***

Students present at the discussion agreed that teaching should be a part of doctoral programmes, but in a form of seminars or workshops, subsidiary rather than compulsory in the way that students can choose topics, which are really related to their PhD research and which match their research interest, needs and timetable. There should be a list of proposed seminars the creation of which students could also participate together with professors.

Generally, students should have the possibility to choose seminars related to basic teaching skills (in case they want to build a teaching career in an university), IT skills, management skills and languages.

The teaching should generally consist of methodology in an interactive way in order that students can learn about the tools and methods that they could apply in their PhD research.

Sometimes compulsory taught courses may create problems concerning the progression of PhD research or may come into conflict with job activities for those students who work.

b. Group 2:

#### ***Question 3: Should the supervisor/advisor actively involve doctoral research at every stage?***

- Overall, we concluded that frequent contact with supervisor is essential for successful doctoral research. Email is widely used by students to keep in contact with their supervisors.
- Experience of supervision varies from countries, institutions and supervisors' personality. In some cases the universities provide doctoral students with various courses on study skills such as research methods and IT techniques in order to complete the level of supervision. These support services are becoming more important. If doctoral student is eligible for attending these taught courses, the supervisor has responsibility for the student's result/achievement.
- Most students are satisfied with the frequency of supervisions but some students feel they should have more frequent contacts, especially in cases when the supervisors have many students under their supervision. Some students undertake their research as a part of research group and feel the level of supervision is less individual.
- Usually there are not any formal rules or regulations about the level/quality of doctoral supervision. We think it is desirable that some opportunity, such as annual review report, be given to doctoral students to assess the supervision.

#### ***Question 4: What kind of supervision is most desirable for doctoral students?***

It was stressed that doctoral students should be given more flexibility in the relationship with their supervisors. In particular, the students should be able to change their supervisor when they feel the necessity.

Sometimes supervisors make funding application on behalf of research group. Its result however is not necessarily clear. It is desirable that the result of funding application should be clearly evaluated.

c. Group 3:

#### ***Question 5. Should doctoral courses focus more on other skills than academic research, as a large proportion of the students will not go on to academic positions after***

***graduation? If so, what types of competences are currently ignored in the doctoral programs?***

According to our discussion, it seems that the doctoral programs are different in different European countries; as for example in Belgium there are no doctoral courses at all. However, we agreed that there is a need for courses, but they should concentrate within the first doctoral years, they should focus on offering new research methods and tools, and on developing the analytical skills rather than giving information. The doctoral courses should try to develop the writing skills, especially English academic writing, as it is needed both at academic and non-academic levels. Moreover, in order to offer further the knowledge acquired at doctoral level, it is needed to have training courses (for applying to an grant, for teaching other people how to teach outside academia). Other area that is not covered by doctoral courses at all are the statistics or mathematics, and for this it could be a possibility of going to undergraduate courses of different specializations. Another problem identified by our group was that sometimes professors are not giving proper PhD courses, but they continue to teach what they thought at undergraduate level. However, one risk that can occur is that in focusing on acquiring other skills there are possibilities of compromising the research because there is not enough time to get as much as possible from many directions. The faculties became more and more, as one of the doctoral students in our group stated, “factories for diplomas,” and the Ph.D. risks to become less academic.

***Question 6. Participation in networks like CLIOHRES – what’s in it for the doctoral students? What kinds of skills and competences does participation enhance?***

Participating in international projects such as the CLIOHRES enhances doctoral students’ communication skills, improves the knowledge of another language, i.e. English, develops managerial skills (when organizing a CLIOHRES meeting). Moreover, it helps in adapting own writing to a different audience that usually does not know much about our own history, as well as it offers the possibility of publishing both articles and the thesis. Other advantages that can be mentioned are: the possibility of expressing in public one’s ideas, the access at a larger academic field, the opportunity of broadening one’s perspective, gaining new ideas and having access to different schools of thought, and, due to the interdisciplinary perspective of the network, it integrates different disciplines. Furthermore, it helps to enhance the perspective for student exchange and access to advices from other professors than the thesis director. Less but not least, the informal meeting offers the comfort of having open discussions with both other doctoral students and seniors.

Finally, a debate emerged: what’s the purpose of the doctorate: is it only of academia, or indeed it helps as well outside the academia?

d. Group 4:

Group 4 had an interesting discussion about the above mentioned questions. Members of all TWGs were present. The discussion was led by Izabella Agardi. Below are the main outcomes of the discussion.

***Question 7: What specific problems have we, as doctoral students, encountered in working within CLIOHRES.net? How can they be rectified?***

Many things seem to be going well, but we feel that it is important that the doctoral students are heard by the seniors. This was not always the case, for example as regards the working out of themes for the Volumes and how this fits the research interests of the doctoral students.

Some students found it not easy to combine the work for CLIOHRES (writing a chapter for a volume) with their dissertation. This partly has to do with doctoral students wanting to stick close to their topics, because they don’t have much time to do additional research.

Seniors do not always listen to or understand doctoral students. Some doctoral students, especially when they are in the beginning of their dissertation, don't dare to speak out. This seems not so much to be related to the hierarchical relation between seniors and doctoral students (students spoke of an open relationship), but to the more experience and eloquence of seniors. Also cultural differences in ways of communicating can play a role.

We suggest that all TWG leaders pay attention to an equal input of doctoral students and seniors in discussions and decision making.

***Question 8: Are we, as doctoral students, acquiring sufficient guidance and encouragement from the seniors in the network, such as in preparing, discussing and writing our articles?***

Generally, doctoral students are getting enough guidance from the seniors. Especially getting input from seniors (but also doctoral students) from other disciplines and other countries is seen as one of the things that doctoral students value very much. Participation in a network like this has the advantage of getting a wide and interdisciplinary perspective.

Some TWGs organised the discussion of chapters in such a way that (at least) one senior and one doctoral student commented on the draft chapters.

In regard to planning chapters for a Volume, doctoral students would benefit from clear thematic and theoretical guidance, so they know what is expected from them.

A positive example that was given was that a member of another CLIOHRES partner acted as advisor for the doctoral student.

Another thing that was valued was that doctoral students were involved to a large extent in making and editing the Volume; it was a heavy task, but they learnt a lot and enjoyed working as a team with the senior.

e. Group 5

***Question 9: Should there be given time at TWG meetings to present and discuss our individual doctoral projects?***

- The group came to the unanimous opinion that time should not be given at TWG meetings for doctoral students to present and discuss their individual doctoral projects.
- The group felt that the doctoral students at CLIOHRES valued the feeling of equality between students and professors that is fostered by the meetings. It was believed that discussing doctoral projects would damage this atmosphere of equality.
- The group also thought that, in most cases, our research interests varied too greatly for us to give useful help and comments on each others theses. It was, however, pointed out that certain methodological and theoretical issues in our doctoral work could be discussed by all doctoral students.
- We also believed that most doctoral students in CLIOHRES discuss their doctoral projects in their free time and over e-mail. The group argued that this was more effective as students could discuss their theses with other students who shared their research interests.
- It was, therefore, suggested that it should be made easier for CLIOHRES doctoral students to find colleagues who share their research interests. The group felt that this could be achieved by placing brief research profiles of CLIOHRES members on the website.

***Question 10: Should there be time given to special doctoral student sessions at the TWG meetings? What should happen there?***

- The group believed that special doctoral student sessions at TWG meetings or the annual plenary meeting would be very useful.

- We felt that the issues discussed at the Reykjavik doctoral student assembly were a good example to follow.
- The group believed that the meetings should attempt to map the experiences of doctoral students in CLIOHRES, as was begun by the questionnaire that was sent to doctoral students before Reykjavik. It was felt that this would be a unique opportunity to study the comparative experiences of European doctoral students.
- It was also argued that the meetings should allow doctoral students to discuss their experience of the CLIOHRES network. It would then be possible to present the concerns and ideas of the doctoral students to the organising committee.

f. Group 6

Group 6 of the doctoral students meeting at Reykjavik has to answer the last two questions of the questionnaire prepared to sum up some of the conclusions of the query about doctoral programs sent to the students by the Pisa Team.

***11. Which are the skills that the doctoral student must acquire with the realization of the doctoral thesis.***

According to the discussions of the members of the 6th team these are:

- -Analytical and organizational skills.
- -Complex research capability.
- -The ability of communicate the results of the research in a way that, combining the necessary scientific character of the research, it can reach an audience as universal as possible.

***12. Is there a need for a limit of the extension of the doctoral thesis?***

The answer of this question is hindered by a fact that also affect most of the problems raised by the query: this is that the CLIOHRES Network students come from very different national research traditions and backgrounds. In that context there are countries such as the United Kingdom, with quite an strict limitation of the extension of a thesis, while others, as Spain, has tended to ask for thesis much more lengthy thesis than other countries of Europe. Apart from this, the time given for fulfilment of the thesis vary from one country to another. As a result, in the discussions of the group the only point of consensus was that the extension of the thesis must be determined by the complete fulfilment of the skills stated in the previous question.

***13. Must the thesis be published before its defence?***

Our answer to thesis question was clear: *No*. First of all, in our opinion a publication prior to the public defence of the theses would make impossible to incorporate in published version of the work the recommendations and suggestions of the supervisors of the research. Apart from this, a publication prior to the defence of the thesis would mean a diminution of its importance and, in some extend, a lack of consideration for the work of our supervisors that, as transpired from our discussion, is more than essential. It was clear for Doctoral Students Discussion Group 6 that the publication of scientific articles during the realisation of the thesis must be encouraged. This is one of the most valuable opportunities provided by the CLIOHRES Program.

[Group 6 report prepared by Emilio Sáenz-Francés San Baldomero]

## Annex 3

Excerpts from:

**Julia Gonzalez, Ann Katherine Isaacs, Robert Wagenaar, *Applying the Tuning Approach in Third Cycle Studies*, forthcoming.**

*The following excerpt of the paper on using Tuning methodology for third cycle studies is included here because the example (entirely hypothetical) refers to History. The entire paper in its final form will soon be published in The Tuning Journal.*

*A second table is included: it hypothesizes a Tuning Template as a tool for planning and organising doctoral studies.*

[...]

### **The use of ECTS in the third cycle**

There has been a certain amount of debate about using ECTS credits in the third cycle. There is some agreement that credits can be used for the taught part of programmes; there is more uncertainty about using them to design or to regulate activities associated with the dissertation or doctoral research project.

We posit that -- as for the first two -- ECTS credits, correctly understood, can provide a very useful planning tool for the third cycle. In its essence, ECTS is a student-centred tool for measuring the time – in absolute terms – that the student / candidate will normally need to employ in order to reach this or that learning outcome. Seen in this way, credits are simply a handy tool for measuring the realism of what we ask students or doctoral candidates to do.

[...]

If we take each credit as indicating about 25-30 hours of student / candidates work, we can reasonably use the general indication that it should be possible to carry out three year doctoral programmes in the time equivalent to 180 ECTS credits and four year doctoral programmes in the time equivalent to 240 ECTS. It has been recommended by the Ministers in Bergen not to make the third cycle too rigid: this is certainly a necessary caveat, but at the same time, the learner has the right to enrol in a programme which he/she can in practice carry out the necessary activities in the allotted time. If this is not possible for the normal candidate, accepted in the programme, it means that design is faulty.

[...]

The dissertation itself may require a long and complex process of gathering data, analysis and the elaboration of an extended monograph. In such a case, credits for the dissertation will probably most often be awarded only when the defence is concluded, and hence when the degree is awarded (although doctoral candidates are now asking to be allowed to publish before the final defence chapters of their dissertations as articles in journals or other collective works).

But in this case too, credits as a measure of time can be used to ensure that the demands made on candidates are reasonable; that the amount of research and analysis that they are asked to do is consonant with the legal length of studies, and to help to organise the stages in the elaboration of their doctoral project.

[...]

To give a concrete example, we might imagine a history candidate in a three year doctoral programme. The three year programme is in its way a ‘project’ which should be organised more rigidly at the beginning and give more autonomy at the end, but always keeping to an agreed



series of deadlines. The candidate will have prepared a presentation of his/her research project in order to be accepted for doctoral studies. Using credits as a measure of time, we might **hypothesise** a programme such as the following:

Phase	Credits or equivalent in time	'taught' or credited components (40 credits)	Individual research project or dissertation (140 credits)	Signposts
First semester	30	5 credits (125 to 150 hours) for a technical seminar (e.g. palaeography) 5 credits (125 to 150 hours) for a high level methodological workshop	The equivalent of 20 credits (500 to 600 hours) of which half devoted to producing a complete and up to date review of bibliography and published sources; and one half to mapping useful archival materials:	By end of semester: Bibliography and map presented to, discussed with and approved by a supervisory committee.
Second semester	30	5 credits (125 to 150 hours) for attendance at and preparation of a doctoral seminar for a cohort or a school	The equivalent of 25 credits (500 to 600 hours) devoted to gathering material and reading sources accordingly; preparation of draft outline	By the end of semester: Review of archival work done and approval by committee of draft outline of the dissertation
Third semester	30	5 credits for participation in methodological seminar	The equivalent of 25 credits (500 to 600 hours) devoted to continued gathering of data, analysis and organisation of results	By end of semester: analytical table of contents presented and approved by committee
Fourth semester	30	5 for the preparation of a brief publishable article or book review	The equivalent of 25 credits (500 to 600 hours) devoted continued gathering of data, writing of one chapter in final form	By end of semester: completed chapter presented and approved by committee
Fifth semester	30	5 credits for helping in organisation of methodological seminar	The equivalent of 25 credits (500 to 600 hours) devoted to writing and necessary further controls and checks	By end of semester: majority of chapters complete and presented in pre-final draft to committee
Sixth semester	30	No 'taught' part, all time to be devoted to final elaboration of text	The equivalent of 30 credits (750 to 900 hours) for work on and checks on dissertation	By middle of semester written text entirely completed in pre-final form; archival checks and polishing of prose, work ready for defence.
		40 credits accumulated	140 credits for dissertation, awarded when assessment is complete	Defence complete, degree awarded (180 doctoral credits)



### Tuning Template for Third Cycle programmes:

Item	Suggestions of elements to be considered	To be filled in according to needs of the specific institution, taking into account the legal framework and the Tuning Subject Area reference points.
1. Introduction to the doctoral programme:	<p>How does the programme fit into the profile and the mission of the individual institution? What are its strengths and areas of particular excellence? Consider what are the main research groups, the main topics cultivated, the gaps – if there are international networks, joint degrees etc.</p> <p>Consider where young ‘doctors’ are employed, and in what capacity.</p>	
2. Degree profiles and occupations:	Academic definition of degree; occupational functions that graduates will be able to perform and degree of responsibility that they will be able to take	
3. Learning outcomes and competences – cycle level descriptors	<p>EQF in general:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. have demonstrated a systematic understanding of a field of study and mastery of the skills and methods of research associated with that field;</li> <li>2. have demonstrated the ability to conceive, design, implement and adapt a substantial piece of research with scholarly integrity;</li> <li>3. have made a contribution through original research that extends the frontier of knowledge by developing a substantial body of work, some of which merits national or international refereed publication;</li> <li>4. are capable of critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis of new and complex ideas;</li> <li>5. can communicate with their peers, the larger scholarly community and with society in general about their areas of expertise;</li> <li>6. can be expected to be able to</li> </ol>	Tuning generic competences to appropriate levels plus subject specific competences

	promote, with academic and professional contexts, technological, social or cultural advancement in a knowledge based society.	
4. Workload and ECTS	180 to 240 credits (25-30 hours of student work per credit) of which a specified part to be awarded on approval of the dissertation or project; a specified part to the various modules or planned activities when they are assessed and the student / candidate has demonstrated that he/she possesses the required competences	
5. Learning, teaching and assessment	Definition of the learning environments and assessment methods (e.g. weekly seminar with other doctoral candidates, organised in turn by groups of candidates who carry out the logistic organisation, chair the meeting, guide discussion, report; or laboratory session in which certain techniques are demonstrated and repeated; etc.)	
6. Quality enhancement	What procedures (self evaluation, external evaluation, candidate participation etc.) are in place to guarantee quality	