

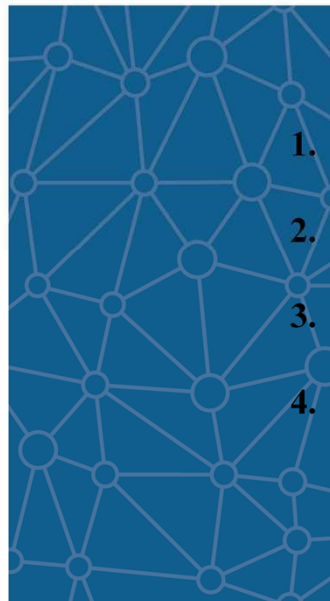


UGent

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**Doctoral
Schools**

CONTENTS



- 1. training of doctoral candidates**
- 2. employability**
- 3. internationalisation**
- 4. quality assurance**

In presentation we will give attention mainly to the key tasks and responsibilities of Ghent University doctoral schools

1. training of doctoral candidates
2. employability of doctoral degree holders
3. internationalization
4. and quality assurance

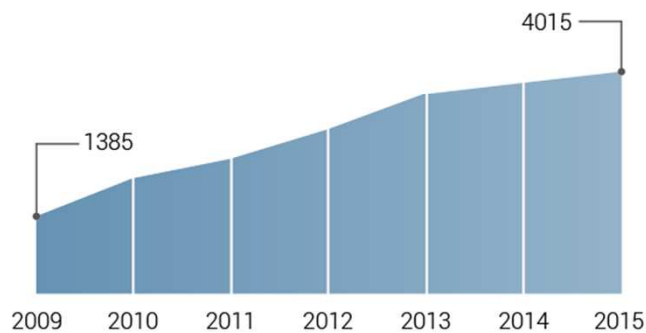


Dominant areas:

- **Sciences**
- **Engineering**
- **Bioscience Engineering**
- **Medical Sciences**

Ghent University is an international top league player in research, research visibility and quality. It is reputed for its research output, innovation strategy, and overall success in obtaining competitive funding.

Though we are a comprehensive university, unlike some of the universities that are present here, the research areas in which our university is most active are Sciences, Engineering, Bioscience Engineering and Medical Sciences.



We boast approximately 4000 PhD students, and award some 600 PhD degrees annually. In 2014, 31% were awarded to non-Belgian researchers, and 48% to women.

PhDs are an essential part of the knowledge economy. Completing a PhD is all about creating fresh knowledge, discovering new things and developing new skills. As governments pursue a policy to further develop the knowledge-based economy, there is an across the board need for well-trained PhD's / for more PhD's who can think innovatively and creatively. At Ghent University we of are of course happy to recruit these PhD students, without however compromising the quality of the research they do.



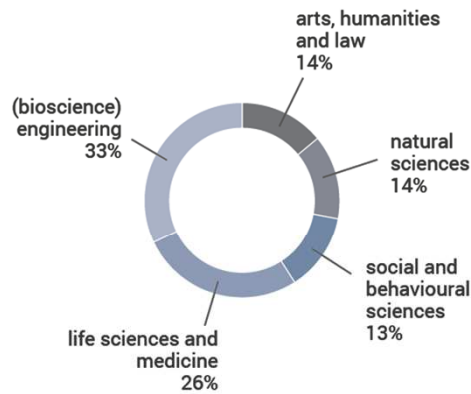
Our commitment to quality shows itself already on this slide.

The path to a successful doctorate is a hard but rewarding process of conscientiously developing and mastering the skills for independent research. Although a solitary work, the student can rely on different parties for coaching, advice and supervision. At Ghent University a **multi-tiered system** of support rather than a traditional 1:1 master-apprentice model is in place: the student carries out his/her research under the guidance of one or more academic supervisors and (in many cases) a doctoral advisory committee, and can rely for further support on the other actors included in this overview.

This multi-tiered system allows for a close monitoring of the progress of doctoral candidates, and the quality of the research they do - as well as constant evaluation of the quality of several aspects of the doctoral training programme. This multi-tiered system is thus an integral part of our quality assurance system.

As you can see - the Doctoral Schools also are included in this multi-tiered system.

WORK EXPERIENCE



Support to doctoral students



Visibility of doctoral degree



Quality culture in research

In the academic year 2007-2008 5 Doctoral Schools were established – each with its own specific research focus:

AHL: Arts, Humanities and Law

SBS: Social and Behavioural Sciences

NS: Natural Sciences

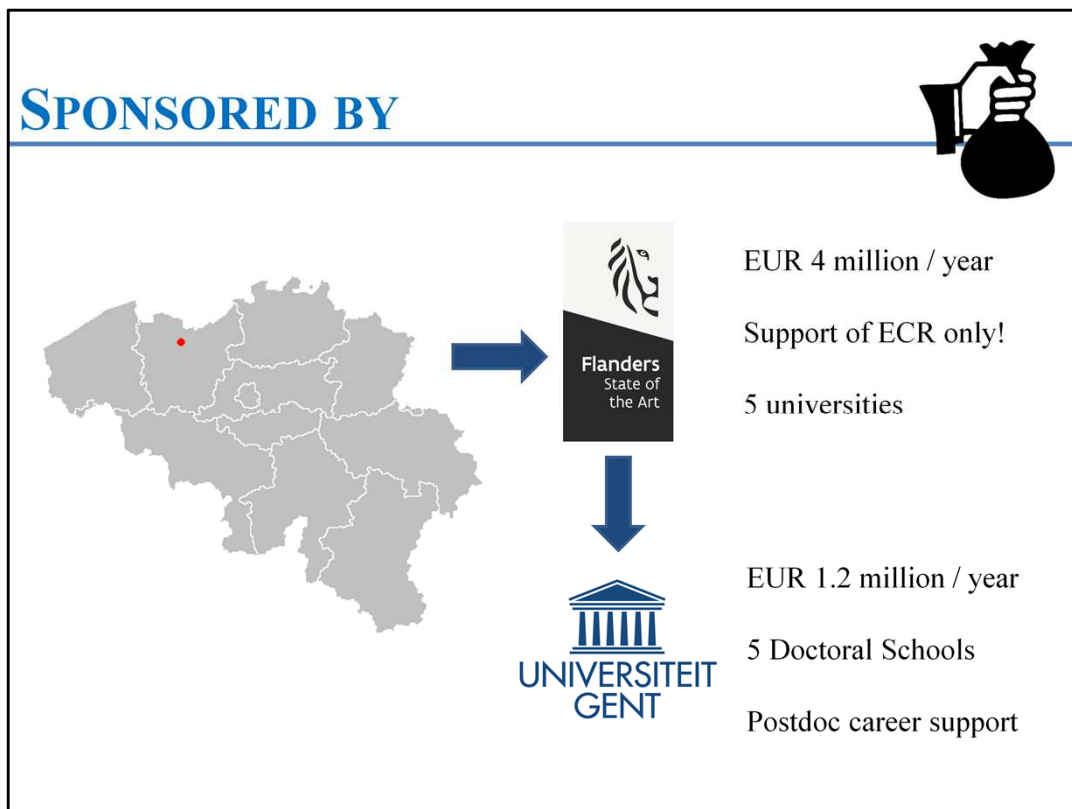
LSM: Life Sciences and Medicine

BSE: (Bioscience) Engineering

This picture also indicates the size of the Doctoral Schools

The Doctoral Schools have a threefold mission:

- (1) To enhance the support offered to doctoral students in the course of their doctoral research,
- (2) To promote and increase the international and social value of the doctorate, making the pursuit of a doctoral degree more attractive to potential researchers and encouraging the labour market to think differently – aka positively – about the doctoral degree.
- (3) To foster a culture of quality in (doctoral) research



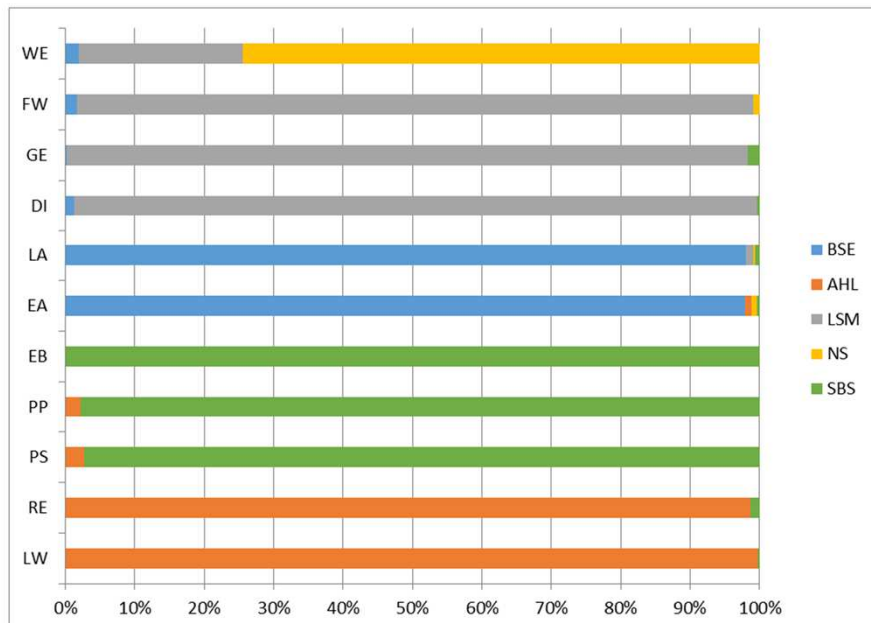
Ghent University was of course not the only Belgian university to establish Doctoral Schools in the past decade.

As you may know, Belgium is a federal country, and education is organized on the level of the (language) communities. The Dutch-speaking universities (incl. the VUB in Brussels) are financed by the Flemish government.

In 2011, at a time when most of our five Flemish universities had already established Doctoral Schools structures, the government decided to grant to all these universities an annual subsidy of 4 million euro. It was explicitly stated that this subsidy could **ONLY** be used to support ERC's (Early Career Researchers) in their **development** as researchers. By no means could it be spent for their **research** itself. Moreover, each university had to spend at least 25% of their share on collaborations with at least two other Flemish universities. In this way, the Flemish government used the subsidy as a means to foster interuniversity cooperation – at least on the Flemish level.

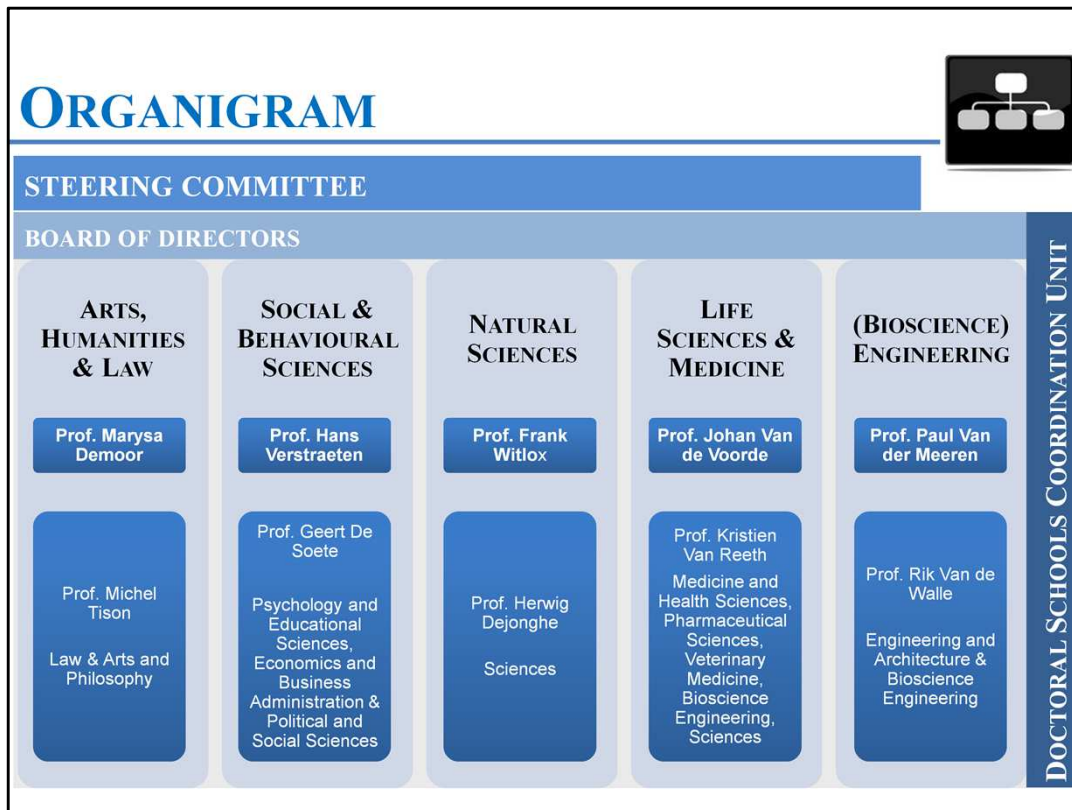
Ghent U's share of the government subsidy amounts to approximately 1.2 million a year. With the subsidy, the majority of the spendings of the 5 doctoral schools (incl. DS staff) is covered, as well as a new career support service for postdoctoral researchers (+ 1000 at Ghent U!)

JOIN THE NETWORK



Whereas PhD students belong to the faculty that awards the PhD degree that are pursuing, they are completely free to join the DS of their choice.

This graph shows the distribution of each of our 11 faculties' PhD students over the five DS. With the exception of the faculty of Sciences (WE), all faculties send the majority of their PhD students to only one DS – namely, the one that fits best with the domains covered at the faculty. (As life sciences are one of the strengths of the faculty of Sciences, PhD students from that faculty choose between the DS of Natural Sciences and the DS of LSM). However, the graph also shows that the idea of leaving the choice to the PhD students isn't so bad, as small proportions indeed choose to join a 'less evident' DS.



This slide shows the organigram of the Ghent U DS.

The steering committee oversees the strategic policy of the DS.

Each DS is chaired by a director and steered by a council. The director is a tenured academic staff member, whose half-time position involves – amongst many other things – the daily management of the school. The council is made up of the deans of the faculties involved in the School, professors and junior researchers.

The directors of the five DS meet approximately every 6 weeks (in the board of directors) to discuss matters pertaining to all 5 Doctoral School (= operational discussions).

The Doctoral Schools Coordination Unit supports all 5 Schools – organizes different courses, takes labour market initiatives, and facilitates many other research- and career-related activities.

ACTIVITIES



- 3 SPECIALIST COURSES
- 1. **doctoral training programme**
3 TRANSFERABLE SKILLS
To be chosen from the following clusters:
- 2. **employability**
 - leadership & personal efficiency
 - research & valorization
- 3. **internationalization**
- 3 CONFERENCES
- 4. **quality assurance**
1 PUBLICATION
- + ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORTS
-
- = DOCTORAL SCHOOLS CERTIFICATE

(Dieter neemt over)

The Doctoral Schools' threefold mission of support, quality assurance in doctoral research and the promotion of the international and social value of the doctoral degree, is translated into 4 focus points (which are precisely the topics we are concentrating on today) – the doctoral training programme, employability, internationalization and quality assurance.

As far as training is concerned, the doctoral schools organise a fully diversified range of top level courses and workshops that deepen as well as broaden the knowledge and expertise of doctoral students, enabling them to become experts within their discipline as well as to become proficient in a wide range of fields.

The minimum set of the study programme consists of

- 3 specialist courses organised, or recognised, by the Doctoral School for which the student has registered
- 3 seminars in transferable skills organised, or recognised, by the Doctoral School and belonging to 3 out of 4 pre-defined clusters – more about these later;
- 3 oral presentations or posters presented at a national or international conference;
- 1 publication in a peer-reviewed, preferably international journal or book;
- the progress report, which students have to submit annually;
- and finally the successful public defense of the doctoral dissertation.

Having met all of these criteria, students will obtain – in addition to their doctoral

degree – the exclusive doctoral training programme certificate.

NEWS FEED (1)



- ★ included in registration for doctorate ~ research topic
- ★ compulsory or not?
 - ~ faculty (board) – first enrolment
 - certain doctoral titles, e.g. Arts
 - certain faculties: Psychology & Educational Sciences, Economics & Business Administration

As was already hinted at, when enrolling at Ghent University, doctoral students automatically become a member of the Doctoral School of their choice. Students decide themselves which Doctoral School best meets their research specialty.

On the subject of enrolment: all doctoral researchers at Ghent University are required to enrol as students at the very start of their doctoral studies and need to re-enrol every academic year (until graduation).

Important to know is that the Ghent University doctoral training programme is not compulsory, unless it is made such – in part or in its entirety – by the faculty (upon the first enrolment).

At the moment, 1/3 of the PhD graduates obtain the certificate in addition to their degree. Yet, up to 75% of our PhD students take at least one additional course in the course of their PhD project.

HIGHLIGHT



- ★ flexible programme
- ★ privilege for all PhD students
- ★ co-responsibility of PhD student, supervisor/Doctoral Advisory Committee
- ★ certificate of the training programme

These numbers illustrate the basic characteristics of our programme:

- Flexible and tailor-made to the needs of the individual students
- Exclusive - open to doctoral candidates only, who can pick and choose those courses and activities (and only those) they deem relevant for their research and future careers
- We expect the students to discuss their training needs with their supervisors and DAC
- To those who manage to attend a variety of courses, we offer an additional certificate



The Ghent University Doctoral Schools make a tremendous effort to complement advanced academic education with excellent transferable or generic skills training, thus facilitating the transfer from academe to the future workplace – be that future workplace academe or beyond. We make it our goal to further broaden the skills of our doctoral researchers and make them aware – more aware – of the competencies they acquire while conducting their doctoral research – in other words making the implicit explicit.

Doctoral candidates are given the opportunity to follow 3 to 6 seminars in transferable skills – equaling at least 18 to 36 hours of training.

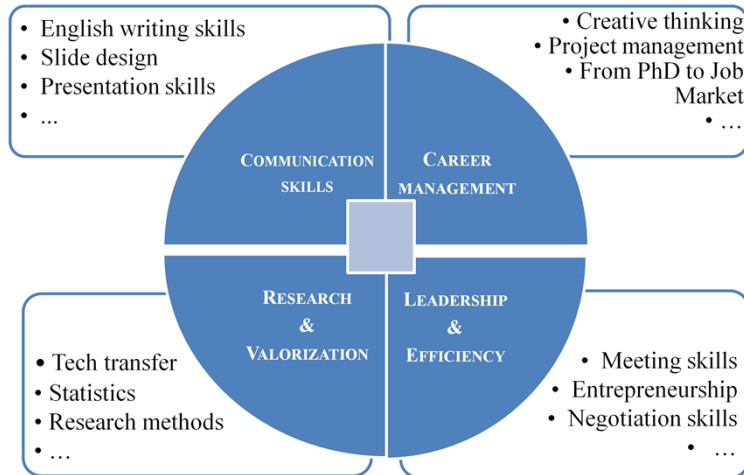
Students who wish to obtain the certificate of the training programme should attend at least 3 seminars, taken out of different thematic clusters:

- (1) communication skills,
- (2) research and valorisation,
- (3) career management and
- (4) leadership and personal efficiency.

These 4 broadly defined areas reflect our understanding of the concept of ‘transferable skills training’ and act as clear signposts for PhD-students and trainers alike. Most of the trainers, by the way, are well-reputed external consultants with long-standing working relationships with leading Flemish companies. So, we are talking about external trainers who also deliver training in large companies, bringing in valuable experience and helping to bridge the gap between the academic world and the labour market. Academe is after

all an environment different from industry or even government organisations and all 'external' knowledge is of crucial importance when preparing academics for a career beyond academe.

SEARCH



In each of the 4 clusters Doctoral Schools offer several courses. Although most courses are offered annually, the programme is continuously 'under construction/reconstruction': not so popular courses are removed, negatively evaluated trainers replaced, and pilots of new seminars launched. The programme is thus a flexible one and allows us to permanently monitor the demands and wishes of all parties involved – the doctoral students as well as the labour market.

INTERESTS



TRENDING

- ★ Authentic Networking
- ★ Personal Effectiveness
- ★ Creative Thinking

- ★ Job Market for Young Researchers
- ★ From PhD to Job Market

- ★ PhD boot camp

- ★

Popular at the moment are courses such as

...

and career-related activities such as

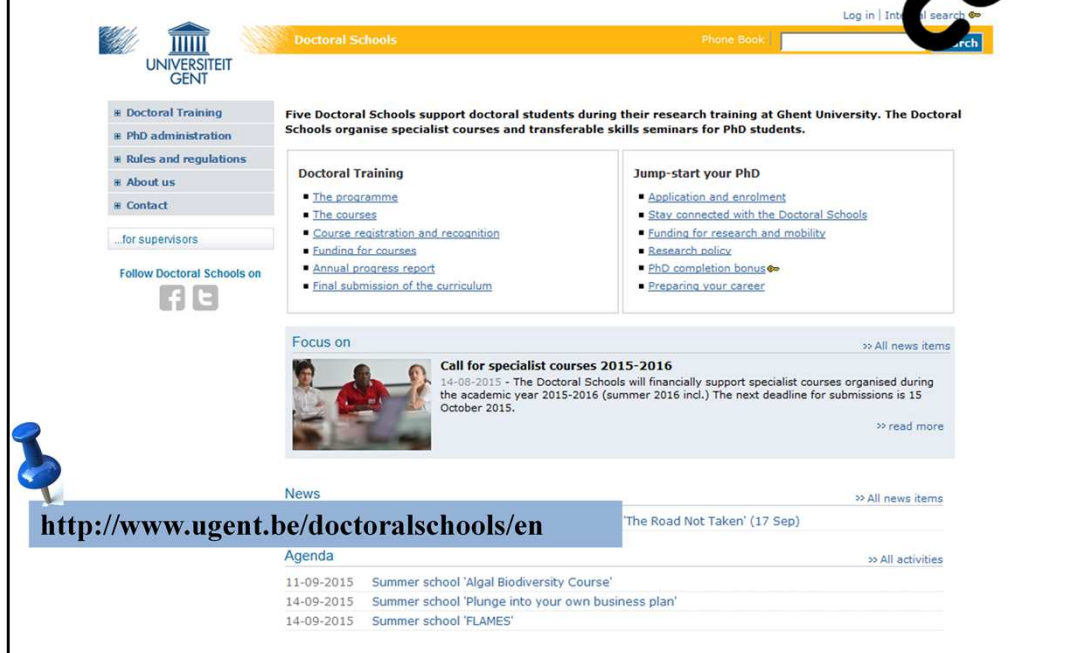
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The Doctoral Schools make it their aim to increase the employability of doctoral students.

Doctoral training is one way of helping doctoral students to make the transition more smooth, augmenting the visibility of doctoral degree holders on the labour market (which still requires a lot of awareness raising on their capacities) is another way to increase their employability. The Doctoral Schools maintain close relations with potential employers which allows us to organize promotional activities of the kind of our yearly organised 'From PhD to Job Market'-conference and the Job Market for Young Researchers, where we make both parties meet and discuss career opportunities.

SHARED A LINK



The screenshot shows the Ghent University Doctoral Schools website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the university logo, the text 'Doctoral Schools', and links for 'Log in' and 'Internal search'. Below the navigation bar, a sidebar on the left contains a menu with items like 'Doctoral Training', 'PhD administration', 'Rules and regulations', 'About us', and 'Contact'. The main content area features a heading 'Five Doctoral Schools support doctoral students during their research training at Ghent University. The Doctoral Schools organise specialist courses and transferable skills seminars for PhD students.' Below this, there are two columns of links: 'Doctoral Training' (including 'The programme', 'The courses', 'Course registration and recognition', 'Funding for courses', 'Annual progress report', and 'Final submission of the curriculum') and 'Jump-start your PhD' (including 'Application and enrolment', 'Stay connected with the Doctoral Schools', 'Funding for research and mobility', 'Research policy', 'PhD completion bonus', and 'Preparing your career'). A 'Focus on' section highlights a 'Call for specialist courses 2015-2016' with a deadline of 15 October 2015. Below this, there are sections for 'News' and 'Agenda'. The 'News' section includes a link to 'The Road Not Taken' (17 Sep). The 'Agenda' section lists three events: 'Summer school 'Algal Biodiversity Course'' (11-09-2015), 'Summer school 'Plunge into your own business plan'' (14-09-2015), and 'Summer school 'FLAMES'' (14-09-2015). A blue pushpin is placed on the left side of the page, and a large chain link icon is in the top right corner.

Log in | Internal search

Doctoral Schools Phone Book

UNIVERSITEIT GENT

- * Doctoral Training
- * PhD administration
- * Rules and regulations
- * About us
- * Contact

...for supervisors

Follow Doctoral Schools on

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Five Doctoral Schools support doctoral students during their research training at Ghent University. The Doctoral Schools organise specialist courses and transferable skills seminars for PhD students.

Doctoral Training

- [The programme](#)
- [The courses](#)
- [Course registration and recognition](#)
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Jump-start your PhD

- [Application and enrolment](#)
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- [Research policy](#)
- [PhD completion bonus](#)
- [Preparing your career](#)

Focus on >> All news items

Call for specialist courses 2015-2016
14-05-2015 - The Doctoral Schools will financially support specialist courses organised during the academic year 2015-2016 (summer 2016 incl.) The next deadline for submissions is 15 October 2015.
>> read more

News >> All news items

<http://www.ugent.be/doctorschools/en> 'The Road Not Taken' (17 Sep)

Agenda >> All activities

11-09-2015	Summer school 'Algal Biodiversity Course'
14-09-2015	Summer school 'Plunge into your own business plan'
14-09-2015	Summer school 'FLAMES'

For those of you who are interested in learning more about our DTP (incl. past courses) and other activities, please check our website (publicly available!)

INTERNATIONALISATION



- ★ collaboration with other doctoral schools
- ★ encourage research mobility and training mobility
- ★ joint doctoral programmes & joint supervision

Internationalisation being one of their main areas of focus, the doctoral schools support and promote an open collaboration with sister organizations abroad, and happily facilitate fruitful international exchanges (RODOS being an excellent example of that!) We encourage our students to pursue part of their research and/or attend specialist courses and seminars in transferable skills at other universities or research centres. Last, we also foster the creation of joint doctoral programmes (becoming more important in European context) as well as more individual collaboration in the form of joint supervision (leading most preferably to a double or joint degree for the candidates).

- ★ doctoral training programme

- ★ mechanisms of quality assurance in doctoral research:
 - supervisor(s) + doctoral advisory committee
 - progress report
 - quality framework (NEW)
 - charter for doctoral students and supervisors (NEW)

- ★ quality culture:
 - group dynamic
 - at the cutting edge of research
 - excellence in (doctoral) research

In order to warrant consistent quality, a quality culture and effective mechanisms of quality assurance are put in place. First of all, quality measures are taken at the level of the training programme itself: our doctoral students are actively encouraged to attend first-class courses at home as well as abroad, and outstanding lecturers are brought to Ghent to offer them first-class training. Courses, workshops and trainers are thoroughly evaluated.

The PhD students themselves are closely monitored by their supervisor or supervisors and/or doctoral advisory committees, as well as through their annual progress reports. A few months ago, our university board accepted a couple of new measures in order to make our quality framework for PhD research more all-encompassing. Important new elements include the obligation for all new students to have at least two mentors (one supervisor + another supervisor or mentor or a DAC) and the general rule to have an internal exam on the dissertation in order to be allowed to publicly defend it. Another strong quality instrument, we believe, is our charter for doctoral students and supervisors, in which the mutual responsibilities of the parties involved are brought together (and particularly those that have nothing to do with administrative flows).

Equally important in maintaining and improving the quality of our PhD research is the general care for a good quality culture in research. Important elements here, as far as doctoral training is concerned, are group dynamic and the ambition to aim for training that is at the cutting edge of research. Doctoral students are also urged to publish in international peer-reviewed journals and give presentations or present posters at international conferences as part of their research training, activities that allow them to

become part of a vibrant (international) community of researchers, provide them with top-level feedback on their research results and continually challenge them to achieve excellence in their research.

AMBITION



- ★ Top-quality & at the cutting edge of research
 - evaluate trainers
 - invite international lecturers
 - send PhD students to top-quality courses abroad
 - prepare for future career

In other words & in short: it is our ambition to offer a top-quality programme, which is closely monitored, which is international, and which thoroughly prepares PhD students for a future career in academe or beyond

SHARED A PHOTO



Some final pictures of our activities (incl. some people whom you will recognize)

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