

Doctoral Programme in Society, Technology and Culture

Doctoral Programme in Society, Technology and Culture

Start
18 Sep 2025

Online
100%

Admission: March 5, 2024

Languages: Spanish, Catalan, English

Official qualification

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Presentation

The Society, Technology and Culture (STC) doctoral programme seeks to explain the complex relationships between technology and society. It begins in the 2021-2022 academic year. It is a development of the Information and Knowledge Society programme, which is now being phased out, and picks up the baton from a pioneering research programme focusing on the information and knowledge society.

The **Society, Technology and Culture (STC)** doctoral programme provides tools for analysing the complex relationships between technology and society, understanding and contributing to improving the key challenges that define contemporary societies. It is a multidisciplinary doctoral programme halfway between Social Sciences and Humanities. Among other areas, but not exclusively, it focuses on growing inequalities, various forms of discrimination, sustainability, social and economic innovation, civic mobilization and centre-periphery tensions in increasingly digitized cultural contexts. Technology is considered a mediator in social and cultural processes, assuming that it plays a predominant role in the (re)distribution of power.

The focus is on digital technologies and infrastructures, and the non-digital technologies that make up the key infrastructures of contemporary societies are also examined. Technologies (digital and otherwise) are undergoing constant transformation, and it is necessary to continue to study their effects on society and culture in greater depth.

The analysis of different social, political, economic, and cultural systems from the perspective of the intermediation of technology goes beyond the traditional disciplinary fields. The STC doctoral programme is consequently based around integrating various theoretical, epistemological and methodological approaches to create relevant knowledge.

The doctoral programme is linked to the research that takes place in the IN3 research institute and in the Arts and Humanities, Health Sciences, Information and Communication Sciences, Law and Political Sciences, Economics and Business Studies, and Psychology and Education Sciences faculties.

The STC programme is committed to creating accessible and open knowledge that contributes to a more just and sustainable world. In particular, it subscribes to and aims to develop the concepts of Open Science, Creative Commons and Open Data. It also promotes a way of research in accordance with the principles of gender equality and responsible research and innovation (RRI). Finally, the programme shares the transformational goals that are set out in the United Nations sustainable development strategy (the 2030 Agenda).

The STC doctoral programme aims to train professionals with a global and interdisciplinary vision, to work in and influence the fields of social sciences and humanities at an international level, understood in terms of spaces for analysis, participation, decision-making and economic and social production. The Doctoral School and the programme are part of the UOC's strategic objectives that seek to train global professionals and citizens; and to promote transdisciplinarity and open knowledge with everyone and for everyone, creating environments that stimulate the co-creation of knowledge with other agents in society in order to increase its impact.

Official qualification

The **Society, Technology and Culture** doctoral programme is a programme that has been verified by the University Council, and its implementation has been authorized by the Government of Catalonia in accordance with current legislation.

The UOC's official university programmes are valid throughout Spain. They are fully recognized academically, and where appropriate, allow the holders to engage in regulated professions, in accordance with the regulations in place in each case.

The certificates are issued with a European Diploma Supplement (DS), which provides information on the courses studied by the student, the results obtained, the professional skills acquired and the qualification's level in terms of the Spanish higher education system. The DS helps students and graduates obtain recognition for their qualifications, and enhances their mobility across the European Higher Education Area (EHEA).

In other countries, the validity of the official university qualifications awarded by the UOC will be determined by each country's education laws.

Find out more about:

+ [Official recognition](#)

+ [Legalization](#)

1st



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Programme quality

The quality of this degree programme is endorsed by the Catalan University Quality Assurance Agency (AQU), which ensures that rigorous standards, including those demanded by the EHEA, are met.

AQU quality seal

Catalan University Quality Assurance Agency



AQU Catalunya registered on EQAR

At the start of the doctoral programme research period, the UOC will provide a personalized learning pathway for each student, taking into account their research skills and knowledge (particularly in terms of research methodologies) and their research interests. This pathway may involve courses, seminars and other research training activities. If those activities are included on a student's personal learning pathway, they must be taken and passed.

When entering the research period of the doctoral programme, the UOC provides each student with a personalised training itinerary, the preparation of which has taken into account the student's knowledge and research skills (particularly in terms of research methodologies), as well as their research interests. As a result, the itinerary may provide for courses, seminars and other activities aimed at research training. In case they are included in the personal training itinerary, they will necessarily have to be taken and passed by the student.

Study plan

The training complements will be configured from the offer of University Master's degrees of the University and, if they are incorporated, they must be completed and passed during the first two academic semesters of the doctorate program.

Based on the student's previous studies and research interests, it can be established that he participates in short-term training activities, in support of his research.

Doctoral students will have to study and pass during the first year of the doctoral program (and particularly, during the first semester), if they have not previously done so, the courses in advanced research methodologies that correspond to their research itinerary within the program. Due to its relevance, all students are recommended to take the subject "Research Design".

The UOC also offers research, transfer and entrepreneurship courses in English **for students, researchers and faculty** to support **academic, scientific and business-focused research**.

Research, transfer and entrepreneurship courses can be recognized as free elective credits for students taking a bachelor's degree course. If you are currently studying on a doctoral programme at any university and have obtained a competitive grant, you can also take them as part of your training resources.

You can consult the range of [courses](#):

[Academic Writing](#)

[Academic Presentations.](#)

[How to Give an Effective Talk](#)

[Entrepreneurship for researchers](#)

[Introduction to patents and intellectual property](#)

Seminars

According to the student's previous studies, his research interests and the regime in which he pursues the doctoral studies (full-time and face-to-face, distance), it can be established that he participates in training activities of short duration, supporting his research.

Doctoral Seminars: Program of debate seminars (1.5 hours per session) on key topics in research on the information and knowledge society and on student research projects. It has two phases. The first is a critical reading that the student proposes with his tutor and that they agree with the teacher responsible for the seminar. Tutors and students lead the session in which the reading they have suggested is discussed, critically. In the second phase, each student submits and discusses a draft of their thesis research plan.

Research seminars: Research seminars where the development and results of the research carried out by the groups linked to the doctoral program are presented and discussed. Organized by the research groups, its objective is to contribute to the development of competences in students from the presentation, discussion and evaluation of the different aspects of the research process within a community of scientific practice. These communities of practice operate on principles of mutual support and replicate broader knowledge communities that function from peer assessment and ongoing debate.

Timeframe	Field of the Society, Technology and Culture	ECTS credits	Type	Language
1st and 2nd. semester	DR-Seminar and Culture	25 hours	Advisable	English
During the investigation period	Research seminars	25 hours	Advisable	English/Catalan/Sp:
2nd. semester	Thematic seminar: Interdisciplinary Analysis of the Network Society	125 hours (5 Credit Units)	Advisable	English

The maximum duration of studies will be three years for full-time students and five years for part-time students, counted from the date of admission to the programme until the doctoral thesis is presented. This period does not include maternity or paternity leave, or any long-term sick leave deemed necessary by the Academic Committee.

The Academic Committee may authorize the extension of these periods, subject to the legally stipulated maximum periods, in specific circumstances defined for each doctoral programme.

After enrolling in the programme, each doctoral student will be given a personalized activity document. This document specifies all the activities set by the Academic Committee for the doctoral student's development.

By the end of the first year, doctoral students must write a research plan that includes the methodology to be used and objectives to be pursued, as well as the means and timetable for completing the thesis.

The Academic Committee will conduct an annual assessment of each doctoral student's research plan and activity document, which will be considered together with reports from the tutor and thesis supervisor. This research plan must receive a positive assessment for the doctoral student to continue in the programme.

Over the course of the programme, each doctoral student must successfully complete the specific training activity (basic, thematic and methodological seminars) stipulated in his/her personalized pathway. In the first year of the programme, doctoral students must also write a research plan and have it approved.

Activities in face-to-face teaching mode

Activities in the organized research period in face-to-face teaching mode

Activities in distance teaching mode

Activities in the organized research period in distance teaching mode



Research lines

Academic team

Director of the Doctoral School

David Masip Rodó

Doctoral Programme Coordination

Mireia Fernàndez-Ardèvol

Academic Committee

Ana Isabel Jimenez Zarco

Ana Maria Clua Infante

Daniel López Gómez

Gabriela Fauth

Ivan Serrano Balaguer

Mireia Fernàndez-Ardèvol

Natàlia Cantó Milà

Thesis directors team

Alejandro Paniagua Rodriguez

Alicia Aguilar Martinez

Amalia Susana Creus

Ana Galvez Mozo

Andrea Rosales Climent

Aurea Cristina Mota de Araujo

Carme Carrion Ribas

Daniel López Gómez

Diana Roig Sanz

Eduard Aibar Puentes

Eduard Josep alvarez Palau

Enrique Baleriola Escudero

Francesc Xavier Medina Luque

Hug March Corbella

Israel Rodríguez Giralte

Ivan Serrano Balaguer

Julio Meneses

Mireia Fernàndez-Ardèvol

Natalia Cuguero Escofet

Natàlia Cantó Milà

Neus Rotger Cerdà

Pere Suau Sanchez

Ramon Ribera Fumaz

Rosa Borge Bravo

Ruben Nieto Luna

Sergi Fabregues Feijoo

Our **eLearning Innovation Center** oversees the evolution of our educational model, to ensure unique, high-quality, connected and networked learning experiences.

25 years' experience in e-learning

In 1995 the UOC was launched as the world's **first fully online university**. More than 25 years later, we are still pioneers in digital education.

Call for applications

General requirements

To be admitted to the organized research period of the Doctoral Programme in Society, Technology and Culture students must meet both the general University and specific programme requirements.

To this end, students must first submit proof of meeting one of the following sets of requirements:

- a) Hold an official university master's degree issued by a higher education institution in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and have passed a minimum of 300 ECTS credits out of all official university courses.
- b) Hold an official Spanish university degree, or one from an EHEA member country, that allows them admission to a master's course, and have passed a minimum of 300 ECTS credits out of all official university courses, of which at least 60 must be at the master's level.
- c) Hold an official Spanish graduate degree of at least 300 ECTS credits in line with EU legal regulations.
- d) Candidates with degrees from education systems outside the EHEA, whose degrees do not require homologation (official recognition by the Spanish Ministry of Education), must hold a level of education equivalent to Spanish university master's degrees that authorizes admission to doctoral studies in the country issuing the degree.
- e) Be a university graduate and have passed with a positive assessment at least two years of education on a programme to be awarded the official degree of any of the health sciences specialities.
- f) Hold a Spanish doctoral qualification in accordance with the previous university system.
- g) Be a graduate, architect or engineer and be in possession of the Advanced Studies Diploma (DEA), awarded in accordance with the provisions of Royal Decree 778/1998, of 30 April 1998, or have obtained research proficiency, regulated in Royal Decree 185/1985, of 23 January 1985.

Candidates who have not successfully completed the initiation to research credits for a university master's degree programme will have to take those bridging courses specified by the programme, if any.

The continued enrolment on the doctoral programme of candidates who hold only an official university bachelor's degree that, in accordance with EU law, consists of 300 ECTS credits or who have not taken and successfully completed at least 20 initiation to research credits as part of a university master's degree programme is contingent on the successful completion of the relevant bridging courses for the initiation to research module, pathway or subjects for the corresponding training period.

According to Decree 822/202, of September 28, students with a disability equal to 33% or more have a reservation of 5% of the places.

Admission requirements

In addition to the general and additional requirements stipulated by the University itself, the Society, Technology and Culture doctoral programme has the following specific requirements:

- University studies in social science or humanities in a broad sense.
- If you're not a citizen of an English-speaking country, **you must provide proof of a level of English equal to or higher than B2** in accordance with the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). Higher levels of proficiency (C1 or C2) will be valued as a plus.
- If you have attended school or have completed a bachelor's or master's degree (or equivalent qualification with regards to enrolment in the doctorate programme) in English in a country where English is an official language, you will be deemed to have an equivalent level to the one required.
- You may also demonstrate your linguistic competency in English by means of another official certificate that proves you have a level equivalent to or higher than the one required. You can consult this equivalency table to see examples of certificates that correspond to these levels.

The UOC's Centre for Modern Languages offers English courses to attain the minimum level required for admission into the different doctoral programmes.

The UOC offers an online English language proficiency test, which can be accessed via this [link](#), to accredit your knowledge of English. A score of between 72 and 94 accredits a level corresponding to B2 as defined by the CEFR. When taking this test, you must specify the code that corresponds to the UOC (Universitat Oberta de Catalunya): 4418. This code does not exempt the student from paying the corresponding exam cost and fees.

Meeting the above requirements does not guarantee admission to the doctoral programme. These requirements must be met in order to apply for admission to the doctoral programme and for this application to be assessed.

If you apply for a UOC grant, you must accredit a level equal to or higher than B2 from the time of application. For other grants, financial aid or research contracts, please consult the terms and conditions and requirements for each case (level of English and part-time or full-time format).

Admission documents

If you apply for access to a UOC doctoral programme, you must submit the following documentation. Unless otherwise indicated, the documents are compulsory for the candidature to be assessed:

- A photocopy of your national identity document (e.g. national identity document or passport).
- A **cover letter**, including your specific motivations for presenting your candidature, and a **description of your specific research interests** (maximum length: 2,500 words).
- A **letter of recommendation** from faculty and/or research staff stating the full name, affiliation, postal address and email address of the person providing the reference. *It is recommended to include a letter of recommendation from a research professor associated with the STC doctoral programme.* (Optional, maximum 2)
- A **curriculum vitae** with details of the master's degree and postgraduate programmes and courses you have studied that are associated with the research interests mentioned in your letter of presentation and where applicable, any previous scientific production. You must also include your full physical address, telephone number and contact email address.
- A sample of **your recent academic work** (in Catalan, English or Spanish).
- **Academic transcripts** for any previous studies, showing the courses taken and the mark given, the exam sitting, the type of course, the number of credits and the average grade of the academic record (if these have not already been submitted to meet the admission requirements).
- A certificate proving you have the **necessary level of English language proficiency** for the doctoral programme.
- Documents **proving you meet the admission requirements**. You can find more information on this in the relevant section in Procedures on the Campus.
- If you have university qualifications from outside the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) that are not officially recognized, you will need to legalize your certificate through diplomatic channels (or, where applicable, with the Apostille of the Hague Convention). If your academic certificates are not in English or one of the official languages of Spain, you will need to accompany them with a sworn translation in Catalan, Spanish or English. Failure to present these documents, or if any of the details they contain do not match those entered in your application, may lead to failure to be admitted to the doctoral programme.
- After the access documents have been reviewed and your candidature accepted, you will be admitted to the doctoral programme subject to submitting the official documents.

Evaluation criteria

All received applications will be evaluated according to the **General Evaluation Criteria**. In addition, applications aiming at a UOC scholarship will also be evaluated according to the **UOC Grants Particular Criteria**.

General Evaluation Criteria:

Criterion	Variable	Total weighting of the criterion
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The **minimum score to access the programme is 50 points**. There may be void positions if not enough applications meet requirement.

UOC Grants Particular Criteria

The Academic Committee of the Doctoral Programme will **pre-select** a maximum of 10 candidates corresponding to **the two best general evaluation criteria in each of the 5 research lines** of the doctoral programme. Only those applications meeting the 50-point threshold established in the previous section will be considered.

Given the interdisciplinary nature of the STC programme, the UOC grant's particular criteria exclude undergraduate and graduate academic records from the evaluation.

Selected candidates will have **an interview** with a subcommittee of the PhD Academic Committee. Estimated length: 20 minutes.

The interview has two sections:

1. **A presentation of the doctoral research idea**. It is recommended to use a presentations (PPT or similar). Length: between 5 and 10 minutes.
2. **Open conversation** about the research idea and the elements that constitute the candidacy (previous trajectory, motivations, knowledge of the programme, commitment...). Length: 10 minutes.

Criterion	Source	Total weighting of the criterion
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If a pre-selected candidate does not respond to the interview invitation within one week, their application will be replaced by the next best candidate in the same research line.

Calendar

1 December 2023: Start of the call for applications for access and admission to doctoral programmes.

12 February 2024: End of the call for applications for access and admission to doctoral programmes.

19 February 2024: Publication of the provisional lists of applications to be assessed. The lists will be published on the [Doctoral School website](#).

19 February to 26 February 2024: Period for appeals of the applications to be evaluated.

29 February 2024: Publication of the final lists of applications to be assessed. The lists will be published on the [Doctoral School website](#).

****** The publication of the final lists of applications to be assessed will be published on 14 March.

6 May 2024: Publication of the provisional resolution on the accepted online and granted candidates. The lists will be published on the [Doctoral School website](#).

6 May to 16 May 2024: Period for appeals of the selection of online and granted candidates.

27 May 2024: Publication of the final resolution on the candidates admitted to the doctoral programmes and those who are granted. The lists will be published on the [Doctoral School website](#).

July 2024: Start of the enrolment period 2024-25.

September 2024: Start of the academic year 2024-25.

Request access

1 Apply for the Welcome and Information Service

Apply for the Welcome and Information Service is a free, no-obligation procedure that provides you with a user name and password that will allow you to enter the UOC's Virtual Campus, from where you will be able to:

1. Contact experts who will help you settle any doubts you may have about applying.
2. Consult the Campus Secretary's Office for information about the programme of studies, enrolment prices, documentation, etc.

Access requirements

Before requesting access, check that you meet the [requirements](#) for the programme you want to be admitted to.

Access form

On the access form, you must give your personal details and the educational level you have attained.

Access Documentation

You will find a list of the documentation you need when you request access and can consult the Campus Secretary's Office.

Discounts

If you are eligible for any of the [discounts](#) stated in the Price Decree, you will have to submit the appropriate documentation, following the instructions given by the virtual Secretary's Office.

2 Access the Campus and contact the researcher

Virtual campus

After you have requested access, you will receive a user name and password that will allow you to access the Virtual Campus, where you will find all the information and resources you may need.

Researcher

You will find the information to contact the lead researcher in the "research lines" section. The researcher can provide support for preparing your application and will be your sponsor, if he or she agrees. Once you have been admitted to the programme, he or she will advise and guide you in choosing courses, in accordance with your prior academic background, your interests and the amount of time you have.

Virtual Secretary's Office

There is a Procedure on the Campus where you can consult and manage all academic matters, such as viewing the programme of studies, payment options or the discounts available.

3 Apply for admission

You can complete the admission form the virtual campus **Procedures / Doctoral programme admission documentation**, where you will have to give your academic details, whether you want to apply for a grant and the research line you are interested in.

You must submit an enrolment proposal after having chosen the courses you want to follow during the semester, which your tutor will analyse so that you can complete enrolment with his or her counselling. It is a step prior to completing enrolment.

4 Send the digital documentation

Having completed the previous step, you must attach the documentation in the same section. You can see which documentation you must attach in the corresponding section within **Procedures / Doctoral programme admission documentation**.

When you have completed all the steps, the doctoral programme's academic committee will assess the applications that have been submitted.

If you pass the first phase of the admission process, you will receive notification confirming that you have entered the second phase and a telephone interview will be scheduled.

If you pass the second phase of the admission process, you will receive notification to confirm that you have been admitted. You will have a maximum of one month (counting from the admission notification) to confirm your acceptance of the place on the doctoral programme; if this confirmation from you is not received, you will not be admitted to the programme.

It is at this point that you will be able to complete enrolment, choosing your preferred payment option from among those available. If you are eligible for any of the [discounts](#) stated in the Price Decree, you will have to submit the appropriate documentation, following the instructions given by the virtual Secretary's Office.

Remember that once you have enrolled, you will have ten days to send the admission documentation.

The Government of Catalonia establishes the public prices for credits and other academic services charged by public universities in Catalonia and the UOC. You can consult the prices in [Decree 125/2023](#), of June 28th.

The fees will be those applicable when enrolment is completed. Subject to annual revisions.

Price and enrolment Fees

Price per credit	32,28€/cr*
Price per learning resources credit	15,16€/cr*

Biannual Fees

Fee for supervision, tutorship and continuous assessment of the doctoral thesis	200,56€
Fee for the management of your record	54,54€
Fee for learning support services	101,47€

Fees

Fee for requesting your certificate	218,15€
Fee for oral examination and defence of the doctoral thesis	156,87€
Fee for requesting your record	54,54€

UOC

Consult the UOC educational offer uoc.edu/en/studies



Universitat Oberta
de Catalunya