
Centre monitoring report

Doctoral School

Academic year 2023/2024

7 January 2025

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1. Basic identification details

| | |
|---|---|
| Director of the Doctoral School (centre) | David Masip Rodó (dmasipr@uoc.edu) |
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| Body and date of approval | Doctoral School Management Committee, 7 January 2025 |

| Programme name | RUCT code | Year implemented | Validation | Modification | Accreditation |
|---|-----------|------------------|-----------------|--------------|---------------|
| Doctoral programme in Law, Politics and Economics | 5601479 | 2022/2023 | 26 January 2022 | - | - |
| Interuniversity doctoral programme in Bioinformatics (UAB, UPC, UdG, UdL, UOC, UVic-UCC, URV, UB) | 5601480 | 2022/2023 | 26 January 2022 | - | - |

2. Preparation of the report

The Doctoral School centre monitoring report has been drawn up by the director of the Doctoral School with the assistance of the Management Committee, whose members are listed below:

- Dr David Masip Rodó (director of the Doctoral School)
- Dr Ferran Adelantado Freixer
- Dr Mireia Fernández-Ardèvol
- Marga Casamitjana Franco
- Dr Iolanda García González
- Dr Ferran Prados Carrasco
- Dr Antoni Meseguer Artola
- Dr Rubén Nieto Luna
- Dr Carles Prado Fonts
- Dr Lluís Garay Tamajón
- Dr David Martínez Zorrilla

This report is based on the relevant doctoral programme monitoring reports, which were prepared by each programme's academic committee according to the following procedure:

- The relevant data were analysed.
- A first draft of the report was prepared by the programme director, taking into account the information provided by each member of the teaching staff.
- This draft report was submitted to the competent member of the Organization, Processes and Quality department.
- The members of the academic committee met to discuss the draft report.
- The report was reviewed in the light of feedback from the academic committee and signed off.
- The report was resubmitted to the Organization, Processes and Quality department.

Once the doctoral programme monitoring reports were completed, the following steps were taken:

- The reports were reviewed by the director of the Doctoral School and a first draft of the centre monitoring report was written.
- This draft report was submitted to the competent member of the Organization, Processes and Quality department.
- The director of the Doctoral School made the necessary changes to the report based on feedback from the Organization, Processes and Quality department.
- The Doctoral School Management Committee reviewed the updated report.
- Once completed, the report was reviewed and presented at the Management Committee meeting (see Section 1, "Basic identification details") and validated and approved on 7 January 2025.

3. Follow-up on requirements and recommendations from external assessment procedures

Of the ten requirements/recommendations from the 2019 accreditation process, all but number 5 have been addressed or justified. This last requirement has been worked on and partially resolved with the introduction of the tutoring classroom, which is shared by all students on all programmes. However, it can still be improved by incorporating the results of the Folio project, which is why its status remains "in progress". You can consult the document: [Summary of recommendations and requirements](#).

| Code | Level (centre / programme) | Description in original final external assessment report | Response | Current status |
|-------------------|---|---|---|-------------------|
| PM-AC- 2019_03 | Centre | <i>5. In order to foster communication between candidates, potential candidates or the wider scientific community and the doctoral programme, as stated in the three self-assessment reports, we recommend that all past and present students on any doctoral programme at the UOC should have access to their peers' research profile and be able to see the work they have published as part of the doctoral programme and the courses, activities, research stays and other endeavours they have undertaken.</i> | <p>Doctoral students are able to meet students from other disciplines and cohorts in the tutoring classroom. There they can communicate and view each other's profiles.</p> <p>The UOC is also improving the exchange of information between students at different stages of research with its Folio tool, which we will be able to roll out next semester. Folio is an innovative and highly visual tool for sharing research progress with teaching staff, thesis supervisors and, with the author's permission, all students or the entire scientific community.</p> | In progress |
| MO-VE- 2021_01 | Interuniversity doctoral programme in Bioinformatics (UAB, UPC, UdG, UdL, UOC, UVic-UCC, URV, UB) | <p>Particular attention will be paid to the following aspects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Admission of students. - Procedures for monitoring students. - Rules for the authorization of the oral examination and defence of theses. - Opportunities for student mobility. - Involvement of international experts. - Application of the internal quality assurance system (IQAS). | | Pending |

| | | | | |
|---------------|---|--|---|----------|
| PM-VE-2021_01 | Doctoral programme in Law, Politics and Economics | Is there any information on the type of recognition (in hours or credits) granted by the UOC for tutoring and thesis supervision? Is this mandatory? | This information was already included in Section 6.2 of the report submitted with our second Verifica appeal. | Resolved |
|---------------|---|--|---|----------|

4. Assessment of compliance with the monitoring standards

4.1 Standard 1: Quality of the training programme

The study programme design (research lines, skills profile and training activities) is current according to the requirements of the educational field and it meets the required level of study according to the MECES.

1.1. The programme has mechanisms in place to ensure that the admission profile of PhD students is suitable and that the number of students is consistent with the characteristics and distribution of the programme's research lines and the number of places available.

1.2. The programme has suitable mechanisms in place for supervision of PhD students and, where applicable, of training activities.

| Centre | Progressing towards excellence | Compliant | Compliant with conditions | Non-compliant |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|-----------|---------------------------|---------------|
| Overall assessment | | X | | |

Analysis and assessment

The Doctoral School is preparing modifications to its doctoral programmes in order to:

- Adapt the access mechanisms and programme competencies in accordance with the new doctoral regulations resulting from the amendment of Royal Decree 99/2011 in July 2023 (Royal Decree 576/2023).
- Update the faculty associated with the programmes' research lines to reflect the new additions to the UOC's teaching and research staff.

The Doctoral School has efficient mechanisms for monitoring and assessing the different admission profiles for each programme. The academic committees validate the profiles based on their fit with the relevant programme's research lines, using the information provided in the application documents and interviews with line representatives. This information is recorded in order to assess the student's suitability and the balance within each programme. Currently, most students gain access to the UOC through an external university master's degree. This has led to an improvement action aimed at promoting the doctoral programmes among UOC master's degree students who have completed excellent final projects and could be potential candidates for the programmes.

Each year, the doctoral programmes reserve places (within the legal limits related to the number of validated places) for students who apply outside the regular competition period in the following cases:

recognized disability (Royal Decree 576/2023) or competitive funding that requires registration and conditional acceptance into a doctoral programme.

Enrolment figures

Below are the figures collected to monitor student enrolment on each doctoral programme. The following notation is used to identify the programmes:

- NIT: Network and Information Technologies
- ELE: Education and ICT (E-learning)
- DPE: Law, Politics and Economics (launched academic year 2022/2023)
- TUR: Tourism
- STC: Society, Technology and Culture (launched academic year 2021/2022)
- ADE: Business Administration and Management
- SIP: Health and Psychology
- HIC: Humanities and Communication
- BIO: Bioinformatics

The following table shows the enrolment figures for the last 5 academic years for the different doctoral programmes and the total figures for the Doctoral School.

| | NIT | ELE | DPE | TUR | STC | ADE | SIP | HIC | BIO | Cohort total |
|------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|--------------|
| 2020/2021 | 23 | 10 | 0 | 6 | 0 | 6 | 21 | 26 | 2 | 94 |
| Men | 20 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 5 | 9 | 10 | 2 | 52 |
| Women | 3 | 7 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 12 | 16 | 0 | 42 |
| 2021/2022 | 24 | 11 | 0 | 8 | 19 | 8 | 24 | 23 | 5 | 122 |
| Men | 16 | 8 | 0 | 1 | 11 | 4 | 10 | 11 | 3 | 64 |
| Women | 8 | 3 | 0 | 7 | 8 | 4 | 14 | 12 | 2 | 58 |
| 2022/2023 | 14 | 18 | 13 | 5 | 14 | 10 | 19 | 12 | 0 | 105 |
| Men | 10 | 9 | 7 | 1 | 7 | 6 | 3 | 6 | 0 | 49 |
| Women | 4 | 9 | 6 | 4 | 7 | 4 | 16 | 6 | 0 | 56 |
| 2023/2024 | 12 | 12 | 16 | 6 | 13 | 9 | 24 | 14 | 1 | 107 |
| Men | 10 | 3 | 12 | 2 | 4 | 5 | 9 | 5 | 0 | 50 |
| Women | 2 | 9 | 4 | 4 | 9 | 4 | 15 | 9 | 1 | 57 |
| 2024/2025 | 20 | 13 | 13 | 3 | 17 | 13 | 20 | 12 | 4 | 115 |
| Men | 14 | 7 | 7 | 0 | 9 | 8 | 3 | 5 | 2 | 55 |
| Women | 6 | 6 | 6 | 3 | 8 | 5 | 17 | 7 | 2 | 60 |
| Programme total | 93 | 64 | 42 | 28 | 63 | 46 | 108 | 87 | 12 | 543 |

Table 1.1 Newly enrolled students by cohort and programme

The programmes enrol a number of students in line with the number of places available. Recently launched programmes (particularly SIP and HIC) enrolled more students in their first years, but this trend has stabilized over the past year, reaching a steady state consistent with the capacity of each programme. The academic committees rank candidates using a public scoring rubric, and only those

at the top are admitted. As a result, in many cases it is not possible to guarantee access to all candidates. There are also minimum scores for each rubric, which means that places may go unfilled if candidates do not meet the minimum threshold.

| | NIT | ELE | DPE | TUR | STC | ADE | SIP | HIC | BIO | Cohort total |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|--------------|
| 2020/2021 | 31 | 23 | 0 | 5 | 0 | 1 | 12 | 12 | 3 | 87 |
| <i>Men</i> | 25 | 7 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 5 | 5 | 3 | 49 |
| <i>Women</i> | 6 | 16 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 7 | 0 | 38 |
| 2021/2022 | 43 | 31 | 0 | 11 | 15 | 5 | 26 | 29 | 5 | 165 |
| <i>Men</i> | 33 | 12 | 0 | 3 | 9 | 3 | 10 | 12 | 4 | 86 |
| <i>Women</i> | 10 | 19 | 0 | 8 | 6 | 2 | 16 | 17 | 1 | 79 |
| 2022/2023 | 55 | 45 | 6 | 15 | 25 | 11 | 40 | 37 | 5 | 239 |
| <i>Men</i> | 42 | 19 | 3 | 4 | 15 | 5 | 11 | 16 | 4 | 119 |
| <i>Women</i> | 13 | 26 | 3 | 11 | 10 | 6 | 29 | 21 | 1 | 120 |
| 2023/2024 | 66 | 54 | 16 | 19 | 37 | 20 | 60 | 49 | 6 | 327 |
| <i>Men</i> | 51 | 21 | 9 | 4 | 19 | 10 | 17 | 21 | 4 | 156 |
| <i>Women</i> | 15 | 33 | 7 | 15 | 18 | 10 | 43 | 28 | 2 | 171 |
| 2024/2025 | 83 | 67 | 22 | 22 | 52 | 32 | 80 | 61 | 10 | 429 |
| <i>Men</i> | 63 | 28 | 13 | 4 | 27 | 17 | 20 | 26 | 6 | 204 |
| <i>Women</i> | 20 | 39 | 9 | 18 | 25 | 15 | 60 | 35 | 4 | 225 |

Table 1.2 Number of active students per year

Table 1.2 shows the number of active students (those who have not withdrawn temporarily or permanently) on each programme for the academic year in question. Importantly, the number of active students increases as the programmes progress. This trend is expected to continue until the programmes reach 8 years with the same intake capacity, at which point the number of new students should balance the number of graduates and dropouts. It is worth noting that, with the exception of NIT and SIP, the programmes do not show significant differences in gender distribution (the NIT programme is predominantly male and the SIP programme predominantly female).

Table 1.3 shows the number of international students enrolled on doctoral programmes by cohort and programme. The figures are very satisfactory, in some cases exceeding 40% of the total programme enrolment. This underlines the programmes' strong international profile.

| | NIT | ELE | DPE | TUR | STC | ADE | SIP | HIC | BIO | Cohort total |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|--------------|
| 2020/2021 | 13 | 7 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 6 | 1 | 35 |
| <i>Men</i> | 10 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 19 |
| <i>Women</i> | 3 | 5 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 16 |
| 2021/2022 | 13 | 6 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 10 | 9 | 0 | 44 |
| <i>Men</i> | 7 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 21 |
| <i>Women</i> | 6 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 7 | 6 | 0 | 23 |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------|----|----|----|---|----|----|----|----|---|-----|
| 2022/2023 | 2 | 10 | 2 | 1 | 8 | 4 | 10 | 3 | 0 | 40 |
| Men | 2 | 6 | 1 | 0 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 18 |
| Women | 0 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 7 | 3 | 0 | 22 |
| 2023/2024 | 5 | 6 | 4 | 2 | 8 | 2 | 8 | 2 | 0 | 37 |
| Men | 5 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 17 |
| Women | 0 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 5 | 2 | 0 | 20 |
| 2024/2025 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 1 | 7 | 4 | 3 | 5 | 2 | 40 |
| Men | 4 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 22 |
| Women | 3 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 18 |
| Programme total | 40 | 35 | 11 | 8 | 27 | 12 | 35 | 25 | 3 | 196 |

Table 1.3. Foreign students enrolled on doctoral programmes

Regarding the percentage of students working on their thesis part-time (see Table 1.4), the figures remain between 65% and 80% in most programmes. This is in line with the characteristics of the institution and the available funding (predoctoral contracts). Historically, the ADE, TUR and BIO programmes have not had access to the UOC grant programme, which has hindered the recruitment of full-time students (with the exception of the last academic year in the BIO programme).

| | NIT | ELE | DPE | TUR | STC | ADE | SIP | HIC | BIO |
|------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|-------|-------|------|-------|
| 2020/2021 | 65.2 | 70.0 | 0.0 | 100.0 | 0.0 | 100.0 | 81.0 | 57.7 | 100.0 |
| Men | 70.0 | 33.3 | 0.0 | 100.0 | 0.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 50.0 | 100.0 |
| Women | 33.3 | 85.7 | 0.0 | 100.0 | 0.0 | 100.0 | 66.7 | 62.5 | 0.0 |
| 2021/2022 | 54.2 | 54.5 | 0.0 | 100.0 | 52.6 | 100.0 | 75.0 | 69.6 | 100.0 |
| Men | 56.2 | 50.0 | 0.0 | 100.0 | 72.7 | 100.0 | 90.0 | 54.5 | 100.0 |
| Women | 50.0 | 66.7 | 0.0 | 100.0 | 25.0 | 100.0 | 64.3 | 83.3 | 100.0 |
| 2022/2023 | 71.4 | 77.8 | 69.2 | 100.0 | 57.1 | 100.0 | 63.2 | 50.0 | 0.0 |
| Men | 60.0 | 77.8 | 71.4 | 100.0 | 57.1 | 100.0 | 33.3 | 33.3 | 0.0 |
| Women | 100.0 | 77.8 | 66.7 | 100.0 | 57.1 | 100.0 | 68.8 | 66.7 | 0.0 |
| 2023/2024 | 75.0 | 83.3 | 75.0 | 100.0 | 15.4 | 88.9 | 79.2 | 85.7 | 100.0 |
| Men | 70.0 | 100.0 | 75.0 | 100.0 | 25.0 | 80.0 | 55.6 | 80.0 | 0.0 |
| Women | 100.0 | 77.8 | 75.0 | 100.0 | 11.1 | 100.0 | 93.3 | 88.9 | 100.0 |
| 2024/2025 | 65.0 | 84.6 | 84.6 | 100.0 | 64.7 | 92.3 | 80.0 | 83.3 | 75.0 |
| Men | 57.1 | 71.4 | 71.4 | 0.0 | 55.6 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 80.0 | 50.0 |
| Women | 83.3 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 75.0 | 80.0 | 76.5 | 85.7 | 100.0 |

Table 1.4. Enrolment of part-time students (% of total)

Similarly, Table 1.5 shows the percentages of full-time students (funded by predoctoral contracts). It should be noted, however, that many of these students complete their grant period without having defended their thesis and subsequently switch to part-time status.

| | NIT | ELE | DPE | TUR | STC | ADE | SIP | HIC | BIO |
|------------------|------|------|------|-----|------|------|------|------|------|
| 2020/2021 | 34.8 | 30.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 19.0 | 42.3 | 0.0 |
| Men | 26.1 | 20.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 19.2 | 0.0 |
| Women | 8.7 | 10.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 19.0 | 23.1 | 0.0 |
| 2021/2022 | 45.8 | 45.5 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 47.4 | 0.0 | 25.0 | 30.4 | 0.0 |
| Men | 29.2 | 36.4 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 15.8 | 0.0 | 4.2 | 21.7 | 0.0 |
| Women | 16.7 | 9.1 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 31.6 | 0.0 | 20.8 | 8.7 | 0.0 |
| 2022/2023 | 28.6 | 22.2 | 30.8 | 0.0 | 42.9 | 0.0 | 36.8 | 50.0 | 0.0 |
| Men | 28.6 | 11.1 | 15.4 | 0.0 | 21.4 | 0.0 | 10.5 | 33.3 | 0.0 |
| Women | 0.0 | 11.1 | 15.4 | 0.0 | 21.4 | 0.0 | 26.3 | 16.7 | 0.0 |
| 2023/2024 | 25.0 | 16.7 | 25.0 | 0.0 | 84.6 | 11.1 | 20.8 | 14.3 | 0.0 |
| Men | 25.0 | 0.0 | 18.8 | 0.0 | 23.1 | 11.1 | 16.7 | 7.1 | 0.0 |
| Women | 0.0 | 16.7 | 6.2 | 0.0 | 61.5 | 0.0 | 4.2 | 7.1 | 0.0 |
| 2024/2025 | 35.0 | 15.4 | 15.4 | 0.0 | 35.3 | 7.7 | 20.0 | 16.7 | 25.0 |
| Men | 30.0 | 15.4 | 15.4 | 0.0 | 23.5 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 8.3 | 25.0 |
| Women | 5.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 11.8 | 7.7 | 20.0 | 8.3 | 0.0 |

Table 1.5. Students with grants (% of total)

The gender perspective

The 2020-2024 Gender Equality Plan responds to a broader regulatory framework than its predecessor and has been defined with reference to the points outlined in the *General framework for incorporating the gender perspective in higher education teaching*, developed by AQU Catalunya in collaboration with the Women and Science Committee of the Interuniversity Council of Catalonia (CIC). This current plan is structured around 5 key areas: organization, communication, research, monitoring and assessment, and teaching. The teaching area includes a wide range of objectives, such as:

- Making gender inequalities visible and raising awareness of this matter.
- Incorporating a gender-neutral, non-androcentric perspective into the UOC's communications and publications.
- Mainstreaming the gender perspective in teaching and research.
- Ensuring balanced representation in decision-making bodies and areas. – Promoting gender parity in academic activities.
- Facilitating access to employment and promoting careers.

These actions fall within the scope of the UOC's 2020-2024 Gender Equality Plan, which is in line with EU and international guidelines and standards. With regard to the gender perspective, there is also a commitment to use the results of projects developed by UOC researchers who are recognized in this field. One such example is the European INSPIRE project (Center of Excellence on Inclusive Gender Equality in Research & Innovation: Creating Knowledge & Engaging in Collaborative Action), led by the GENTIC research group.

The Doctoral School uses inclusive language in its communications and adheres to the institution's equality plan.

Furthermore, on the initiative of a large group of doctoral students, the [2nd LGBTQIA+ Pride Research Conference](#) was held during the 2023/2024 academic year. Coordinated by the doctoral students themselves, with support from the director of the doctoral programme in Society, Technology and Culture, Mireia Fernández-Ardèvol, the event took place on 21 June 2024 and featured various presentations selected through an abstract submission process open to students from different universities. The event also included a keynote workshop, "Not at Home", delivered by guest speaker Simoni Stergioula. The conference was a success in terms of participation and is expected to be repeated in the coming years. The Doctoral School also offered seminars during the academic year on topics of cross-disciplinary interest: gender and research, postdoctoral careers and data management.

Follow-up on improvement actions

As a result of previous monitoring processes, the following proposals for improvement have been identified:

1. Increase international student enrolment.
Significant efforts have been made to increase international outreach and to develop agreements, particularly in relation to joint supervision. A good example is the agreement recently signed with the Institut Polytechnique de Paris.
2. It is necessary to implement specific actions to inform UOC master's degree students about the doctoral programmes.
This initiative has been included in the objectives of certain programme directors. Information about the doctoral programmes has been sent to students completing their final projects on official master's degree programmes that give access to the doctoral programmes.

Strengths

- The Doctoral School has undertaken various outreach activities to attract a wider range of candidates for admission, resulting in a steady increase in applications and new enrolments over recent years.
- The new portfolio has been fully implemented, expanding from 3 to 9 programmes in the last 6 years.
- The UOC has signed an agreement with CSIC to promote doctoral internships.
- Data on the programmes are now disaggregated by gender as part of the monitoring processes (see Tables 1.1-1.5).

Areas for improvement

As an improvement action, the UOC is working on an institutional data governance project that will allow even the most individualized academic results to be broken down by gender from the 2025/2026 academic year. As part of this effort, data from the Doctoral School could be included in the project, allowing for automated analysis by gender, programme and cohort.

4.2 Standard 2: Relevance of public information

The institution appropriately informs all stakeholders of the PhD programme's characteristics and the management processes for quality assurance.

- 2.1. The HEI publishes truthful, complete, up-to-date and accessible information on the characteristics of the PhD programme, its operational delivery and the outcomes achieved.
- 2.2. The institution guarantees easy access to relevant information on the PhD programme for all stakeholders, which includes monitoring and, where applicable, accreditation outcomes.
- 2.3. The HEI publishes the IQAS which forms the framework of the PhD programme.

| Programme | Progressing towards excellence | Compliant | Compliant with conditions | Non-compliant |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|-----------|---------------------------|---------------|
| Overall assessment | | X | | |

Analysis and assessment

The Doctoral School has taken several steps to improve the information published in the two main sections of the website:

- The homepage of the [Doctoral School website](#), where all key sections have been revised to provide up-to-date information on:
 - The Doctoral School, its management bodies and team, as well as guides, research toolkits and regulations.
 - The research lines of the different doctoral programmes.
 - Calls for applications, admissions and fees.
 - Grants and financial assistance.
 - Writing a doctoral thesis, including a showcase of defended theses.
- The academic procedures site, which includes information on processes for students already enrolled on a programme (e.g. requesting extensions, temporary withdrawal, ERASMUS calls, deposit procedures and research plans).

Finally, in order to improve the dissemination of the work of UOC researchers, a dedicated profile page with a uniform format has been created for each researcher affiliated to the UOC (see [example profile](#)). These pages provide comprehensive information on their profiles, research lines, funded projects and publications.

Follow-up on improvement actions

The following improvement actions have been proposed in previous monitoring processes:

1. *Include an option on the website for students, thesis supervisors and members of thesis assessment boards to download the documents they need, so that these documents are accessible to everyone.*
As of the 2024/2025 academic year, a new page is available on the Doctoral School website for external researchers who occasionally collaborate with the UOC.

2. *There should be more data on the quality of outcomes on the website's Data page.*
All satisfaction assessment tools have been redesigned. As soon as data are collected through the new surveys, they will be published centrally on the *Quality* page of the UOC website, together with satisfaction data for other official degree programmes.
3. *Some programmes have not yet published the CVs of their associated teaching and research staff.*
This improvement has been implemented through the new template for publishing the CVs of all UOC teaching and research staff. In addition, a new system based on the consortium tool Dialnet, which allows interactive graphical visualization of research metrics, will soon be operational (the Orió project, currently in [beta](#)).

During the last accreditation process (October 2019), several observations for improvement were made, resulting in various updates to the public information about doctoral programmes. These are outlined below:

1. *The admissions procedure does not appear to be clearly outlined on the individual programme websites.*
The *Request access* section of the website has been completely redesigned. It now [visually presents the 4 steps](#).
2. *The website for each doctoral programme should include a description of the expected admission profile, as described in the validation report for each qualification. Each programme should also specify the general and specific competencies covered.*
The programme websites specify the admission profile and the associated general competencies. The specific competencies can be found via a link to the validation report.
3. *It is essential that students can see on each doctoral programme website who will be supporting them throughout their journey (tutor, programme director, training coordinator and cohort tutor). This is usually provided under the "Admission" tab within the "Programme of study" section, but should also be included in a main tab entitled "Programme organization".*
Each programme website has a section entitled *Academic team* which provides comprehensive information on all the people involved in the process (<https://www.uoc.edu/en/studies/doctorates/doctorate-humanities-communication-teachers>).
4. *The "Doctoral thesis" tab should provide more information about this process, in particular the procedures for submitting and defending a thesis and for obtaining an international mention.*
The *Procedures* section has been restructured to include a complete description of the process (procedures for oral examination, admission to the oral examination and open access publication procedure, oral examination and defence of the doctoral thesis and online defence of the doctoral thesis).
Furthermore, the *Research plan* section contains a specific subsection with information on all available mentions.
5. *In order to foster communication between candidates, potential candidates or the wider scientific community and the doctoral programme, as stated in the three self-assessment reports, we recommend that all past and present students on any doctoral programme at the UOC should have access to their peers' research profile and be able to see the work they have published as part of the doctoral programme and the courses, activities, research stays and other endeavours they have undertaken.*

Doctoral students are able to meet students from other disciplines and cohorts in the tutoring classroom. There they can communicate and view each other's profiles. In addition, as mentioned above, the UOC will soon implement the Folio tool for doctoral studies. This is an innovative and visual tool for students to share with the whole community the status of their thesis project, the progress they have made in their studies and their scientific output.

6. *No information has been published on the procedure for writing and defending the research plan, but work is said to be under way to produce visual diagrams to help doctoral students understand the steps to be taken at each stage. It is also noted that there is no information available on the specific laboratories of the doctoral programmes, but that there are plans to include this information. In addition to all this, each programme must provide specific information on other learning resources (virtual classroom, learning environment, library, access to databases, etc.). The two indicators have only been included as improvement actions in the Health and Psychology programme, but should also be considered in the other programmes (S2.2. There is no information on thesis defence procedures, available laboratories or career opportunities). It is also recommended to include information on the continuation requirements of each doctoral programme (e.g. activities, research stays and publications).*

As mentioned above, as an online university, all procedures can be carried out in the *Academic procedures* section of the UOC's Virtual Campus, with greater guarantees for data security and procedures than on the public website. Specific details on all the steps to be taken at each stage can be found in the *Oral examination of the doctoral thesis* and *Research plan* sections.

The UOC has created a research hub with laboratories dedicated to immersive technologies (virtual reality, augmented reality and mixed reality); research and development in cyber-physical systems; research in neuropsychology and neuroscience; experimentation for digital design and manufacturing; practical research on social media and digital socialization environments; and a multidisciplinary visual and sound space. In terms of more interdisciplinary resources, students are also provided with tools, software, hardware and technical advice to carry out their research, as well as support throughout the quantitative data research process. The UOC also offers virtual laboratories.

These activities are included on the website of each programme. The option of adding all the required information on research stays and resources will be considered. The Communications team believes that including so much information in the first level of the programme may be confusing for candidates and that it would be better to publish it on the Doctoral School website.

7. *The Doctoral School website does not contain information on temporary withdrawals.*
As the UOC is an online university, the Virtual Campus is designed to handle all procedures online.
Information on temporary and permanent withdrawals, as well as the procedures for managing them, can be found in the *Procedures* section of the Virtual Campus, where detailed explanations are available. A specific procedure has been created to allow students to submit requests for temporary or permanent withdrawal.
8. *It is essential to include a "Certificates and documents" tab on the Doctoral School website, where students can access and download the various forms needed to complete the procedures required for the doctoral programme.*

As mentioned in the previous points, since the UOC is an online university, these processes are managed through the Virtual Campus. Information and procedures relating to certificates and official documents are also available online in the *Academic procedures* section. The *Certificates and official documents* section contains a subsection with the name *Requesting certificates*.

9. *The websites of the three programmes do not provide information on the main career opportunities for doctoral students.*

The development of this section for the Doctoral School website is nearing completion.

10. *The above information should be completed and the information on the three doctoral programmes' websites should be unified.*

The information on the doctoral programme websites has been unified across all 9 doctoral programmes currently offered by the Doctoral School.

Strengths

Over the past year, significant efforts have been made to improve the dissemination of information about the Doctoral School, following recommendations from various monitoring and accreditation processes. This has been accompanied by the production of infographics and guides to help new students understand the processes. Examples include:

- Visual diagrams:
 - [The path to your PhD](#)
 - [International PhD co-supervision](#)
 - [Map of doctoral students](#)
- Specific kits:
 - [Library welcome kit](#)
 - [Research ethics resources kit](#) (Research Ethics Committee)
 - [Career plan development guide](#)
 - [Welcome kit for new researchers](#)

Areas for improvement

The following are proposed improvement actions for the next 2 years:

- Integrate a community management tool (Folio) that will allow the efficient publication of doctoral students' thesis projects. This initiative has two main aims:
 - To provide doctoral students with a platform to present their work, with a permission system that allows different levels of privacy (accessible to the general public, to the UOC community or to specific groups or individuals). This will allow students to learn about their peers' projects while fostering opportunities for collaboration, especially among part-time students who are often too geographically dispersed to fully engage with the community.
 - To provide a portfolio tool that also serves as a record of the doctoral student's activities. From this record, using a tagging system and an automated analysis tool, it should be possible to generate an activity document for annual assessment and monitoring of the thesis project.

- Extend the portfolio of infographics to graphically illustrate key steps in the doctoral thesis assessment process, the defence protocol (including the signature process and required documentation), and the secret ballot process for the *cum laude* mention. These materials will be particularly useful for external members of thesis assessment boards (many of whom are international) and for online examiners.

4.3 Standard 3: Efficacy of the internal quality assurance system

The HEI has a functioning internal quality assurance system (IQAS) that has a formal status and assures the quality and continuous enhancement of the PhD programme in an efficient way.

3.1. The IQAS implemented facilitates the processes for the design and approval of the PhD programme, its monitoring and its accreditation.

3.2. The IQAS implemented ensures information and relevant outcomes are compiled for effective management of the PhD programmes.

3.3. The IQAS implemented is reviewed periodically in order to analyse its suitability and, where applicable, an enhancement plan is put forward in order to optimize it.

| Programme | Progressing towards excellence | Compliant | Compliant with conditions | Non-compliant |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|-----------|---------------------------|---------------|
| Overall assessment | | X | | |

Analysis and assessment

In the last two academic years, the satisfaction assessment tools for the doctoral cohort have been revised to better adapt the content of the surveys to the specific nature of the Doctoral School, which often differs significantly from what is most relevant in bachelor's or master's degree programmes.

In addition to the annual and biannual surveys, a **focus group** was introduced in the 2023/2024 academic year. This group consists of a representative sample of 10 thesis supervisors from different programmes, levels of experience (early career vs seasoned supervisors) and research methodologies. The aim is to qualitatively assess the thesis supervision process at the UOC and to identify potential improvement actions to increase satisfaction.

In the 2023/2024 academic year, a new graduate survey was also launched to find out about this group's link to research (whether in academia or industry) and their opinion of the training they received during their time at the Doctoral School.

In the current academic year, the accreditation reports for the Education and ICT (E-learning) and Network and Information Technologies programmes have been completed. The accreditation visit was held on 11 December 2024.

Follow-up on improvement actions

Previous monitoring and accreditation processes have resulted in the following proposals for improvement:

1. Both student surveys about the courses and programme and satisfaction surveys for thesis supervisors need to improve.

A working group was set up to review all satisfaction assessment tools. The results became available during the 2023/2024 academic year.

Four new satisfaction assessment tools have been in use since the 2022/2023 academic year:

- (1) semester course surveys;
- (2) semester research course surveys;
- (3) annual doctoral programme surveys; and
- (4) a focus group to gauge the satisfaction of thesis supervisors. Surveys have not been eliminated, but have been updated to reflect the desired indicators for doctoral programmes.

Strengths

The information gathering process has been updated and adapted to the doctoral context, and the IQAS now includes new specific procedures to meet the needs of doctoral programmes: PO16_Deposit, defend and assess the doctoral thesis; PO17_Identify and manage funding sources; PO18_Carry out R&I projects (to support the management of predoctoral contracts); and PO19_Transfer the results of R&I.

Areas for improvement

No other significant changes to the IQAS are currently planned.

4.4 Standard 4: Suitability of teaching staff

Teaching staff are both sufficient and suitable in accordance with the characteristics of the PhD programme, the scientific field and the number of students.

- 4.1. Teaching staff have accredited research activity.
- 4.2. Teaching staff are sufficient in number and work a suitable number of hours in order to perform their functions.
- 4.3. The PhD programme has suitable actions in place in order to promote thesis supervision.
- 4.4. The level of involvement of foreign teaching staff and international doctors in monitoring committees and thesis assessment boards is suitable for the scientific field of the programme.

| Programme | Progressing towards excellence | Compliant | Compliant with conditions | Non-compliant |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|-----------|---------------------------|---------------|
| Overall assessment | | X | | |

Analysis and assessment

The teaching staff maintain a high level of activity in the supervision of doctoral theses. For example, the average number of thesis supervisors per doctoral student over the past 5 years at the Doctoral School is 1.73973. This indicates that co-supervision is a very common practice, occurring in almost 3 out of 4 doctoral theses. Table 4.1 shows the average number of supervisors per defended thesis by programme and year, highlighting this trend. The number of teaching staff in relation to the size of the programmes is therefore very appropriate.

| | NIT | ELE | DPE | TUR | STC | ADE | SIP | HIC | BIO |
|------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 2020/2021 | 1.667 | 1.500 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 2.000 |
| 2021/2022 | 2.000 | 1.667 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 2.000 | 0.000 |
| 2022/2023 | 2.000 | 1.500 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 1.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 1.000 | 0.000 |
| 2023/2024 | 2.000 | 1.500 | 1.500 | 1.000 | 2.000 | 2.000 | 2.000 | 1.714 | 0.000 |
| 2024/2025 | 0.000 | 1.000 | 2.000 | 0.000 | 2.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 2.000 | 2.000 |

Table 4.1. Average number of supervisors per defended thesis by programme and academic year

Figure 4.1 shows a histogram of active thesis supervisors at the time of writing. The vast majority of supervisors are supervising between 1 and 2 theses. Of the 279 total supervisors, 146 are supervising only one thesis, 64 are supervising two theses and 36 are supervising three theses. This means that 88% of research staff are supervising no more than three theses. At the moment, only 3% of research staff are supervising 5 or more doctoral theses. A single staff member is supervising 14 doctoral theses (12 of which are co-supervised). These figures include co-supervision. Thus, apart from this small number of exceptional cases, the workload of teaching staff is reasonable.

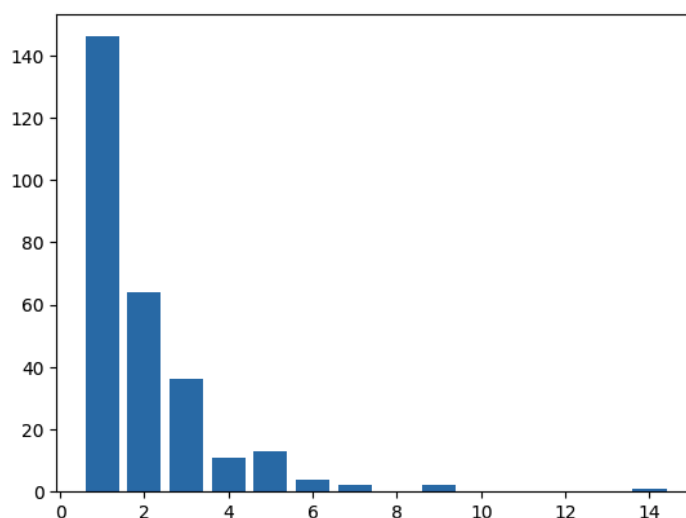


Figure 4.1. Histogram of theses currently being supervised by teaching and research staff

It is mandatory for all thesis committees to include a member from outside the UOC. There has also been an increase in the involvement of foreign teaching staff in the supervision of doctoral theses (co-supervision). During the reporting period, 9 co-supervised theses included co-supervisors from outside Spain. Examples include individuals from prestigious institutions such as KU Leuven, University of Groningen, Philipps-Universität Marburg, Luxembourg Institute of Science and Technology, and Wesleyan University in Connecticut, USA. This underlines the strong internationalization of the Doctoral School's programmes.

The annual student satisfaction surveys include 7 items related to the teaching staff and their supervisory activities. Specifically, students are asked to rate the following statements:

- Statement 1. My thesis supervisor has given me the support necessary to conduct my research project.
- Statement 2. My thesis supervisor is knowledgeable in my field of research and has answered my questions clearly and in a timely fashion.
- Statement 3. My thesis supervisor has spent enough time on me.
- Statement 4. My thesis supervisor has helped in the development of my interdisciplinary competencies.
- Statement 5. My thesis supervisor has given me clear and concise directions.
- Statement 6. My thesis supervisor has attended to my needs.
- Statement 7. I'm happy with the input from my thesis supervisor.

The average score for these items, rated on a scale of 1 (very dissatisfied) to 5 (very satisfied), has remained close to 4.5 over the last 5 academic years. In addition, the overall average satisfaction of students with their doctoral programme is currently 78%, down slightly from 85% in the previous academic year.

Strengths

During the 2023/2024 academic year, several training initiatives were implemented for teaching staff, focusing on both methodological and technical skills, including:

- Skills development workshops on supervising doctoral theses, aimed particularly at early career teaching staff members.
- Training sessions on the applied use of artificial intelligence technologies in research to boost productivity.

Training was also provided on the new regulations for theses by compendium, which have been made more flexible and tailored to each area of knowledge.

Moreover, the regulations introduced the possibility of carrying out practice-based theses, which is particularly appealing for students in artistic disciplines.

The percentage of active six-year research periods among supervisors of defended theses has now exceeded 90% (especially in the NIT and ELE programmes). This represents a significant increase compared to the first accreditation processes.

Areas for improvement

-

4.5 Standard 5: Effectiveness of learning support systems

The physical resources and services needed to deliver the activities envisaged in the PhD programme and for the training of PhD students are sufficient and suitable in accordance with the number of PhD students and the characteristics of the programme.

5.1. The available physical resources are adequate for the number of PhD students and the characteristics of the PhD programme.

5.2. Services available to PhD students provide suitable support to the learning process and encourage access to the labour market.

| Programme | Progressing towards excellence | Compliant | Compliant with conditions | Non-compliant |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|-----------|---------------------------|---------------|
| Overall assessment | X | | | |

Analysis and assessment

During the 2023/2024 academic year, the cohort-based tutorial structure (cohort tutors) was maintained to provide administrative support to doctoral students throughout the thesis process. The support services provided to students by Personnel (e.g. processing and renewing work visas, welcoming doctoral students) and Open Science also remained unchanged. Satisfaction surveys show a notable increase in satisfaction with thesis supervision, from 86% in 2022/2023 to 92% in the current year. In addition, satisfaction with the learning environment improved from 59% in 2022/2023 to 69% in the current academic year.

Furthermore, during the 2023/2024 academic year, several initiatives were implemented that have significantly improved the quality of support and resources available to doctoral students:

- AfterUOC has been officially added to the institutional calendar. Held twice a year, the event brings together the entire network of former UOC employees. The meet-ups, often organized as panel discussions, address issues of concern to doctoral students in terms of employability and career opportunities. Former UOC employees, many of whom hold key positions in government or in companies in various industries, are able to provide valuable mentorship, especially for doctoral students in the final stages of their theses.
- The annual Doctoral Day event was also launched, focusing on practical aspects of doctoral life, such as managing student-supervisor relationships and preparing a thesis by compendium.
- The *Doctorat i Pa amb tomàquet* (Doctoral Programme and Tomato Bread) initiative continued. These monthly meet-ups are financially and logistically supported by the Doctoral School. At each meeting, a doctoral student presents their research in an informal setting, while those present share a meal of typical Catalan tomato bread and cold cuts. Fellow students ask questions and suggest new approaches to the research presented. The academic aspect is entirely self-organized, with the students deciding on the presentations for the year. This regular event gives students the chance to learn about each other's work, encourages collaboration and strengthens the sense of belonging to a community.

As of this academic year, the research laboratories in the UOC's Interdisciplinary R&I Hub are fully up and running. Doctoral students now have unlimited access to the following labs:

- **NeuroLab:** For studies of human cognitive processes and changes using non-invasive brain stimulation techniques and artificial intelligence applications.
- **XR Lab:** For research on the use of immersive technologies (virtual, augmented and mixed reality) in learning, pain management and ophthalmic treatments.
- **Audiovisual & Sound Lab:** A fully equipped recording studio for producing audiovisual and multimedia materials.
- **Social Networks and Gaming Lab:** For research into communication in the digital society, including cinema, journalism and advertising.

- **Design & Maker Lab:** Provides equipment and guidance for digital design and fabrication, including 3D printing and CNC.
- **Wireless Networks Lab:** For developing cyber-physical systems using electronic instruments, antennas and communication systems.
- **TechLab:** A general purpose lab providing resources and technology support for teaching, research and innovation.
- **Data Science Lab:** Supports research involving quantitative data and provides advice on data analysis.
- **LifeSpan Lab:** Fitted with anthropometric equipment for nutrition, physical activity and public health research. This includes tools for measuring BMI, body composition and skinfolds, as well as tools for performing stress tests.

Strengths

The main strengths in terms of key developments in the 2023/2024 academic year are:

- Well-equipped laboratories: Doctoral students now have extensive facilities and laboratory technicians to provide personalized support in the use of specialist equipment.
- Psychological Help Service (SAP): This service continues to be available to all doctoral students, including part-time, non-contract students. It has been instrumental in identifying dysfunction and addressing anxiety-related issues arising from the highly individualized nature of doctoral research.
- Substantial increase in funding: Funding for doctoral stays, conference attendance and training (e.g. summer/winter schools) has doubled from €40,000 to €80,000.

Areas for improvement

In line with the continued roll-out of the research labs, an improvement action is proposed to introduce an annual training session led by final-year peers who are experts in specific labs. The aim of this training is to familiarize students with the capabilities of the new laboratories and to establish expert contacts within the Doctoral School, thereby helping to reduce the learning curve associated with their use.

The percentage of doctoral students with funding to complete their thesis (full-time students on a contract) remains low. The Doctoral School intends to secure funding through European projects under the MSCA COFUND programme. Two proposals for more than €2 million each have already been submitted in response to the call. Although these proposals were not successful, they are currently being improved for resubmission in future annual calls.

4.6 Standard 6: Quality of (learning) outcomes

Doctoral theses, training activities and assessment are consistent with the training profile. The quantitative results of the academic and employment indicators are adequate.

6.1. Doctoral theses, training activities and assessment are consistent with the intended training profile.

6.2. The values of the academic indicators are adequate for the characteristics of the doctoral programme.

6.3. The values of the employment indicators are adequate for the characteristics of the doctoral programme.

| Programme | Progressing towards excellence | Compliant | Compliant with conditions | Non-compliant |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|-----------|---------------------------|---------------|
| Overall assessment | | X | | |

Analysis and assessment

During the monitoring period (academic year 2023/2024), 13 theses were defended by full-time students and 24 by part-time students (see Tables 6.1 and 6.2). The upward trend in the number of defended theses continues, in line with the increase in the number of places available in recent years, particularly following the introduction of new programmes and the transfer of students from the former doctoral programme in the Information and Knowledge Society (SIC) to the STC, HIC, DPE and SIP programmes.

| | NIT | ELE | DPE | TUR | STC | ADE | SIP | HIC | BIO | Cohort total |
|------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|--------------|
| 2020/2021 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| Men | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Women | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| 2021/2022 | 5 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 9 |
| Men | 5 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 7 |
| Women | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| 2022/2023 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6 |
| Men | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6 |
| Women | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 2023/2024 | 5 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 0 | 13 |
| Men | 3 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 6 |
| Women | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 7 |
| 2024/2025 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Men | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Women | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Programme total | 15 | 7 | 1 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 0 | 33 |

Table 6.1. Number of full-time theses defended

| | NIT | ELE | DPE | TUR | STC | ADE | SIP | HIC | BIO | Cohort total |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|--------------|
| 2020/2021 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 8 |
| Men | 1 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 5 |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| Women | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| 2021/2022 | 7 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 17 |
| Men | 6 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 12 |
| Women | 1 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 5 |
| 2022/2023 | 6 | 10 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 18 |
| Men | 5 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 12 |
| Women | 1 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 6 |
| 2023/2024 | 9 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 7 | 0 | 24 |
| Men | 6 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 12 |
| Women | 3 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 12 |
| 2024/2025 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 4 |
| Men | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| Women | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Programme total | 25 | 26 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 9 | 2 | 71 |

Table 6.2. Number of part-time theses defended

Turning to dropout rates (see Table 6.3), the current figures are very low. The overall figure (83 in the last 5 years across all programmes) is less than 37%, which is very reasonable given that around 80% of students complete their thesis part-time. However, it is important to monitor these figures regularly during the annual reviews, as there may be some hidden attrition among students who are still enrolled but are unlikely to meet the requirements to defend their thesis once their enrolment period has ended.

| | NIT | ELE | DPE | TUR | STC | ADE | SIP | HIC | BIO | Cohort total |
|------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|--------------|
| 2020/2021 | 6 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 4 | 7 | 3 | 1 | 23 |
| Men | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 12 |
| Women | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 2 | 0 | 11 |
| 2021/2022 | 6 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 10 | 4 | 0 | 23 |
| Men | 5 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 3 | 0 | 15 |
| Women | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 8 |
| 2022/2023 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 0 | 20 |
| Men | 1 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 11 |
| Women | 0 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 9 |
| 2023/2024 | 1 | 2 | 6 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 16 |
| Men | 1 | 1 | 6 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 12 |
| Women | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 4 |
| 2024/2025 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Men | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------|----|---|----|---|---|---|----|----|---|----|
| Women | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Programme total | 15 | 7 | 10 | 5 | 0 | 9 | 24 | 12 | 1 | 83 |

Table 6.3. Number of dropouts by programme and academic year

In terms of quality mentions (*cum laude* and international mentions, Tables 6.4-6.5), the results are highly satisfactory. Over the last 5 years, a total of 43 theses have been awarded *cum laude*, 15 of them in the 2023/2024 academic year. This year, 8 of the 13 theses defended by full-time students received an international mention. This is particularly noteworthy as the international mention requires a research stay of at least 3 months at a centre outside the student's country of residence. In recent years, the budget allocated by the Doctoral School to fund doctoral research stays has increased. Eligibility has also been extended to doctoral students funded by other grants (FI, FPU, FI-SDUR, etc.).

| | NIT | ELE | DPE | TUR | STC | ADE | SIP | HIC | BIO | Cohort total |
|------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|--------------|
| 2020/2021 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 7 |
| Men | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 4 |
| Women | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| 2021/2022 | 6 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 10 |
| Men | 6 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 8 |
| Women | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| 2022/2023 | 2 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 8 |
| Men | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 |
| Women | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 4 |
| 2023/2024 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 7 | 0 | 15 |
| Men | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 8 |
| Women | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 7 |
| 2024/2025 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 3 |
| Men | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| Women | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Programme total | 14 | 13 | 3 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 9 | 1 | 43 |

Table 6.4. Number of defended theses awarded *cum laude* mention

| | NIT | ELE | DPE | TUR | STC | ADE | SIP | HIC | BIO | Cohort total |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|--------------|
| 2020/2021 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3 |
| Men | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Women | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| 2021/2022 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| Men | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Women | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| 2022/2023 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| Men | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| Women | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| 2023/2024 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 8 |
| Men | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 3 |
| Women | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 5 |
| 2024/2025 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 3 |
| Men | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| Women | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Programme total | 6 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 1 | 21 |

Table 6.5. Number of defended theses awarded international mention

Satisfaction surveys show an increasing level of overall satisfaction with the doctoral programmes, which has risen year on year to the current level of 77% (see Figure 6.1).



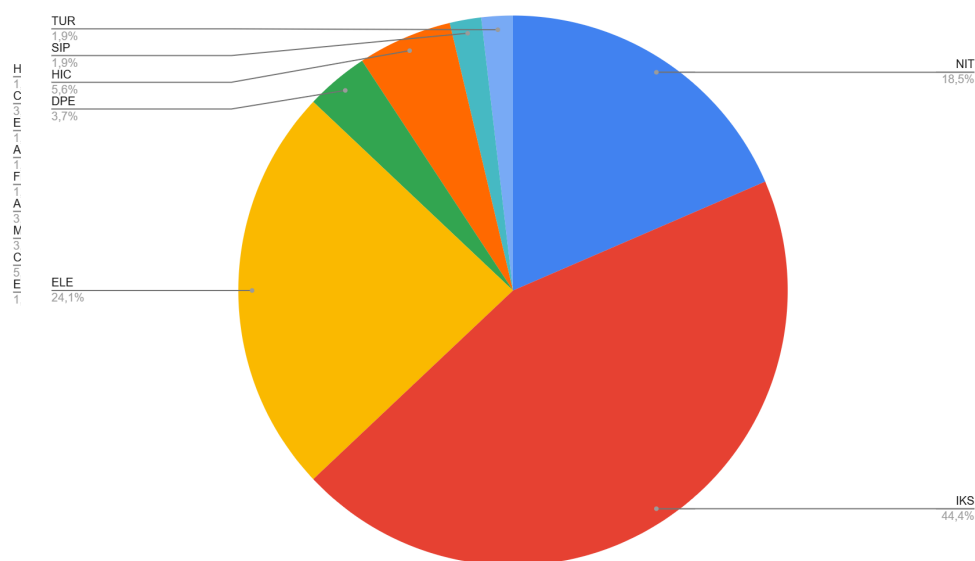
Figure 6.1. Satisfaction percentages for the last 5 completed academic years

With regard to employment outcomes, the Doctoral School conducts a survey of graduates, asking them about various aspects, including their profile, current employment, postdoctoral research and relationship with other UOC doctors (often thesis supervisors).

Profile of UOC doctoral graduates

On 28 November 2024, there were 328 UOC doctoral graduates, 54 of whom responded to the survey. With regard to the profile of the respondents, the following observations can be made:

In terms of gender, 46.3% (25) are women and 53.7% (29) are men. As for country of origin, 72.2% (39) are from Spain and 27.8% are from other countries, including Colombia (3 respondents), Argentina (2), Mexico (2), Canada (2) and one respondent each from Ethiopia, Honduras, Ecuador, Germany, Philippines and Pakistan.



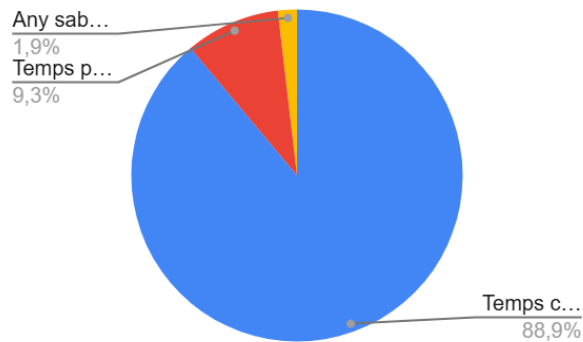
Regarding the doctoral programmes completed by the respondents, 44% (24) graduated from the doctoral programme in the Information and Knowledge Society, 24.1% (13) from the doctoral programme in Education and ICT (E-learning), 18.5% (10) from the doctoral programme in Network and Information Technologies, 5.6% (3) from the doctoral programme in Humanities and Communication, 3.7% (2) from the doctoral programme in Law, Politics and Economics and 1.9% (1) from the doctoral programme in Health and Psychology.

With respect to funding conditions during the doctoral programme, the results of the survey show that 50% (25) of respondents completed their programme without a grant, contract or financial assistance, while the remaining 50% completed it with a UOC grant (40.7%), an FI grant (1.9%) or a research assistant contract (3.8%). Finally, in relation to the type of funding, 51.9% completed the doctoral programme on-site, while 48.1% did so online.

Current employment of UOC doctoral graduates

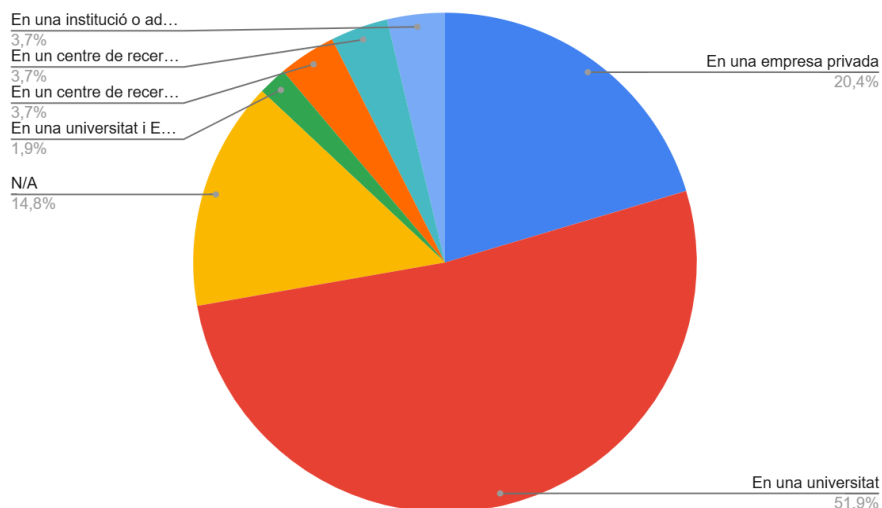
This section presents the results of questions 1 to 4 of the survey. These questions ask about graduates' current employment status, their main occupation, their opinion on whether their job is related to the doctoral programme they completed, and their current workplace.

A total of 88.9% (48) of respondents indicated that they work full-time, 9.3% (5) work part-time and 1.9% (1) are on sabbatical.

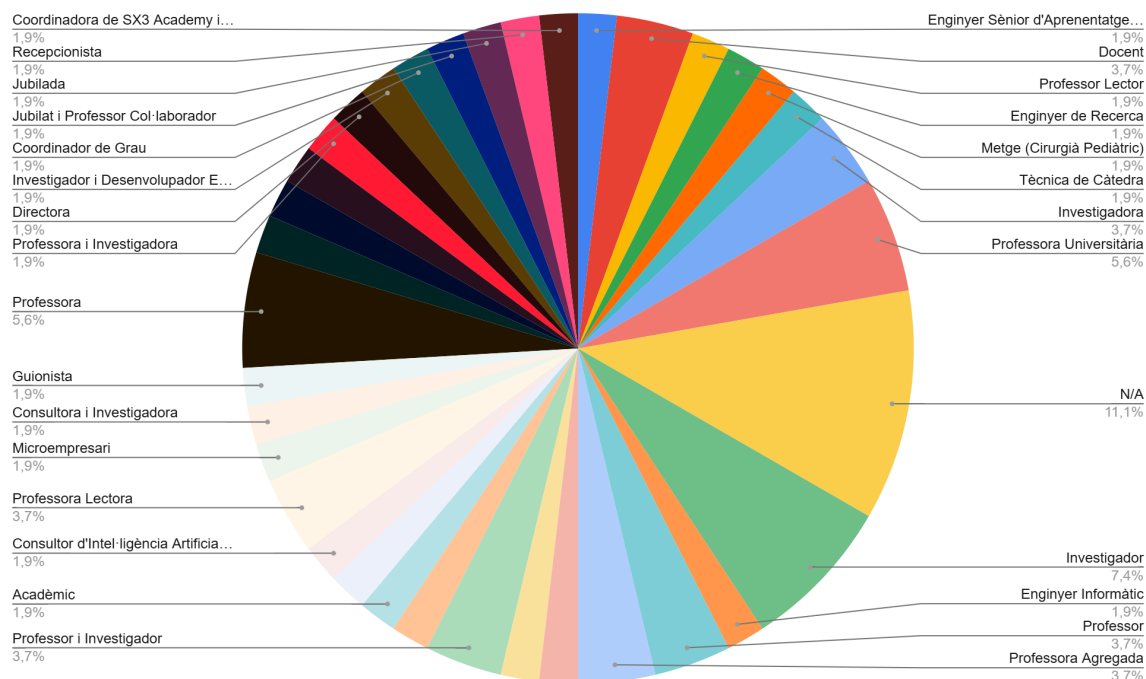


Of the respondents working full-time or part-time, 59.3% (32) are employed in positions related to their doctoral studies and perform job functions that match their level of education; 11.1% (6) are employed in university-level positions unrelated to their doctoral studies and do not perform functions that match their level of education; 7.4% (4) are employed in positions that are neither university level nor related to their doctoral studies and do not perform functions that match their level of education; and 5.6% (3) do not consider their position to be related to their doctoral studies, although they perform functions that match their level of education.

Currently, 51.9% (28) of respondents are employed at a university, 20.4% (11) at a private company, 3.7% (2) in public administration, 3.7% (2) at both a research centre/institute and a university, 3.7% (2) exclusively at a research centre/institute and 1.9% (1) at both a research centre/institute and a private company.



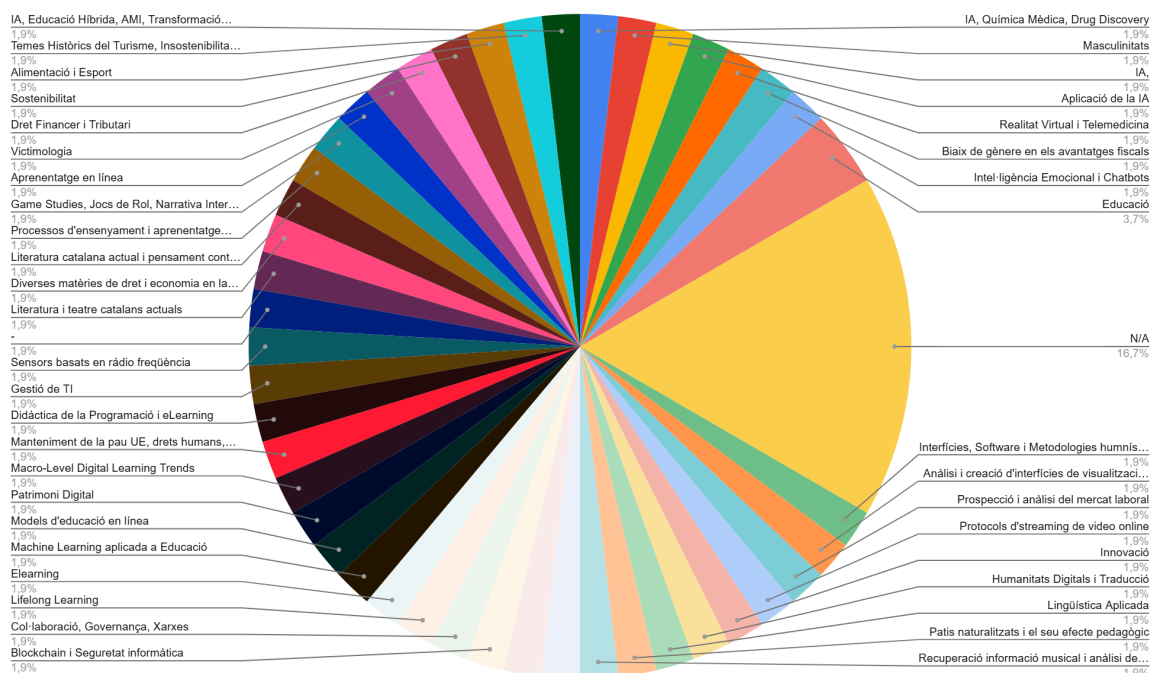
Finally, it should be noted that the main occupation of the respondents is very diverse. However, teaching, whether in secondary schools or universities, stands out as one of the most common occupations, accounting for 39.2% of respondents.



Research by UOC doctoral graduates

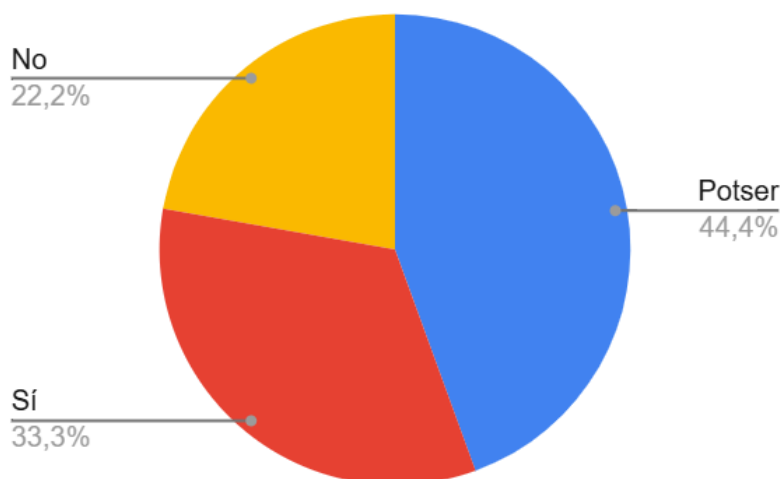
This section presents the results of questions 5 to 8 of the survey. These questions ask whether graduates are currently doing research (at any level of intensity), what their research area is, where they are doing their research, and whether they intend to return to research at some point in the future.

A total of 83.3% (45) of respondents are involved in research to varying degrees. The areas of research reported by the respondents are very diverse, but education and ICT, technology and law have the highest concentration of respondents.



Of those involved in research, 33.3% (18) carry out research at the UOC, 29.6% (16) did not specify where they carry out their research, 16.7% (9) carry out research at a university (specified or not specified in their answers), 5.6% (3) at a private company, 3.7% (2) at other places, 3.7% (2) both at a university (specified or not specified) and at the UOC, 1.9% (1) both at a university (specified or not specified) and at other places, 1.9% (1) both at a university (specified or not specified) and at a company, and 1.9% (1) at their own company.

Of the respondents not currently involved in research, 44.4% (4) might consider returning to research, 33.3% (3) would definitely return to research and 22.2% (2) would not return to research.

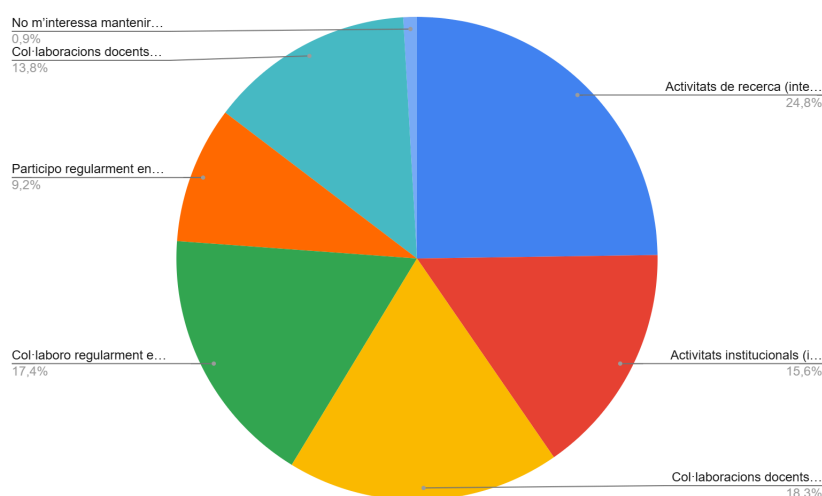


Association with the UOC

This section presents the results of questions 9 and 10 of the survey. Question 9 asks graduates whether they participate or would be interested in participating in UOC activities, and of what type (research, institutional, teaching), allowing them to select all the options that apply. Question 10 asks them if they have any kind of relationship with their thesis supervisor.

In total, 79.6% (43) of respondents maintain a relationship with their thesis supervisor, while 18.5% (10) do not.

In terms of associations with the UOC beyond the thesis supervisor, 24.8% (27) of respondents expressed an interest in participating in research activities, 18.3% (20) in teaching collaboration and 15.6% (17) in institutional activities. In addition, 17.4% (19) of respondents regularly participate in research activities, 9.2% (10) in institutional activities and 13.8% (15) already collaborate in teaching activities. Only 0.9% (1) of respondents indicated that they did not wish to maintain any association with the UOC.



Strengths

The tools for finding and analysing information related to this standard have been significantly improved. Graduation rates are in line with the nature of the programmes, which have a high proportion of part-time students.

Areas for improvement

The following improvement actions, based on observations from previous monitoring processes, are currently in the process of being resolved:

1. Collection of programme data broken down by gender.
A gender field has been added to the Doctoral School's current database, allowing data to be disaggregated as shown in this report.
2. Modification of the doctoral graduate satisfaction survey to better reflect the characteristics of the Doctoral School.
New measurement tools have been designed and will be used to monitor programmes in future academic years.

5. Assessment of the programmes

5.1 Doctoral programme in Law, Politics and Economics

The doctoral programme in Law, Politics and Economics started in the 2022/2023 academic year and is progressing adequately. Despite high demand for admission, which exceeds the number of places available and continues to grow, there are no current plans to increase the number of places. The focus remains on ensuring the quality of supervision by teaching and research staff and maintaining the high standard of research.

The teaching staff associated with the programme have strong research careers and continue to attract new members with similar experience or highly promising junior profiles. Co-supervision between more senior and junior supervisors contributes to their development and growth, thereby broadening the programme's academic team.

Indicators of student and teacher satisfaction are positive. Despite the programme's recent launch, two doctoral theses have already been defended during this period, both with the *excellent cum laude* distinction, and there is general satisfaction with the programme.

5.2 Interuniversity doctoral programme in Bioinformatics

The interuniversity doctoral programme in Bioinformatics (UAB, UPC, UdG, UdL, UOC, UVic-UCC, URV, UB) covers a strategic interdisciplinary field that is experiencing significant growth. It responds to the increasing demand for highly qualified professionals in sectors such as biomedicine, pharmaceuticals and agri-food. With a total of nearly 100 students and 13 theses submitted in the 2023/2024 academic year, the programme stands out for its academic robustness among the participating Catalan universities.

The UOC leads the data science research line, but has recently experienced a significant reduction in expert teaching staff, an issue that will need to be rectified in the coming years. Nevertheless, it was the UOC that organized the annual student progress reviews for the third consecutive year, demonstrating its commitment to the smooth running of this doctoral programme. Although only one of the 13 students who defended their theses in the last academic year was a UOC student, the enrolment of the programme's first grant holder marks an important milestone for this year. The programme is well established at the UOC, with certain areas requiring improvement to maintain its high standard.

The interuniversity doctoral programme in Bioinformatics and the interuniversity doctoral programme in Tourism participated in the UOC's first call for grants for interuniversity programmes. On this occasion,

the grant was awarded to a student from the Bioinformatics programme. Over the next two years, priority will be given to the Tourism programme and the Business Administration and Management programme, in order to provide grant opportunities for candidates from all three programmes.

6. Improvement actions

See the centre improvement plans for the 2019/2020, 2020/2021, 2021/2022, 2022/2023 and 2024/2025 academic years (*PO07 Monitoring improvement actions_ED*).

Annex 1. Centre improvement plan. Monitoring of the 2023/2024 academic year

Monitoring of the improvement plan for the 2019/2020 academic year

| Programme | Stand ard | Weakness identified | Description of the cause | Proposed action | Status |
|-----------|--------------|--|--|--|-----------|
| Centre | S2 | Include an option on the website for students, thesis supervisors and members of thesis assessment boards to download the documents they need, so that these documents are accessible to everyone. | Because these documents are not available on any public web page, users without a Virtual Campus account are unable to access them. External researchers cannot log on to the Virtual Campus, so they cannot access important information they need as ad hoc collaborators. | Create a specific institutional blog or website for non-UOC researchers. | Resolved |
| Centre | S2 | There should be more data on the quality of outcomes on the website's <i>Data</i> page. | Some doctoral data have not been published. | Publish all doctoral data on the UOC website's <i>Data</i> page. | Resolved |
| Centre | S6 | The monitoring of competency acquisition has yet to be implemented. | This activity still follows the traditional assessment guidelines. | Adjust the assessment guidelines. | Ruled out |

Monitoring of the improvement plan for the 2020/2021 academic year

| Programme | Stand ard | Weakness identified | Description of the cause | Proposed action | Status |
|-----------|--------------|---|---|---|----------|
| Centre | S1 | Increase international student enrolment. | It would be beneficial to increase international dissemination and establish agreements to attract international talent to the various programmes at the Doctoral School. | From the 2023/2024 academic year, a series of actions will be designed to raise the international profile of the Doctoral School's programmes. | Resolved |
| Centre | S6 | Programme data broken down by gender are not currently collected or analysed. | The fact that this information is missing was identified while preparing the monitoring report. | The UOC's data governance project will allow even the most individualized academic results to be broken down by gender, but this is not yet possible. We do not expect this to be ready before the 2025/2026 academic year. | Resolved |

Monitoring of the improvement plan for the 2021/2022 academic year

| Programme | Stand ard | Weakness identified | Description of the cause | Proposed action | Status |
|-----------|--------------|---|--|--|----------|
| Centre | S3 | Both student surveys about the courses and programme and satisfaction surveys for thesis supervisors need to improve. | It is necessary to create a satisfaction assessment system tailored to the indicators used for doctoral programmes and the people involved in them. The surveys sent out so far have failed to gather adequate information because they were simply adaptations of those used for other official programmes. | Create a satisfaction assessment system tailored to the key doctoral programme indicators. | Resolved |

Monitoring of the improvement plan for the 2022/2023 academic year

| Programme | Stand ard | Weakness identified | Description of the cause | Proposed action | Status |
|-----------|--------------|---|---|---|----------|
| Centre | S6 | The doctoral graduate satisfaction survey needs to be better adapted to the characteristics of doctoral programmes. | We need to know what doctoral graduates think, and for this to be meaningful, the survey needs to be changed. | Prepare a new satisfaction survey for UOC doctoral graduates and send it out every year in July. | Resolved |
| Centre | S2 | Some programmes have not yet published the CVs of their associated teaching and research staff. | This information is essential for both current and prospective students. | The Doctoral School will work with the relevant institutional units to improve this section of the website. | Resolved |
| Centre | S1 | It is necessary to implement specific actions to inform UOC master's | Increasing the participation of UOC master's degree graduates in | The Doctoral School will propose explicit coordination with the | Resolved |

| | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | | degree students about the doctoral programmes. | doctoral programmes is essential, with a focus on better matching the research agendas of teaching and research staff with potential candidates. | faculty associate deans in order to encourage participation in both faculty-bound and interdisciplinary doctoral programmes. | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|

Improvement plan. Monitoring of the 2024/2025 academic year

| Programme | Stand ard | Weakness identified | Description of the cause | Proposed action |
|---|--------------|---|---|--|
| Doctoral programme in Law, Politics and Economics | S1 | The selection and admission process for candidates is complex and not sufficiently optimized. | Due to the high number of applications, the absence of limits on the number of endorsements and the profiles of candidates who are not always suitable or of sufficient calibre, the selection process requires a potentially disproportionate amount of time and effort. | Develop an internal protocol setting out criteria and procedures to improve the efficiency and quality assurance of the selection process. Specific measures could include: - Capping the number of endorsements allowed per member of teaching and research staff. - Requiring endorsers to attest that they have interviewed or communicated with the candidate to refine and guide the research proposal. - Requiring candidates to submit a proposal or a preliminary draft of their research plan. |
| Doctoral programme in Law, Politics and Economics | S4 | The number of foreign experts participating in the programme remains very low. | Legal research constitutes a very significant part of the programme and is, by its nature, strongly influenced by territorial considerations, which hinders internationalization. | In order to increase international participation, it is proposed that at least one of the examiners and one member of the thesis assessment board should be from abroad, unless there are justified reasons to the contrary. |
| Centre | S1 | There is a need for updated, accessible and gender-disaggregated data. | Currently, there are no accessible, automated monitoring indicators disaggregated by gender. | The UOC is working on an institutional data governance project that will allow even the most individualized academic results to be broken down by gender from the 2025/2026 academic year. As part of this effort, data from the Doctoral School could be included in the project, allowing for automated analysis by gender, programme and |

| | | | | cohort. |
|--------|----|--|--|--|
| Centre | S2 | There is a need to build a sense of community and keep track of doctoral student activities. | A consistent mechanism for entering activities from the activity document and sharing research among peers is needed. | The integration of a community management tool such as Folio would allow doctoral students to efficiently publish their thesis projects, enter activities from their activity document and share their research with different segments of the community through a permissions system. |
| Centre | S2 | There is a need to present information in a more consumer-friendly format. | Teaching staff, especially external members, need simpler, more visually presented summaries to better understand the process of sitting on a thesis assessment board. | Extend the portfolio of infographics to graphically illustrate key steps in the doctoral thesis assessment process, the defence protocol (including the signature process and required documentation), and the secret ballot process for the <i>cum laude</i> mention. These materials will be particularly useful for external members of thesis assessment boards (many of whom are international) and for online examiners. |
| Centre | S5 | Laboratory training. | The labs are brand new, and training is required for new cohorts entering the programmes each year. | An annual training session, delivered by final-year students who are experts in specific laboratories, could be implemented to showcase the capabilities of the new labs while providing expert contacts within the Doctoral School. This would help to reduce the learning curve associated with their use. |
| Centre | S5 | Predocutorial grant funding. | There are currently very few predocutorial grants available and the level of funding is low. | The Doctoral School intends to secure funding through European projects under the MSCA COFUND programme. |

Standard: (S1) Quality of the training programme; (S2) Relevance of public information; (S3) Efficacy of the internal quality assurance system; (S4) Suitability of teaching staff; (S5) Effectiveness of learning support systems; (S6) Quality of (learning) outcomes.