

QUALITY OF TEACHING AT DOCTORAL STUDIES

<p>The quality assurance system for doctoral education (as well as first and second cycle of studies and postgraduate studies) in Poland is on several levels. It takes place at:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - classes in individual subjects resulting from the study plan (responsible: tutors, doctoral studies supervisor); - Faculty of Graduate Studies (Faculty Commission of Quality Education); - University (Rector’s Plenipotentiary Representative for Quality Assurance of Training, University Commission for Quality of Education).
<p>The external bodies responsible for improving the quality of education, the assessment of which determines the grade and quality of education are:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Polish Accreditation Commission, - the Accreditation Commission for Academic Medical Schools (ACAMS), - the National Accreditation Council for Nurses and Midwifery Schools - the University Accreditation Commission are
<p>Jan Kochanowski University in Kielce recognizes the strategic goal of ensuring the highest quality of education. The University take into account:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the provisions of the Bologna Declaration, - the Act of Higher Education, - European Qualifications Framework - Polish Qualifications Framework etc.
<p>In terms of UJK, the “quality” includes:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the improvement of the “quality management” - the enlightening of “institutional quality” by measuring the performance of key internal and external stakeholders - the implementation of mechanisms that minimize deviations between expectations and actual outcomes.
<p>In order to improve the quality of education, UJK implements also the quality improvement in the field of university resources management, ie:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - finance, - didactic-science and ICT infrastructure, - knowledge and human resources.
<p>Internal Quality Assurance System:</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) refers to all stages and aspects of the didactic process, 2) includes the activities for the improvement of higher education, doctoral and postgraduate programs, 3) takes into account: the way of verifying the effects of education on all faculties and levels of higher education, doctoral studies and postgraduate studies; assessment of achievement of the assumed learning outcomes; assessments by students, doctoral students and postgraduate students after the end of each education cycle; conclusions from the monitoring of the professional careers of university graduates and conclusions from the study of employers’ expectations

	and the compatibility of learning outcomes with the needs of the labor market.
The aim of the Internal Quality Assurance System is to:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) take care of fulfilling the mission and strategy of the University in the area of improvement and quality assurance, 2) increase the attractiveness and competitiveness of UJK towards other universities, 3) continue the improvement of the quality of education in the UJK and building quality culture, 4) create and promote pro-quality activities and involve the entire academic community in this process, 5) improve the quality of education of teaching staff, infrastructure and didactic offer, 6) create the clear and open standards for monitoring and evaluation of the teaching process.
In order to carry out the tasks of the Internal Quality Assurance System for Higher Education, we set up the University Commission of Quality of the Education. It consists of the University Education Quality Assurance Team and University Quality Assessment Team. Within the latter, there are two subassemblies:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teachers Training Subcommittee, - Subcommittee on Doctorate and Postgraduate Studies (PSDiP).
According to the Order No. 78/2015 of the Rector of the University of Jan Kochanowski in Kielce (19 October 2015) the tasks of the Subcommittee on Doctorate and Postgraduate Studies are:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) supporting, monitoring and analyzing the quality of education at doctoral and postgraduate studies, 2) analysis of the compliance of doctoral and postgraduate studies with the applicable internal and external regulations, 3) giving opinions on the programs of doctoral and postgraduate studies, 4) proposing changes to the doctoral and postgraduate education programs aimed at improving the quality of education, 5) analysis of the adequacy of methods of verification of attainment of the assumed effects of education at doctoral and postgraduate studies.
At the level of the faculties of the university there are Faculty Quality Assurance Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Departmental Quality Assurance Teams, - Faculties for Quality Assessment of Education, - Directional Learning Programs Teams.

<p>Committees which have established:</p>	
<p>The effects of doctoral education (and how they are verified and documented) determine the organizational unit running doctoral studies. In the case of UJK, such unit is the department.</p> <p>The provision of high quality doctoral education is, inter alia, a way of constructing plans for these studies, which ensure the participation of doctoral students in:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - compulsory courses in subjects closely related to the field of study - optional subjects developing professional skills, preparing the doctoral student for research or research and development work, - optional classes, developing teaching skills, preparing the doctorate to practice to the profession as a teacher, - professional practice.
<p>An important part of the Internal Quality Assurance System is the research¹ conducted as pools at the university, faculties and field surveys among:</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) students, doctoral students, postgraduate students and graduates of particular levels and forms of studies, 2) academic teachers, 3) non-academic staff serving the education process.
<p>The internal quality assurance system is an important part of the quality system of university-wide procedures and on departmental level - faculty procedures. They are constantly reviewed and updated. At present, among the general-purpose procedures at UJK, there are:</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The procedure for the creation, modification and abolition of higher education courses / doctoral and postgraduate studies, 2. The procedure for assessing the effectiveness of achievement of assumed learning outcomes, 3. The procedure for assessing the internal quality assurance system for education, 4. The procedure of providing students with didactic, scientific and material support, 5. The procedure for handling the course of studies, 6. Dissemination procedure, 7. The procedure of the general university survey, 8. Assessment procedure for an academic teacher, 9. The procedure for monitoring the professional careers of graduates, 10. The procedure of dissertation,

¹ These researches are conducted with the principals of voluntary, confidentiality and openness of the results. Doctoral students, as well as first- and second-degree students, and postgraduate students, may complete surveys from their individual accounts at the Virtual University.

The surveys assessing the academic teachers for the fulfillment of their didactic duties are carried out each time after the completion of classes in the given year and in the field of studies; the questionnaires evaluating the classes are conducted after each course of the subject in the given year and the course of study. The results obtained in these surveys serve to improve the quality of education.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. The procedure for holding and documenting student internships, 12. The procedure of class attendance, 13. The procedure of mode and method of conducting certification exams from foreign languages, 14. Student participation in elective courses, 15. The procedure for the introduction of grades to the Virtual University, 16. The procedure for dealing with complaints and conclusions and resolving conflicts.
<p>The detailed description of the internal quality assurance system (presented here) concerns Jan Kochanowski University in Kielce. Solutions in individual Polish universities may differ, but it is important that in each institution - both public and non-public – the system works:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The systematic work to improve the quality of education is conducted by the Polish Accreditation Commission (PAC). It is created by a panel of experts working to improve the quality of education in all public and non-public HEIs, is qualified to evaluate the fulfillment of conditions for teaching and quality assessment at I, II and III degrees of studies and postgraduate studies, and to evaluate the activities of core organizational units in the universities. - PAC was created on January 1, 2002 (under the name the State Accreditation Commission) under the Act of 20 July 2001 amending the Act on Higher Education Act at that time and the scope of its tasks and competences was redefined and expanded by the current Act of 27 July 2005 about the Higher Education, as well as the Act of 23 June 2016 on amending the Act on Higher Education and some other acts. - Passing the assessment of the Polish Accreditation Commission is obligatory and its negative rating may result in the decision of the minister responsible for higher education to revoke or suspend the right of education in the given field of study and the level of education (also for doctoral studies). - The Polish Accreditation Commission conducts a program of evaluation based on the evaluation of the quality of education in the fields of study, the levels and the profile of higher education. - The amended <i>Act on Higher Education and related regulations</i> allow PAC a less formal and more substantive approach to assessing the quality of education in Polish higher education institutions.

<p>While preparing the detailed criteria for program evaluation, the Commission adopts solutions based on current legislation but also takes into account “Quality Assurance Standards and Guidance in the European Higher Education Area” according to which the program evaluation criteria consist of:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the concept and curriculum, its consistency with the mission and strategy of the institution, and the ability to achieve learning outcomes; - the education staff; - the cooperation with the socio-economic environment; - the didactic and scientific infrastructure and educational resources; - caring for students and supporting learning and achieving outcomes.
<p>By assessing the quality of education in the fields of general-studies, PAC analyzes primarily:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the interrelationship of research activities with the learning and teaching process in a particular direction, - the impact of researches on the achievement of learning outcomes, - the ability of students to participate in research.
<p>In the case of a practical profile, the focus of the Commission is on how to provide students with the opportunity to acquire:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - knowledge, - practical skills, - social competence in conditions as close as possible to actual jobs²
<p>The general approach of the PAC is based on the principle that the most important impact on the quality of education is a well-thought-out, modern education program that responds to the challenges of the present day, carried out by appropriately selected teaching staff in the conditions necessary to achieve the goals set. The Commission also takes into consideration:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the clearly defined effects to be achieved by the graduate; - the fact of ensuring the application of effective, diverse and aptly chosen and tailored student learning approaches to learning outcomes, with particular emphasis on the degree of diplomacy; - the confirmation of achievement by graduates of all assumed learning outcomes. <p><i>The amendment of the Act on Higher Education took into consideration the process of education (and especially the system of regulations concerning quality assurance and evaluation of education) in Polish universities which were very bureaucratic. Universities have developed extensive internal procedures to document in detail their efforts for a good quality of education. This in mainly concerned the functioning of the formal internal structure of the quality assurance system. Meanwhile, the measure of quality culture should be the efficiency of this system, and the Polish Accreditation Commission should evaluate its effectiveness rather than the formal description.</i></p>

² In assessing the educational programs at the different levels of education, the Commission takes into account the characteristics of the education levels included in the Polish Qualifications Framework and adjust the programs to the appropriate level of the Framework.

When making changes to the quality assessment system, it was assumed that the quality assessment of PAC in education should be of a substantive nature and should be based on a clear set of criteria. Changes in the Act of Higher Education Law consist in departing from the need to verify the PAC's compliance with numerous formal conditions for conducting studies in a particular direction, level and profile of education. The process of checking the legality of teaching will be separated from the process of substantive evaluation of the quality of education. In order to minimize bureaucratic burdens for study units, the formal verification will be based on the data collected by the reporting system, including the POL-on system.

The PAC's quality assessment process (or, at least, in the assumptions made by the authors of the last amendment of the Act) was supposed to have the character of a dispute concerning all general evaluation criteria defined in the ordinance of the Minister of Science and Higher Education. Its participants are the evaluation team and the academic community - academic teachers, students and staff supporting the learning process, which participates in the delivery of education on the assessed direction. As the result of such a dispute, in addition to the evaluation by the evaluation team, recommendations should be made, the implementation of which will guarantee the improvement of the learning process.

The amendment of the Law on higher education abolished PAC's institutional assessment, which consisted in evaluating the core activity of the organizational unit of the institution and was carried out in the unit where the program evaluation had been conducted in most of its courses. There are voices, especially among PAC experts, that this type of assessment should be reintroduced. PAC's opinions and conclusions are presented to the minister competent for higher education.

The Polish Accreditation Commission has the status of full member in:

- Central and East European Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (CEENQA) – since January 2002
- European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA) – since December 2005,
- International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) – since 2007,
- European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) – since January 2009.

Since 15.01.2009, the Commission is in the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR), a register of agencies operating under the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance.

In 2012, the American National Committee on Foreign Medical Education and Accreditation (NCFMEA) assessed that the procedures and standards used by the Polish Accreditation Commission in the accreditation process of medical schools are comparable to those of the US.

Pursuant to the provisions of the PAC's Statute, the Commission's activities are the subject to external review (once every 5 years). The first such assessment was carried out by the International Panel of Experts in 2008, and its result allowed the inclusion of the Polish Commission in the European Registry of Quality Assurance Agencies (EQAR). As a result of the next review at the turn of 2013 and 2014, the full membership of PAC in ENQA has been confirmed.

Qualifications obtained through doctoral studies completing by the doctoral degree in a specific field have been entered into the Integrated Qualification System (Act of 22 December 2015 on the Integrated Qualification System) - corresponding to 8th level of Polish Qualification Framework.

<p>An integral part of the Integrated Qualification System is the Polish Qualification Framework.</p>	<p>The Polish Qualifications Framework is a modern, coherent European Qualifications Framework (EQF), a way of determining, organizing and describing qualifications, including the effects of education obtained through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - formal education (schools, higher education) - non-formal education - outside the general education, - vocational and higher education system (eg. qualification, language, specialist - certified) - courses, - learning outcomes in non-formal education (eg. professional experience and practice, internships, student internships, independent learning).
<p>Doctoral studies are conducted in Poland in units with the appropriate powers conferred by the Central Commission on Degrees and Titles at the request of the organizational unit.</p>	<p>The Central Commission:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) takes into account the level of scientific or artistic activity of the unit and the number of people employed in it who hold the title of professor or the degree of habilitated doctor. 2) confers this right after consultation with the Central Council for Science and Higher Education. 3) influences the process of quality assurance in the sense that it controls the level of scientific and didactic staff employed in the doctoral student body and has the power to revoke the assigned powers if the organizational unit ceases to meet the required conditions set forth in the Act. 4) makes a periodic assessment of the fulfillment of the conditions for awarding a Ph.D. 5) is also the body to which an applicant for a doctorate can appeal against a resolution of a refusal (after reviewing the appeal, within no more than six months, the Central Commission either upholds the contested resolution or, by repealing it, refers the case to the board of the same or another organizational unit for reconsideration). 6) keeps, updates and publishes on its website: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the information about the organizational units authorized to assign degrees along with a list of these degrees; - the information about organizational units that the Central Commission has restricted, revoked or suspended the right to assign degrees, the date it was suspended, and

	<p>the reason for the restriction, withdrawal or suspension of entitlement;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the information about organizational units conducting doctoral studies; - the summaries of doctoral dissertations and reviews submitted to the doctoral degree.
<p>The internal evaluation process consists, among others, in determining the effectiveness of achievement of the assumed learning outcomes by assessing the students' achievements of the assumed learning outcomes and verification of the methods of assessment and evaluation. Responsible persons are:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - lead teachers, - supervisors, - reviewers (of doctoral dissertation), - tutors, - curricular teams for curricula, - Faculty Unit for Assessing the Quality of Education - the University Team for Assessing the Quality of Education.
<p>The verification of effectiveness of achievement of the assumed learning outcomes is realized by:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the assessment of the subject card (curriculum) and verification of the assumed learning outcomes in the area of knowledge, skills and social competences; - the diploma process - through the diploma thesis the assumed effects of education are verified. They are evaluated by the promoter and reviewer (diplomas at the various faculties and the diploma procedure); - student practice (doctoral) - the learning outcomes gained during student internships are complementary to the concept of education; - the international exchange of students - obtaining information from students about their knowledge, skills and social competences in the context of staying in a partner university; - the achievement of scientific circles - feedback through external reviews (scientific publications, speeches at conferences, awarded by the Rector and the Minister's scholarship); - investigating the fate of graduates - by providing feedback on the acquired knowledge, skills and competences and their relevance to the labor market; - the survey of employers' opinions - opinions of employers on educational programs, including the expected learning outcomes and methods of their verification, especially concerning practical training;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - monitoring the activities that prepare students to acquire in-depth knowledge and skills in conducting research and practical work-related training.
<p>Verification of the quality of education during doctoral studies is inter alia:</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) the staged works - performed by a doctoral student during studies: colloquium, tests, final papers, presentations, case studies; 2) the exams on the subject - questions prepared for the exam should not go beyond the content included in the course card delivered during lectures / exercises. Student has the right to justify by the instructor received on the assessment exam; the form of the examination: oral / written, practical is determined by the teacher and included in the card of the subject; 3) the credit and the credit with the grade - the teacher defines the assessment criteria, gives the student the marks and justifies the assessment received by the student on the credit. Criteria for assessment and its components are defined in the course card; 4) the report on the implementation of scientific research and progress in the preparation of the dissertation, provided by the scientific supervisor or promoter - at the end of each year of study; 5) the parameterization of scientific achievements – doctoral students of UJK are obliged to introduce their own scientific achievements (for the academic year) through individual profile to the Scientific Research module.

The verification of the achievement of directional learning's outcomes is also a positive credit for doctoral dissertations, writing a dissertation, positively reviewed and defended.

According to the recent amendment of the Act on Higher Education, the Minister of Science and Higher Education “conducts the Unified Anti-plagiarism System, which cooperates with the national repository of written diploma theses, and assures the free use of this system by universities” - according to this provision since the academic year 2018/19 every university's obligation will be to verify diploma theses in the central system run by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education. The anti-plagiarism procedure will cover all bachelor's, master's, and doctoral theses. So far, universities in Poland have used different anti-plagiarism systems (eg Plagiat.pl or Open Anti-plagiarism Systems) - the obligation to carry out the anti-plagiarism procedure has introduced (since the academic year 2015/16) by the amendment of the Higher Education Act of 1.10.2014

According to this amendment the rectors of the universities until 31.12.2018 must submit to the national repository of written thesis papers data on works which defense was successful after 30 September 2009. Transition of the anti-plagiarism procedure is a condition of admission the work for the diploma / defense dissertation. If the assessment shows that the work does not meet the criteria of the anti-plagiarism

procedure and at the same time contains a prerequisite for plagiarism, then such work is not admitted to the dissertation examination / submission of the dissertation and is not added to the anti-plagiarist database. A work that does not meet the criteria of the anti-plagiarism procedure and also contains the premises for plagiarism is a subject to additional evaluation by the commission appointed by the dean. The commission consists of a dean or an assistant dean, a promoter and other specialist in the subject matter of a given thesis with a doctoral degree or a scientific title. It makes a final judgment on whether a job is plagiarized. Of course, the problem is the degree of digitization not only of diploma and doctoral studies, but also - and perhaps above all – the literature of the subject. If a student / doctoral student uses foreign language work not in the database, the anti-plagiarist systems are unable to detect unauthorized / unreported borrowings. On the Internet you can find lots of tips / guides telling people what to do to avoid the anti-plagiarism program and “do not get caught” on plagiarism. So, this is still a problem that is not completely resolved. Many people stress that there is still a huge role to play here to fulfill the thesis supervisor. The effectiveness of the anti-plagiarism systems used by the Polish universities has been negatively assessed by the Supreme Chamber of Control in 2014, accusing them of being unprofitable and ineffective - they can easily be deceived, they do not even detect the primitive borrowings of popular portals, and the results of their work are incomparable between colleges / universities. Professor Tadeusz Grabiński, after analyzing the anti-plagiarist programs used by Polish universities (Plagiat.pl, Open Antipollution System, Podkarpackie Anti-Plagiarism Platform and Genoa), thinks that instead of wondering how much borrowing already means plagiarism, one should show (for each field separately) how much original work is in a given work. The universities define the relevant ECTS regulations and standards. The faculty council / doctoral program manager will individually set up an education plan and program for a doctoral student undertaking studies at another university or research institute in accordance with ECTS. The number of ECTS credits is attributed to all subjects from which the doctoral student has obtained a credit according to the study plan and the ECTS standards.