

ECTS rules and recommendations from the doctoral school

According to the Danish Ministerial Order on the PhD Programme, PhD students must complete courses corresponding to 30 ECTS (i.e. half a year's work) as part of their programme.

The 30 ECTS are achieved by participating in:

- **'actual' courses**, i.e. courses offered to PhD students in their doctoral school (or other doctoral schools) where certificates indicating ECTS weight are issued.
- **activities that award ECTS** i.e. activities that directly support the PhD student's project and/or prepare him or her for a research career (e.g. participation in study circles, master classes, conferences, trial defences, or (co-)arrangement of symposia, seminars and conferences).

Actual courses are either **generic** (targeted at students from all research programmes) or **subject specific** (i.e. closer in subject matter to the individual PhD projects). Generic courses are typically offered from a central team in the doctoral school (or SDU's HR department), while subject-specific courses are offered by the research programmes. Activities that award ECTS can also be offered by the programmes or agreed individually with the supervisor.

Students register activities that award ECTS on a special ECTS form (which can be printed from the school's website). The form must be signed by the supervisor.

There are no rules for how many ECTS must be earned from actual coursework or from activities that award ECTS, as there are no uniform project needs amongst the PhD students. On the other hand, students are generally encouraged to aim for **15-20 ECTS for actual courses**, though project-specific needs may warrant a different balance. Courses and activities are compiled in a special insert to the final PhD certificate.

An activity (e.g. conference participation with paper) cannot both award ECTS and count as dissemination or teaching. Teaching is normally counted in SKT (semester teaching hours, i.e. teaching hours per week for a semester).

It is possible to earn ECTS in connection with course participation and activities during a change of environment – as long as this is agreed with the supervisor.

In the humanities, there is **national course cooperation** allowing students to take courses at other institutions (except CBS) free of charge. It is therefore important to keep an eye on the national course database (<https://phdcourses.dk/>) and on the course offerings at other doctoral schools in the humanities. Doctoral schools at other faculties (the social sciences, the natural sciences, etc.) usually charge course fees. If such a course is central to

the PhD student's project, and if no similar course is offered by a doctoral school in the humanities, the student may apply to have the cost covered by the head of the research programme (or by the head of the doctoral school if there are no funds available in the programme).

PhD students are themselves responsible for obtaining documentation for earned ECTS (in the form of course certificates and ECTS forms). **Copies of certificates and forms are sent collectively** to the doctoral school in connection with the evaluations after the first and the second year, and after the fifth semester.

Students are advised to earn most of the 30 ECTS before the last year of study.

Only two courses are mandatory at our doctoral school:

- The introductory welcome course
- The RCR course (RCR = Responsible Conduct of Research)

Students who start their projects before or after the normal starting dates (1 February and 1 September), and who therefore cannot attend the welcome course, will instead be invited to an individually organised introductory session with the head of the doctoral school. The welcome course is in Danish. Separate courses or sessions are arranged in English as needed.

The RCR course, which is offered in collaboration with the university library, should be taken early in the course of study. It is offered at least once a year.

It is also recommended for students to choose **at least one course within three of the following types**:

- The history and/or theory of science
- Managing empirical data (statistics / quantitative methods / qualitative methods / Nvivo)
- Academic writing (and/or oral presentational skills) in English
- Practical teaching skills
- Project Management / Research Leadership / Competence & Career Development

Regardless of the subject area of the individual PhD project, a qualified researcher is expected to possess at least some generalist knowledge and skills within the above categories.

Participation in courses and activities that award ECTS constitutes a paid work obligation (or a contractual obligation). PhD students are therefore expected to exercise responsible management of their selection of courses and activities, as well as their course enrolments and attendance.