

**Postgraduate doctoral
study programme**



University of Zadar

**QUALITY IN
EDUCATION
Study Programme
Guide**

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Study Programme Guide

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INTRODUCTION

The postgraduate study programme *Quality in Education* is doctoral programme in the area of the social sciences, scientific field of pedagogy.

The bearer and deliverer of the *Quality in Education* doctoral study programme is the Department of Pedagogy, University of Zadar. The programme was accredited at the University Senate session on 24 September 2014, pursuant to positive reviews by renowned experts in the field of education: Prof. Neven Hrvatić, PhD (Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb), Prof. Andrew Brown, PhD (Institute of Education, University of London), Prof. Renata Miljević-Ridički, PhD (Faculty of Teacher Education, University of Zagreb), and pursuant to all legal regulations of the Republic of Croatia.

Due to the importance of scientific-research work as an integral part and basis of good quality higher education in the national and European contexts, the launch of a postgraduate cycle in Education at the Department of Pedagogy, University of Zadar, is of strategic significance. The study programme focuses primarily on scientific research into the quality of education, and on discussion and critical assessment of current scientific knowledge in pedagogy. It also requires students to be acquainted with and respond critically to theoretical and methodological insights in other scientific areas, fields and branches.

The postgraduate study programme in pedagogy is aligned with the mission and vision of the University of Zadar (Development Strategy of the University of Zadar from 2017 to 2022), which has a strong research emphasis, focusing on organising and conducting scientific-research work, continually improving the quality of undergraduate, graduate and doctoral studies, assuring student and teacher mobility, and developing multidisciplinary studies and international cooperation. The University of Zadar's mission and development strategy up to the year 2022 places research activities and equipping young researchers in the foreground, in order to assure the continuity of high-quality achievements in the University's basis tasks, in parallel with internationalisation and the production of new knowledge as a basis for social development.

I. AIMS, SPECIFICS AND PRINCIPLES OF THE DOCTORAL STUDY PROGRAMME

The aims of the postgraduate study programme *Quality in Education* are:

- ▶ To develop a scientific-research core in the area of education which will produce new knowledge, critically assess the application of current knowledge in educational practice, and establish dialogue between science, the arts, the technical sciences and other elements of practice to which education is oriented
- ▶ To affirm interdisciplinary research bearing in mind the different kinds of professionals involved in education, and to strengthen the scientific development of particular methodologies
- ▶ To assure the vertical passage of students of pedagogy who have graduated from the University of Zadar or other higher education institutions in the Republic of Croatia and abroad, given their interests and professional needs
- ▶ To assure the vertical passage of students who have graduated in other scientific areas and fields, in the Republic of Croatia and abroad, who are interested in scientific-research work in the area of education
- ▶ To achieve competitiveness in the European research area
- ▶ To establish scientific cooperation with foreign institutions of higher education
- ▶ To assure the mobility of teachers and doctoral students
- ▶ To advance knowledge by creating and conducting original research.

The doctoral study programme is uniquely recognisable for its:

- ▶ Topical focus on quality education in all segments of the education system, forms of education and learning (formal, non-formal and informal) and educational situations and levels (the family, pre-school, primary and secondary, vocational, tertiary, and adult education, etc.), and in alternative educational concepts in the national and international contexts

- ▶ High-quality curricular components and their influence on educational practice, particularly the teaching and learning process
- ▶ Focus on the key (generic) competences of subjects in the educational process and professional competences of educational professionals (pre-school teachers, school teachers, higher education teachers and support staff, in the national and international contexts)
- ▶ Topical areas which require cooperation between education and other disciplines and contribute to new interdisciplinary areas (for example, economics and education, information sciences and education, technology and education) and the scientific development of methodologies in educational subjects or learning areas.

The postgraduate study programme *Quality in Education* is based on the principles of excellence, originality, flexibility, respect for human rights, professional and research ethics, and the quality of research and scientific approaches.

II. LEARNING OUTCOMES

Doctoral students in the postgraduate study programme *Quality in Education* are prepared for scientific work in the area of the social sciences, pedagogy and the wider educational sciences, with the emphasis on a) researching phenomena linked to the development of quality in education under institutional conditions, b) researching educational needs and processes, c) conceiving innovative models of education and d) researching the quality of educational concepts and their relevance in practice.

Upon completing the doctoral study programme, and producing and defending their dissertations, students will be able to:

- ▶ Interpret and respond critically to educational theories
- ▶ Formulate and explain problems in the area of the educational sciences
- ▶ Compare and evaluate educational concepts (pre-school, school, alternative and standard)
- ▶ Understand theories and argumentation models about educational goals
- ▶ Use categorical education concepts and terminology appropriately
- ▶ Postulate, formulate and operationalise research problems in the field of pedagogy and educational sciences
- ▶ Demonstrate the ability to create, design, implement and adapt scientific research processes
- ▶ Research problems in the area of education independently and autonomously, and publish the results of original research
- ▶ Participate in the work of scientific-research teams and create new scientific-research projects
- ▶ Critically analyse, evaluate and synthesise new research ideas
- ▶ Write scientific papers according to the requirements of scientific and professional standards
- ▶ Disseminate scientific insights and communicate their field of expertise through scientific arguments with colleagues, the wider scientific community and the wider social setting
- ▶ Apply ethic principles to social research, particular when it involves the confidentiality of personal and other data, a professional relationship with respondents, interpreting and disseminating research results, protecting research participants, avoiding conflicts of interest, or the harmful consequences of plagiarism.

Attention will also focus on developing the doctoral students' other generic competences, so by the end of their studies, they will be able to communicate in teams, plan, organise, manage and lead scientific-research and project tasks, achieve research goals in interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary teams, and apply them in multicultural settings and intercultural processes.

III. ENROLMENT CONDITIONS AND CRITERIA

The following candidates may enrol in the postdoctoral study programme *Quality in Education*:

- ▶ Those who have completed university graduate studies (min. 300 ECTS) in the fields of pedagogy or the educational sciences, the area of primary education or early/pre-school education, educational-rehabilitation sciences, sociology, psychology and kinesiology, and other fields in the social sciences
- ▶ Those who have completed university graduate studies in other scientific areas and chosen the area of education for their professional and scientific focus, or in other scientific areas according to personal needs or the requirements of their work
- ▶ Those who have completed a master's degree in the area of pedagogy or the educational sciences, the field of primary education or early/pre-school education, or other scientific areas
- ▶ Those who gained a GPA of 4.0 or above during graduate studies, or who can provide two letters of recommendation from university teachers if their GPA was lower
- ▶ Those who have a good knowledge of English or another foreign language (German, Italian, French)
- ▶ Those who can demonstrate in a letter of motivation or interview a high degree of motivation for scientific-research work and the demands of the doctoral study programme.

IV. ORGANISATION OF THE TEACHING PROCESS

The postgraduate study programme *Quality in Education* is organised in semesters.

During the first year, lectures lead to doctoral seminars and are held once a month according to a special schedule.

During the second and third years, the focus is on consultations and tutorials, intensive mentoring and independent work by the doctoral students.

Consultative work with doctoral students is carried out individually and through various aspects and methods of education, using the appropriate educational resources. Skype and other kinds of audio-visual communication may be used.

As their doctoral studies progress, students focus increasingly on scientific-research work, writing scientific reports and articles, organising scientific knowledge bases, and giving presentations at scientific conferences, groups and symposia.

Doctoral workshops and seminars are an innovative teaching form which are particularly important, as they facilitate immediate scientific thought processes at the highest academic level, involving all participants in the doctoral study programme.

V. OBLIGATIONS OF DOCTORAL STUDENTS DURING THE DOCTORAL PROGRAMME

Obligations of doctoral students during the study programme	Proof of study achievements and requirements fulfilled during the doctoral study programme
<p>Doctoral students are obliged to attend all classes according to the schedule provided.</p> <p>During the first year, in the first and second semesters, doctoral students will meet all teachers participating in the study programme through classes held once a month as a rule. These teachers are potential mentors of doctoral dissertations.</p> <p>In the first semester of the current year, as part of the module <i>Theoretical-Methodological Approaches in Education</i>, the following courses are entered in the doctoral students' record books:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Conceptions and perspectives in education Teachers: Prof. Igor Radeka, PhD and Prof. Neven Hrvatić, PhD ▶ History of theories of education Teacher: Prof. Igor Radeka, PhD ▶ Methodology of educational research Teacher: Asst. Prof. Daliborka Luketić, PhD <p>Doctoral students must fulfil all obligations required by the teachers.</p>	<p>Signature of doctoral student on the appropriate form or photograph.</p> <p>Fulfilment of obligations for all classes mentioned is a prerequisite for enrolment in the third semester.</p> <p>The teachers write in the student's record book and application: <i>obligations fulfilled</i>. (If the teachers are unavailable, the head of the doctoral study programme may make the entry on their behalf.)</p>
<p>In the second semester of the current year, as part of the module <i>Methodology of Research in Education</i>, the following courses are entered in the doctoral students' record books:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Learning in the digital environment Teacher: Prof. Ivanka Stričević, PhD ▶ Developing research competences Teacher: Dr. Dina Mehmedbegović ▶ Quantitative and qualitative research in education Teachers: Asst. Prof. Daliborka Luketić, PhD and Assoc. Prof. Zdeslav Hrepić, PhD <p>Doctoral students must fulfil all obligations required by the teachers.</p>	<p>Fulfilment of obligations for all courses mentioned is a prerequisite for enrolment in the fifth semester.</p> <p>The teachers write in the student's record book and application: <i>obligations fulfilled</i>. (If the teachers are unavailable, the head of the doctoral study programme may make the entry on their behalf.)</p>

In the second year, as part of the module *Quality in Education* (3rd semester), doctoral students must enrol in the compulsory course *Doctoral seminar*, and one optional course.

Doctoral students are obliged to produce three outlines for a research project during the *Doctoral seminar* course.

The Doctoral Study Council considers the research project outlines, and appoints mentors (and co-mentors) to supervise the production of one selected research project per student.

Each doctoral student works with the mentor to elaborate the research project, presents it to the other teachers and students at the *Doctoral seminar* (according to a special schedule) and demonstrates competences in a scientific discussion of the research project.

The project proposals by the doctoral students are also used when appointing mentors for the preparation and defence of the doctoral thesis topic.

After the project outline is approved, the name of the mentor holding the *Doctoral seminar* is entered into the student's record book.

The *Doctoral seminar* sessions are held according to the teaching schedule.

In addition to the *Doctoral seminar*, students must select one optional course (elective):

- ▶ **Concepts of early and pre-school education**
Teacher: Asst. Prof. Diana Nenadić Bilan, PhD
- ▶ **Multi-strategies and combined research methods**
Teacher: Dr. Dina Mehmedbegović
- ▶ **Pedagogy of family relations**
Teacher: Assoc. Prof. Rozana Petani, PhD
- ▶ **Teaching in modern schools**
Teacher: Prof. Anđelka Peko, PhD
- ▶ **Culture of teaching and the curriculum**
Teachers: Prof. Anđelka Peko, PhD and Prof. Vesnica Mlinarević, PhD
- ▶ **The family and educational institutions**
Teacher: Assoc. Prof. Rozana Petani, PhD
- ▶ **The structure of lifelong learning**
Teacher: Asst. Prof. Ana Marija Rogić, PhD
- ▶ **Learning in the digital environment**
Teachers: Prof. Ivanka Stričević, PhD and Assoc. Prof. Zdeslav Hrepić, PhD

The *Doctoral seminar* course is a prerequisite for enrolment in the sixth semester.

The head of the course (*Doctoral seminar*) writes in the student's record book and application: *obligations fulfilled*.

The student's project proposal (synopsis outline) is evaluated by all teachers present at the *Doctoral seminar*, and the head of the course, who is also the mentor, writes in the student's record book and application: *obligations fulfilled*.

The optional course (elective) is a prerequisite for enrolment in the sixth seminar.

The teachers write in the student's record book and application: *obligations fulfilled*. (If the teachers are unavailable, the head of the doctoral study programme may make the entry on their behalf.)

- ▶ **National curricula and educational standards**
Teachers: Prof. Dijana Vican, PhD and
Asst. Prof. Matilda Karamatić Brčić, PhD
- ▶ **Modern technology in education**
Teacher: Assoc. Prof. Jasmina Vrkić Dimić, PhD
- ▶ **Researching the school and classroom climate in the context of curricular changes**
Teacher: Asst. Prof. Marija Buterin Mičić, PhD
- ▶ **Educational aspects of researching interculturalism**
Teacher: Asst. Prof. Marija Buterin Mičić, PhD
- ▶ **Inclusive education**
Teacher: Asst. Prof. Matilda Karamatić Brčić, PhD
- ▶ **The education of children and pupils with special needs**
Teacher: Prof. Smiljana Zrilić, PhD
- ▶ **Education in the context of European values**
Teacher: Prof. Dijana Vican, PhD
- ▶ **Active forms of learning and teaching**
Teacher: Assoc. Prof. Jasmina Vrkić Dimić, PhD

The *Doctoral seminar* is a form of teaching in which all doctoral students and mentors participate.

Doctoral students are obliged during the *Doctoral seminar* to defend their proposed doctoral thesis topic by the time they enrol in the third year of doctoral studies.

The production of the doctoral dissertation is the independent work of the doctoral student, guided and supervised by the mentor (co-mentor), which includes the student's scientific activity which ends when the dissertation is completed, submitted and defended.

The conditions for enrolment in the third year of the doctoral study programme are the teacher's evidence in the record book and application stating that the doctoral student has fulfilled all obligations.

In the third year, each doctoral student has a mentor while preparing their dissertation and the entry in the record book reads *Production of doctoral dissertation*.

The mentor holds consultative teaching sessions as agreed with the student. A co-mentor may also assist if the Doctoral Study Council so decides.

The production and defence of the doctoral thesis synopsis are results of the mentor's (and co-mentor's) work with the doctoral student.

The doctoral thesis topic production and defence are defined by the University Rulebook and this Guide.

The mentor provides a signature to confirm that the text of the dissertation is ready to submit to the further defence procedure according to the University Rulebook.

Apart from achievements recorded and requirement met during the course of doctoral studies, doctoral students are obliged to meet two of the following four conditions before submitting their dissertations:

- To publish at least one scientific or expert paper in a scientific or expert journal, or provide confirmation that publication is under way
- To participate in a domestic or international scientific meeting, round table discussion, conference, or symposium (proof must be provided)
- To conduct a period of residence (internship) at a foreign higher education institution or scientific-research institute
- To participate in a scientific-research project (as a leader or associate).

The Doctoral Study Council evaluates the fulfilled conditions and delivers an opinion in writing. These conditions may be met at any time during the doctoral study programme.

The doctoral study programme is completed when the dissertation receives a positive evaluation and the oral defence before the Expert Committee for the Defence of the Doctoral Dissertation is successful (the defence procedure is defined in the contents of this Guide and in the University Rulebook).

VI. PROGRESS OF DOCTORAL STUDENTS IN THE DOCTORAL PROGRAMME

Doctoral students progress in the postgraduate study programme Quality in Education by attending obligatory classes, completing work assignments during classes before enrolling in further study years, fulfilling obligations in compulsory and optional courses, producing a research project outline, presenting it to teachers and other doctoral students, and demonstrating competences in scientific debate regarding the research project, producing and defending their doctoral thesis synopsis, meeting other conditions defined in the doctoral study programme which correspond to learning outcomes, and producing and successfully defending their dissertations.

Doctoral students who show particular progress during their studies are allowed to accelerate them. Acceleration means achieving rapid progress by omitting an educational cycle (semester, or study year), that is, the opportunity to complete studies earlier than the normal, optimal period (3 years). Acceleration is pertinent to doctoral students who

demonstrate acquired learning outcomes at Level 8.2. of the Croatian Qualifications Framework, and who are exceptionally talented and scientifically productive.

Doctoral students may have other activities acknowledged, conducted in other institutions or in their personal research work (for example, being awarded a Master of Science degree, or having papers published).

Decisions to promote doctoral students are made by the Doctoral Study Council at the request of students, teachers, or group of teachers or mentors.

VII. SUBMISSION AND ACCEPTANCE OF THE DOCTORAL THESIS TOPIC AND SYNOPSIS DEFENCE

The doctoral dissertation is an original, independent scientific work written by the student, which according to the research methodology, topic and level of contribution to science is suitable for defining the student's abilities to act as an independent researcher in the scientific field.

The Expert Committee for the evaluation and the defence of the doctoral thesis topic consists as a rule of three members. The first member is a teacher in a scientific-teaching post and acknowledged expert in the field of the doctoral thesis topic. The second member is a mentor or co-mentor, a teacher in a scientific-teaching post and an acknowledged expert in the field of the doctoral thesis topic. The third, external member is a teacher in a scientific-teaching post and acknowledged expert in the field of the doctoral thesis topic from another scientific or academic institution. The first and the third members may be scientists in scientific posts.

The Doctoral Study Council organises the defence of the doctoral thesis synopsis. The defence of the doctoral thesis synopsis is public and is announced eight days in advance on the noticeboard and website of the study provider.

The Expert Committee is obliged, at the latest three months after the public synopsis defence, to submit a report with a proposal regarding the approval of the doctoral thesis synopsis to the Doctoral Study Council, the Expert Council for the Area of Social Sciences, and the Senate of the University.

After the selected synopsis is approved, the doctoral student may start working on the dissertation.

If the committee evaluates the synopsis and its defence negatively, the doctoral student is instructed to rewrite it and present another defence. If the result is again negative, at the proposal of the Doctoral Study Council and the Expert Council for the Area

of Social Sciences, the Senate renders a decision to halt the procedure for gaining the title Doctor of Science.

All official forms which conform to the provisions of the Ordinance on Postgraduate Studies (from applying for enrolment in the study programme, to the record of the public dissertation defence) are available on the website of the Office for Postgraduate Studies, in Croatian and English.

VIII. PRODUCTION OF THE DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

The doctoral study programme is completed when the dissertation is produced and defended.

As a rule, the dissertation is written and defended in Croatian. It may be written and defended in another language, at the candidate's request, if the Postgraduate Studies Council so decides, following a recommendation from the Doctoral Study Council.

Instructions for writing the dissertation, examples of the preliminary pages and required appendices, with a description of the procedure following the dissertation defence, can be found on the website of the Office for Postgraduate Studies.

IX. EVALUATION OF THE DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

The Office for Postgraduate Studies checks and confirms that the doctoral student has met all obligations in a satisfactory manner.

The dissertation is assessed by separate reports by the members of the Expert Committee for the Evaluation of the Doctoral Dissertation. The reports are submitted at the latest three months from the submission of the dissertation.

The members of the Committee are appointed by the Senate of the University at the proposal of the Doctoral Study Council and the Postgraduate Studies Council of the University.

The members of the Committee each write a separate report. If a clear decision based on the reports cannot be reached regarding the evaluation of the dissertation, the Doctoral Study Council and/or the Expert Council for the Area of Social Sciences may ask for supplementary comments from the members of the Committee, or further

opinions from two independent experts who assess the dissertation and submit reports. In addition, the Senate may appoint a new Committee and ask the members to review and assess the dissertation again, and to submit reports.

At the proposal of the Expert Committee for the Evaluation of the Doctoral Dissertation, and following a recommendation from the Doctoral Study Council and the Expert Council for the Area of Social Sciences, the Senate may approve the dissertation or return it to the doctoral student for further work according to the comments and demands of the Expert Committee, supplied in writing. The doctoral student is obliged to amend the dissertation within six months of receiving such a decision.

X. DEFENCE OF THE DISSERTATION

When the Doctoral Study Council and Expert Council for the Area of Social Sciences and the Senate receive and accept a positive evaluation of the dissertation, the Doctoral Study Council sends a recommendation to the Postgraduate Studies Council and the Senate, and the Senate appoints an Expert Committee for the Defence of the Dissertation comprising at least three members. The defence of the dissertation is conducted within three months of accepting the positive reports. The defence is in public, and the dissertation must be publicly available at least 15 days before the date of the defence. The dissertation is made available at the University Library.

By defending a dissertation in the postgraduate study programme *Quality in Education* the candidate receives the academic title Doctor of Science, Area of Social Sciences, Field of Pedagogy (PhD) which corresponds to Level 8.2. of the Croatian Qualifications Framework.

XI. MANAGEMENT OF THE DOCTORAL PROGRAMME

The body which manages the doctoral study programme *Quality in Education* is the Doctoral Study Council. The Council consists as a rule of teachers from the Department of Pedagogy who are in scientific-teaching posts and fulfil the requirements for mentoring. The Council may broaden the membership to include teachers from other departments and institutions who are external associates in the doctoral study programme. The decision to include them is rendered by the Doctoral Study Council of the Department of Pedagogy.

XII. QUALITY ASSURANCE MONITORING OF THE DOCTORAL PROGRAMME

Monitoring and improving the quality of the doctoral study programme are carried out by:

- The Office for Quality Assurance of the University of Zadar, in accordance with the Ordinance on the Quality Assurance System of the University of Zadar¹
- The Doctoral Study Council of the Department of Pedagogy.

Monitoring the quality of the doctoral study programme includes monitoring the quality of teaching delivery for each subject and the quality of delivery of the entire programme. Quality monitoring is carried out by conducting surveys of doctoral students, individual and group conversations with doctoral students, and analysing data on students' achievement which are gathered by the Office for Postgraduate Studies (length of study, pass rates, etc.).

The Office for Quality Assurance of the University gathers data on the work and scientific productivity of mentors and their mentoring work, and the Doctoral Study Council and the Expert Committee for the Area of Social Sciences discuss the evaluation of mentors' work by the doctoral students. The reports on the work of mentors are accepted by the Senate.²

¹ http://www.unizd.hr/Portals/0/doc/PRAVILNIK_O_SUSTAVU_OSIGURAVANJA_KVALITETE_SVEUCILISTA_U_ZADRU.pdf

² http://www.unizd.hr/Portals/0/doc/doc_pdf_dokumenti/pravilnici/pravilnik_o_ocjenjivanju_rada_asistenta_poslijedoktoranada_i_mentora_20171115.pdf

XIII. MENTORS AND CO-MENTORS

Mentors and co-mentors for the doctoral study programme in pedagogy are experts in scientific-teaching posts in various scientific branches of pedagogy or the wider field of education; they are involved in scientific projects and engaged in professional cooperation in various ways – inter-institutionally at the local, regional and national levels, and internationally through the Erasmus+ programme and other mobility programmes, by participating in projects financed by the European Union, editing and other activities.

1. Prof. Dijana Vican, PhD, Department of Pedagogy, University of Zadar
2. Prof. Igor Radeka, PhD, Department of Pedagogy, University of Zadar
3. Prof. Anđelka Peko, PhD, Faculty of Education, Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek
4. Prof. Neven Hrvatić, PhD, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb
5. Prof. Ivanka Stričević, PhD, Department of Information Sciences, University of Zadar
6. Prof. Vesnica Mlinarević, PhD, Faculty of Education, Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek
7. Prof. Smiljana Zrilić, PhD, Department of Teacher and Pre-school Teacher Education, University of Zadar
8. Assoc. Prof. Rozana Petani, PhD, Department of Pedagogy, University of Zadar
9. Assoc. Prof. Jasmina Vrkić Dimić, PhD, Department of Pedagogy, University of Zadar
10. Assoc. Prof. Zdeslav Hrepić, PhD, Columbus State University, USA
11. Asst. Prof. Matilda Karamatić Brčić, PhD, Department of Pedagogy, University of Zadar
12. Asst. Prof. Marija Buterin Mičić, PhD, Department of Pedagogy, University of Zadar
13. Asst. Prof. Dijana Nenadić Bilan, PhD, Department of Teacher and Pre-school Teacher Education, University of Zadar
14. Asst. Prof. Daliborka Luketić, PhD, Department of Pedagogy, University of Zadar
15. Asst. Prof. Ana Marija Rogić, PhD, Department of Pedagogy, University of Zadar
16. Dina Mehmedbegović, PhD, Institute of Education, University of London

The number of co-mentors appointed alongside the mentor may be increased depending on the research issues in the dissertation, and this is decided by the Doctoral Study Council. Mentors and co-mentors are appointed by the Senate.

XIV. CONTACTS

Name of service or office	Name and surname	e-mail	Telephone
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