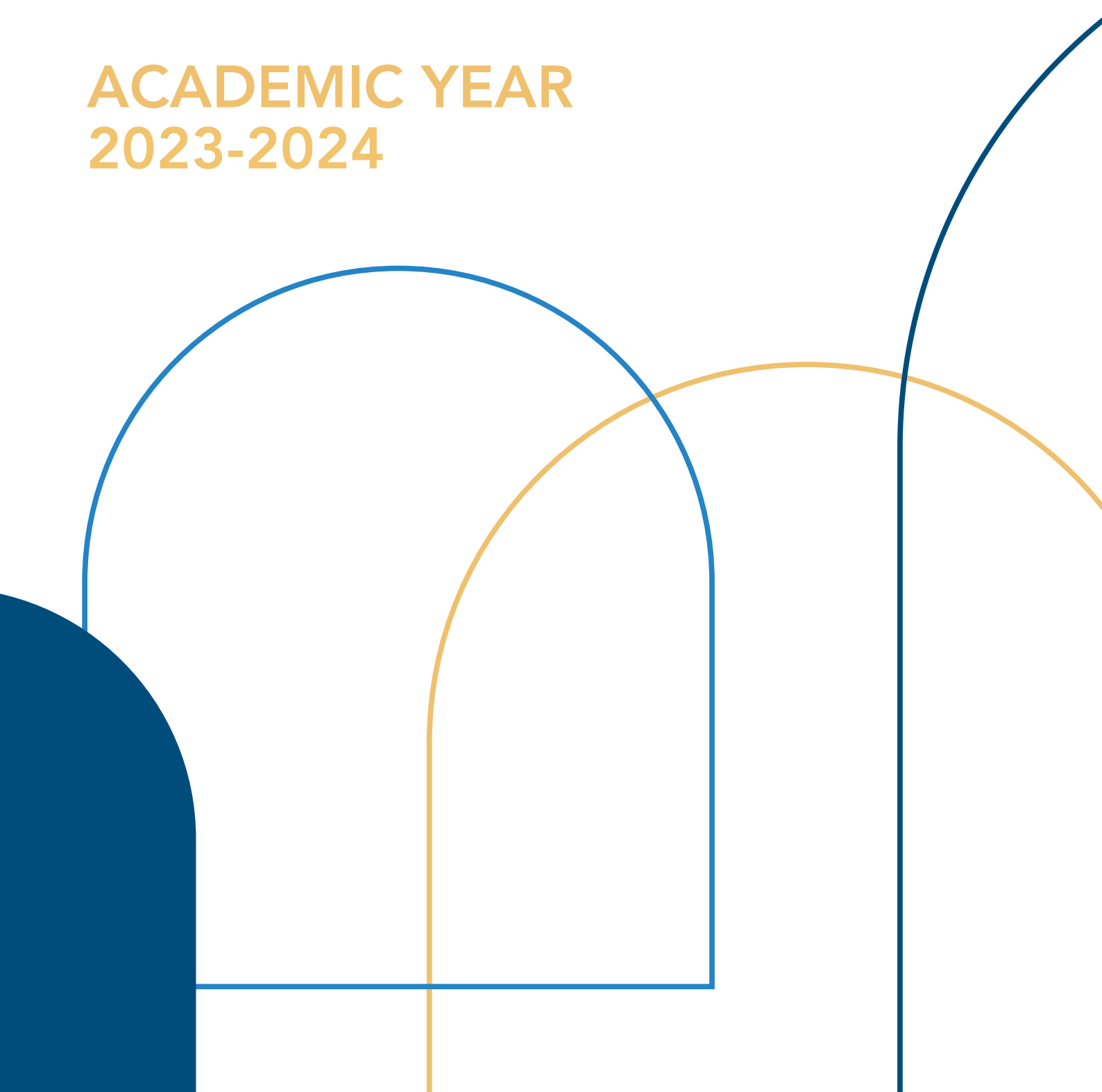


RESEARCHERS' GUIDE

ACADEMIC YEAR
2023-2024



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WELCOME TO THE SPS DEPARTMENT

You are about to embark on a life-changing journey—your journey to a PhD from the EUI. This guide helps you navigate our world. It contains information on our various programme milestones and requirements. It will help you structure your work during the next four years and provide guidance and support throughout. In addition, we provide details on this year's teaching programme and our current faculty and staff.

On the same webpage, you will find other information relevant to the courses. If at any time you would like greater clarification of our procedures and arrangements, please contact the Director of Graduate Studies, Professor [Arnout van de Rijt](#), or the Departmental Coordinator, Ms [Aurélie Boursier](#). Of course, as the Head of the department but also as someone who has been in your shoes in the past (and I even wore them in the same place as you are about to enter), I am available to speak with you on any issue that might come up in the course of your studies, whether personal or professional. Please do not hesitate to contact me!

This guide concentrates on the formal teaching activities provided by the department. However, the life of the Institute also revolves around informal and inter-departmental activities organised by researchers themselves. Importantly for your present and future research, these activities include informal working groups of researchers, postdoctoral fellows and faculty. We therefore strongly encourage you to be physically present at the Badia and participate in the community. Also, please keep close track of emails arriving in your inbox. Many of them might be of secondary importance to you, but some will be of great interest: events organised by other departments, the Max Weber Programme, the Robert Schuman Centre (RSC) or the School of Transnational Governance (STG) can add to the already wide range of activities and resources offered within the Department.

SPS, the largest department of the EUI, is committed to protecting diversity, broadly defined. Inspired by the wide array of academic traditions characterizing our body of researchers, we remain loyal to our dual purpose of promoting academic excellence while respecting methodological pluralism. At SPS, we learn to become scholars by critically engaging with each other's work, building a community based on respect, solidarity and group spirit. In this otherwise lonely journey, having such a community is vital both on personal and academic grounds.

We all look very much forward to welcoming you in person in September and wish you all a very fruitful and enjoyable stay at the Institute!

Elias Dinas
Head of Department
August 2023

1. BASIC FACTS ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT

1.1 Profile of the Department

The Department of Social and Political Sciences is one of Europe's leading centres for research and doctoral studies in comparative politics, political behaviour and political sociology, demography and sociology of inequality, micro- and computational sociology, and international relations and security. In this broad-ranging research programme, there is a common emphasis on the need for a solid evidentiary basis for social science theories and recommended policy responses to ongoing social and political developments.

The core mission of the EUI Department of Political and Social Sciences (SPS) is the recruitment, training, and placement of early career researchers from throughout Europe, while trying as much as possible to extend our focus also beyond Europe. In admitting researchers from all over Europe with different backgrounds and initial levels of training, the Department thus plays a crucial role in equalizing opportunities for doctoral research across the EU.

The Department favours a multi-faceted approach to research projects and theses, many of which cut across the conventional boundaries. The Department also encourages broader cross-disciplinary work and endorses a spirit of [methodological pluralism](#), giving equal weight to qualitative, quantitative and mixed method research designs.

It has good working relations in both teaching and research with the departments of Law, History and Economics, and with the Max Weber Programme, the Robert Schuman Centre and the School of Transnational Governance, and is at the centre of extensive international networks. It hosts a number of large, collaborative projects financed by the European Commission Framework programmes or other external sources, such as the European Research Council. The Department also has many individual projects resulting in single-authored books and articles. Finally, as active members of CIVICA, we have access to all resources, including courses, presentations, workshops and other activities organized under the CIVICA framework.

The main working language of seminars and teaching is English, but theses can be written in any one of the other languages of the European Union in which supervision is available.

1.2 People

FACULTY

As of September 2023, the Department will count thirteen full-time professors, one part-time professor and two part-time assistant professors. The Department expects two new full-time professors and two new full-time assistant professors to join by September 2024.

This constant renewal of faculty at the EUI allows us to act as a hub for research in the social sciences and doctoral training throughout Europe. For the latest developments, please check the regularly updated list of professors, and all people working or affiliated with the department at:

<https://www.eui.eu/en/academic-units/political-and-social-sciences/faculty-and-staff-political-and-social-sciences-department>

ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM

Please check the full list of the administrative staff at the department on the [dedicated People's webpage](#).
General administrative contact: sps.dept@eui.eu.

RESEARCHERS

For a list of all SPS researchers please consult the [dedicated People's webpage](#).

VISITING STUDENTS

Every year the SPS Department welcomes a small number of visiting students registered in Ph.D. programmes at universities around the world for periods from three to six months. The rules for seminar attendance (see [Point 1.5.6](#)) also apply to visiting students. Upon request, the SPS Department can certify seminar/workshop attendance and that the requirements for credits have been met. Please note that the EUI does not operate the ECTS system.

RESEARCHERS' REPRESENTATIVES ("REPs")

Every six months, two out of four researchers' representatives (REPs) are elected within the Department for a one-year term. According to the [Rep Charter](#), their responsibility is 'to further the academic, welfare and social interests of all the Researchers as a whole' (Article 1). In line with the EUI Convention, the reps represent and lobby for the collective interests of researchers, by ensuring they are voiced at the professorial and administrative levels, including the various governance bodies and committees such as the Academic Council and Executive Committee.

On the departmental level, they attend the monthly departmental meeting, where they participate fully in the discussions and can put items on the agenda. They also participate in the selection of new professors, fellows and researchers for the Department. Whilst they do not necessarily undertake all of these tasks themselves, they coordinate this representation. One of the reps also assists in the allocation of mission funding and Early Stage Researcher grants.

The reps also constitute a point of contact for individual researchers with questions or who need advice on any academic or non-academic issues. This can include everything regarding from queries about working environment, seminar assessments and problems with supervision. The reps constitute an important mechanism for conveying the ideas of individual researchers to the Director of Graduate Studies and other administrative units. And finally, when they're not doing all of this, they might even have time to organise some social events.

Find out more on the researchers' representatives

<https://www.eui.eu/en/public/about/representatives>.

Contact SPS reps: SPS.RepMail@eui.eu

FERNAND BRAUDEL FELLOWS

Fernand Braudel Fellows are mid-career and senior academics visiting the Institute for a period of several months. They have no formal teaching responsibilities but may participate in seminars and can give occasional advice to doctoral researchers in their specialised fields.

MAX WEBER FELLOWS

The Max Weber Fellows are part of a programme financed by the European Commission. They are post-doctoral researchers spending one or two years at the Institute. They are housed in Badia Fiesolana and a number of them are also associated with the SPS Department. They will be present or co-teaching in some seminars and are available for consultation by doctoral researchers working in their fields.

VISITING FELLOWS

Every year the Department accepts requests from a limited number of scholars from around the world wishing to spend some time (2-6 months) doing research at the EUI.

Priority is given to scholars whose research interests relate directly to work being carried out within the Department and are of particular interest to one or more of the Department's teaching staff. They have no teaching responsibilities but are usually happy to discuss research issues with researchers.

OTHER FELLOWSHIPS

Each year the Department welcomes a number of postdoctoral fellows working under other schemes. These include the Marie Curie Fellowships financed by the European Commission, as well as fellowships financed by various national and foundation grants.

Please also note that a number of the Jean Monnet Fellows in the Robert Schuman Centre (see [RSC webpages](#)) also work on SPS related topics.

The Fellows' seminar will take place on the first Wednesday of each month (unless otherwise specified). The departmental meetings are for professors and researchers' representatives.

LIBRARY INFORMATION SPECIALIST

Thomas Bourke is the Library's Information Specialist for the Political and Social Sciences and is responsible for library collections (books, periodicals, working papers, databases) in these disciplines. He also takes care of the classification of new acquisitions, introductory courses for new users, training courses on digital resources, seminar reserve shelves, and creating and maintaining webpages.

Contact: thomas.bourke@eui.eu

Members of the SPS Department are welcome to contact him for any of the following:

- Book purchase requests
- Suggestions for journals, working paper series, online subscriptions
- Special acquisitions
- Specialised research assistance
- Datasets from data archives, such as the ICPSR
- Specific information queries (bibliographical, factual, web-related)
- Suggestions for updating internet resources
- Information on the progress of book orders

Don't forget to first check the online catalogue and/or the Library's webpages, in particular the SPS Library Support page:

<https://www.eui.eu/Research/Library/ResearchGuides/PoliticalAndSocialSciences>

For other matters, please contact the Loans Desk, the Reference Desk or the Inter- Library Loan service as appropriate.

1.3 The Doctoral Programme

The objective of the doctoral programme in the SPS department is to train high-quality scholars in the Political and Social Sciences.

The programme consists of coursework and supervised independent research leading to a doctoral dissertation. Coursework is concentrated in the first two years of the programme while the last two years are devoted solely to PhD research. The programme has progress milestones set for each year to ensure proper progress through the programme. These milestones are described in more detail under the description and requirements of each year of the programme. In the following, you can find more details on supervision as well as doctoral training and the teaching offered.

1.4 Supervision

Supervision is a crucial part of the journey toward the Ph.D. As an institute focused on doctoral training, the EUI places special emphasis on supervision.

The rules and regulations governing doctoral supervision as well as the EUI standards and good practices of supervision are explained in detail in "Academic Rules and Regulations" and "Doctoral Supervision at the EUI: A Code of Practice".

<https://www.eui.eu/Documents/ServicesAdmin/DeanOfStudies/EUI-RulesRegs.pdf>

<https://www.eui.eu/Documents/ServicesAdmin/DeanOfStudies/CodeofPracticeSupervisionNov031.pdf>

This section explains what you need to know about supervision in the SPS department, in addition to what is written in the above documents.

1.4.1 Getting started

When starting your first year, you will be allocated to a potential supervisor or potential supervisors, when more than one professor has shown an interest in supervising your work.

During your first months at the Institute, you must, however, decide upon a single supervisor or, in some cases, supervisors. The deadline for doing so is 30 November 2023. You may have up to two supervisors. The choice of the supervisor(s) is yours, and you may want to discuss your research topic with a number of members of the Department before finally making your decision. It is, of course, understood that the chosen supervisor(s) should agree to act in this capacity.

It may be tempting to opt for two supervisors with the idea that the more the better. However, two supervisors may also mean two differing opinions. Remember that you can turn to all SPS professors for consultation whether they are your supervisors or not. When two supervisors are appointed, one of them will be the main supervisor and the other will be the co-supervisor. Although both will have a formal supervisory role, the main supervisor has the final word in case of conflicting opinions. Both supervisors will become members of the thesis jury.

In most cases, both supervisors will be based in the SPS department. As set up in the [Academic Rules and Regulations](#) (10.3), a supervisor can also be a part-time professor, a professor in another department, a RSC professor, the RSC director, an STG professor, the STG Director, the Dean of Post-Doctoral Studies, or the President of the Institute. Supervisors from outside SPS will as a general rule be appointed as co-supervisors. Even if the external supervisor becomes the main supervisor, the researcher will have a co-supervisor or a 'liaison' supervisor (see also [Point 1.4.3](#)) based in the SPS department.

Finally, from the second year onwards, researchers may have an external co-supervisor from outside the EUI if the expertise required is not fully available within the Institute. This will typically happen toward the end of the second or beginning of the third year. The decision to appoint an external co-supervisor will be made by the Department during one of its monthly meetings and the Head of Department will then send an official letter to the external professor asking whether they are prepared to act as a co-supervisor. In no case should you ask an external professor whether they are available as a co-supervisor without having obtained the agreement of your departmental supervisor. This co-supervisor will become a part of the thesis jury. Supervision arrangements and any changes to them are always decided by the Department in its monthly meetings.

The request to appoint a co-supervisor should be addressed at the latest the week before the Departmental meeting via e-mail to sps.headofdept@eui.eu, with the Departmental coordinator Ms. Aurélie Boursier in copy (check the [SPS Academic calendar](#)).

1.4.2 Possible problems

You are entitled to expect from your supervisor considerable help in preparing every stage of your dissertation. When you present written work, this should be returned to you within a reasonable period of time with detailed comments and discussion. You should also expect to receive help, advice and constructive criticism when you experience periods of difficulty with your work. In return, you must be willing to be open about your problems and seek advice. You will probably have a natural desire to demonstrate only your strengths to your supervisor, but this will not enable you to receive relevant feedback on areas of weakness.

As is the case with all social relationships, the supervisory relationship can be a difficult one. You may have different opinions on the direction the dissertation should take. You may find it difficult to communicate with your supervisor, and the feeling can be mutual. Or your personalities simply don't synch. It is a good idea to try to be as open as possible about the expectations both have, and also try to openly discuss any problems that may come along the way. In some cases this will not be possible or enough, and in such cases researchers may wish to consult the Director of Graduate Studies, or the Head of Department when the Director of Graduate Studies is the supervisor.

Occasionally, researchers find it necessary to seek a change of supervisor, either due to difficulties in personal relations or simply because their thesis has started to develop in ways that would be more suitably supervised by a different professor. This becomes increasingly difficult to do as time passes, but it is possible. You need to identify a new supervisor, who of course must be willing to take over supervision. With the new supervisor's agreement, you must then make a formal request for the change in writing to the Head of Department (SPS.HeadOfDept@EUI.eu) with the Departmental coordinator Ms. Aurélie Boursier in copy. The request will then be submitted to the Department for approval at the following monthly Departmental meeting (check the [SPS Academic calendar](#)).

1.4.3 If your supervisor leaves the EUI

EUI professors are on temporary contracts and therefore the supervisor may well leave the EUI before the doctoral thesis is completed. It is important for you to know that the departing supervisor is under contractual duty to continue supervision until the thesis is completed.

The Department makes arrangements to minimize the disruption to doctoral work, typically by appointing a co-supervisor or a 'liaison supervisor' from the SPS faculty (see [Academic Rules and Regulations](#), 10.5). The former is a more formal arrangement with the rights and duties that being a supervisor entail. Although the 'liaison supervisor' role is less formalized, it makes sense that they are someone you can discuss your research with. Normally, the 'liaison supervisor' would also become part of the thesis jury. It is important to start thinking about the arrangements well before the supervisor leaves and you should take an active role in thinking about what your supervision needs are and who you would like to have as your co- or liaison supervisor in SPS.

1.5 Doctoral Training

The Department's doctoral programme puts a strong emphasis on the theoretical perspectives and methodological tools required for Ph.D. research and beyond. The Department offers different types of courses:

- **Field seminars** – there are four: "**Sociology**", "**Comparative Politics**", "**Public Policy and Institutions**", "**International Relations**". Each researcher must follow and pass at least one field seminar of their choosing in their first year. There will be an assessment after each course. Passing this assessment for one field seminar will be a requirement for admission to the second year of the PhD programme.
- **Methods seminars** - go from compulsory introductory seminars in qualitative and quantitative methods to intermediate and more advanced mixed methodological seminars.
- **Research seminars** (=non-methods, non-field) are more focused on specific, cutting- edge topics within a given substantive research area.
- **Workshops** - are shorter in duration than seminars and are concentrated in a few days (typically, two or three days). They usually take place in the third term and are mostly devoted to research methods.

It is important that you take both methods and research seminars in a balanced way. Both are important and you will not become a good academic without substantive knowledge of your field that is combined with strong methods skills. Field and research seminars help you understand what is and is not known in the field, and what questions are important to study. They also help you develop theoretical arguments. The methods courses train you to answer research questions in a qualified manner. As a PhD researcher you may well be tempted to focus on the (perceived) needs for your doctoral dissertation work when selecting courses, while forgetting that the training should prepare you not only for the coming four years as a PhD researcher, but also the coming 40+ years of your career, in or outside academia.

First-year researchers are required to take a minimum of 110 credits. In addition, the first-year researchers need to participate in [Accademia Fiesolana](#) that is offered in September. In their second year, researchers need to take a minimum of 60 credits. Seminars give 20 credits and workshops given 10 or 20 credits (for workshops with 10 and 20 classroom hours, respectively). On seminar attendance requirements and seminars taken in other departments of at other universities, see below.

If you have completed more than 110 credits in your first year, the additional credits will be transferred to your second year.

1.5.1 Seminars and workshops over the academic year

The academic year is divided into three terms, running from early October to early June. In addition, the department offers a September programme of introductory and preparatory courses, which are mainly for first-year researchers.

In the first two terms, 20-credit seminars meet on a weekly basis for a minimum of ten weeks. Throughout the academic year, but most frequently in the third term, there are workshops on particular topics (often methods) that are typically intensive (two to three days) and of shorter duration (mostly 10 hours, equalling 10 credits), although some workshops too are of seminar-length. The workshops are sometimes given by invited speakers from other universities. Further intensive courses and workshops are offered as needed and some researchers go to summer schools. The EUI encourages interdisciplinary teaching. Seminars can therefore be offered jointly with professors from other departments in the Institute. Colloquia organised by each professor with their supervisees provide spaces for discussion of research design and problems.

1.5.2 The September programme

The objective of the September programme is to offer preparatory courses for first-year researchers that will support them in the doctoral training that follows. In addition to the September activities offered by other units at the EUI as well as other introductory events, the SPS September programme consists of the compulsory Accademia Fiesolana and three optional preparatory workshops.

Accademia Fiesolana is an introductory departmental seminar and is compulsory for all first-year researchers. Its objective is to introduce you to the broad and pluriform research done in the department.

The objectives of the three workshops are to prepare researchers for courses offered later in the programme and to brush up on some basic skills that researchers may need during their studies. They are offered as intensive one-week-long courses (for exact venues and timeslots please consult the [webpage](#)).

12 – 21 September 2023, [Accademia Fiesolana](#) (Compulsory to all first-year researchers)

25 – 29 September 2023, Preparatory workshops (more information available on the [SPS Seminar and Teaching webpage](#), under 'September programme')

(Recommended for all first year researchers)

10:00 – 12:00 Mathematics for Political and Social Scientists

13:00 – 15:00 Introduction to R

15:00 – 17:00 Introduction to Qualitative Methods – Philosophy and Ethics, Interviews and Ethnography

Research Practicum – Introductory two seminar sessions on 12 and 22 September 2023.

[Check the full syllabus.](#)

The Centre for Academic Literacies and Languages (CALL) offers English Academic Literacies & Italian Language courses to support you both in your departmental work and in living in Italy. You will receive an invitation to enrol in one of the SPS Research Writing (Recommended) and

Academic Presentations (Optional) preessional courses running on **Monday, Tuesday, Friday mornings from 11 – 22 September 2023**. From mid-October the SPS Research writing course is on Wednesday mornings. For more details see the [English Academic Literacies webpage](#). You may start learning Italian intensively in September or less intensively in mid-October. Courses run throughout the year. For more details see the [Italian webpage](#). Other academic literacies and language courses and workshops can be found on the [CALL webpages](#).

1.5.3 Compulsory seminars

The programme has two compulsory methods seminars. Researchers must take a seminar in qualitative as well as in quantitative methods. These seminars must be taken during the first two years of the programme.

Introduction to Qualitative Methods runs in the first term and is the course in qualitative methods mandatory to all researchers. Researchers who have little or no previous experience with qualitative methods are strongly advised to take *Introduction to Qualitative Methods – Philosophy and Ethics, Interview and Ethnography* in September.

Researchers can choose between three seminars to fulfill their requirement for taking a seminar in quantitative methods. Each of these seminars runs in the Fall. *Introduction to Quantitative Methods* is aimed at researchers who have no or little prior experience with statistics and quantitative methods, or who may want to brush up on these skills. *Intermediate Quantitative Methods* is meant for those who have already taken courses in quantitative methods previously, and it can be taken also by those who have taken an introductory quantitative methods course at the EUI. Finally, those who have extensive prior training in statistics and quantitative methods and want to learn more can also take *Introduction to Econometrics and Regression* taught in the Economics department.

In addition, researchers must take at least one of the four field seminars (Sociology", "Comparative Politics", "Public Policy and Institutions", "International Relations") during their first year. For admission to year two, researchers must pass one field assessment in their first year, the preparation for which may involve additional reading. There are four field assessments, corresponding to the four field seminars. Second year researchers can also take field seminars for credit as an elective, without having to take the corresponding field assessment. First-year researchers can also take a second field seminar for credit as an elective, without having to take the corresponding field assessment.

1.5.4 Methods training

In addition to the compulsory methods seminars, SPS offers more advanced and specialized training in both quantitative and qualitative methods. Part of this training is offered as elective methods courses in the first or second term, while the rest is offered in the form of workshops in the third term, in the spring. We recommend that you take the compulsory methods courses before proceeding to the more advanced and specialized ones. You can also consider methods courses taught in the other departments or as part of the CIVICA consortium (see below). If SPS and the EUI cannot offer training in some methods, a summer school can be an option.

1.5.5 Seminars given in the first and second terms

For full seminar outlines please consult:

<https://www.eui.eu/en/academic-units/political-and-social-sciences/seminars-and-teaching>

First Term: October - December 2023*

* Seminars resume on 2 October 2023 (unless otherwise specified). Registrations open in August and close End of September

| Field Seminars | Title |
|--|---|
| M. GOLDEN & S. HIX | Comparative Politics |
| S. GUZZINI | International Relations |
| J. HARKONEN & A. VAN DE RIJT & H. VAN DE WERFHORST | Sociology |
| A. HEMERIJCK & E. IMMERGUT | Public Policy and Institutions |
| Methods Seminars | Title |
| J. CHECKEL | Introduction to Qualitative Methods |
| A. VAN DE RIJT & F. KOSTELKA | Intermediate Quantitative Methods |
| J. DI COCCO | Introduction to Quantitative Methods |
| M. GOLDEN | Research Practicum |
| Research Seminars | Title |
| A. HEMERIJCK & W. SCHELKLE | Crisis, what crisis? Comparative research into hard policy problems |
| S. HOFMANN | Europe and the World (1st and 2nd term) |
| Workshops | Title |
| HEMERIJCK & S. HIX | Prospectus Workshop (15/11 + 10/01) |

Second Term: January - March 2024*

* Seminars resume on 8 January 2024 (unless otherwise specified). Registrations open Mid October and close Mid December.

| Methods Seminars | Title |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| M. GOLDEN | Research Practicum |
| E. DINAS | Causal Inference |
| Research Seminars | Title |

| J. CHECKEL | Foundations of Political & Social Science: Philosophy, Theory and Ethics |
|------------------------------------|--|
| S. GUZZINI | Power |
| S. HIX | Replicating Research in Political Science |
| S. HOFMANN | Europe and the World (1 st and 2 nd term) |
| S. HOFMANN | The history and politics of order-making |
| E. IMMERGUT | Institutionalist theory course |
| W. SCHEKLE | Reading course on big structures, large processes and huge comparisons |
| H. VAN DE WERFORST | Economic Inequalities and Their Effects on Society |
| Whole year seminar series | |
| Title | |
| E. DINAS & F. KOSTELKA & M. GOLDEN | Professionalization and Disciplinary Ethics (<i>no credits</i>) |

One of these year's innovations is the launching of a Professionalization seminar series, which will introduce SPS researchers to the norms and ethics of our disciplines and provide skills for their preparation in the job market. This seminar series runs once per month throughout the academic year, is co-taught by Professors Dinas, Golden and Kostelka, and is neither compulsory nor does it provide academic credits.

1.5.6 Seminar attendance requirements

The requirements for 'satisfactory participation' are established by each professor for their courses, and comprise a combination of frequency of attendance and evidence of adequate performance (which in some cases involve short presentations). There will be compulsory registration of attendance at each seminar session for all seminars. In case of absence you must send a written justification (if feasible, before the session) to the seminar instructor and the organising assistant. **In order to meet the attendance requirement of a given seminar/workshop, you must not miss more than 20% of the total number of sessions.**

1.5.7 Seminars taken in other EUI departments

Researchers can count attendance at these courses towards their minimum requirements provided that the SPS Director of Graduate Studies and the professor giving the course agree, and provided of course that they satisfy the attendance requirements of that course. It is the responsibility of the researcher to request a written confirmation from the relevant professor in the other department that the seminar has been followed and can be credited. Such confirmation is to be sent together

with the agreement of the Director of Graduate Studies to the supervisor's assistant and to the SPS Departmental Coordinator, Ms Aurélie Boursier.

1.5.8 Courses taken outside the EUI

In some cases, researchers may want to substitute courses taken at other universities for our seminar requirements. This may happen, for example, when researchers go as visiting students to other universities or are on a stage and attend courses at a university near the location of the visit. Others may attend summer schools.

In addition, SPS researchers can benefit from course offerings by partner universities of the CIVICA – The European University of Social Sciences (<https://www.civica.eu/>) consortium. Many of the CIVICA courses are offered online or in hybrid format and can complement the courses offered by SPS and other EUI departments.

Researchers attending courses at other universities or summer schools may count their attendance towards their seminar requirement, provided they gain prior approval from the Director of Graduate Studies. Researchers must ensure that their supervisor and the professor giving the course in the other university agree, and they must satisfy the attendance requirements of that course. It is the responsibility of the supervisor to confirm this last point and to obtain a short report from the colleague at the other university. Such a report is to be sent together with the approval of the Director of Graduate Studies to the supervisor's assistant and to the Departmental Coordinator, Ms Aurélie Boursier. If in doubt, consult the Director of Graduate Studies.

As a rule, courses taught at the PhD level by the CIVICA partners can be credited with 10 and 20 credits awarded for courses corresponding to (a minimum of) 10 and 20 classroom teaching hours, respectively. Similar calculus will be applied to PhD-level courses taken at universities that not part of CIVICA as well as summer schools. However, in the latter cases more discretion will be applied and therefore it is particularly important to have your supervisor's support as well as prior approval from the Director of Graduate Studies. In some cases, courses taught at the MA level can also be credited. Getting credits for such courses is, however, subject to even stronger discretion and will need to be particularly well motivated and supported by your supervisor.

In general, short courses taken in other EUI departments or outside the EUI are not credited as workshops and cannot be counted towards the SPS minimum requirements.

1.6 Calendar and researchers' deadlines 2023-2024

For the latest update of the Calendar of Departmental activities and meetings, please check the SPS Academic Calendar:

<https://www.eui.eu/DepartmentsAndCentres/PoliticalAndSocialSciences/RulesForms/SPSCalendar>

Please check the updated list of deadlines on the website:

<https://www.eui.eu/Documents/Intranet/SPS/SPS-Deadlines.pdf>

1.7 Residence requirements and leaves of absence

In accordance with the Institute rules, research students on grant must reside in Florence during term time, unless duly authorised. Students may, nonetheless, be absent from the Institute for certain periods of time and for different purposes.

Authorisation requirements:

- Up to 30 days: Written authorisation of the supervisor and in the case of a research mission, authorization of the mission on the [online platform](#);
- More than 30 days ("Leave of Absence with or without grant"): written authorisation of the Department, and the permission of the Entrance Board. The request should specify the reason for the absence, place(s) and date(s), and be sent via e-mail to SPS.HeadOfDept@EUI.eu with the supervisor and the Departmental Coordinator Ms. Aurélie Boursier in copy. Requests should be sent well in advance the start of the leave and at least two weeks before the next Departmental Meeting (check the [SPS Academic calendar](#)).

Leaves of absence can be requested for different reasons, including missions, exchanges and research visits, parental leave, medical grounds and duty of care, research assistantsups, stages and internships. For more information, see Chapter 12 of the Academic Rules and Regulations:

<https://www.eui.eu/Documents/ServicesAdmin/DeanOfStudies/EUI-RulesRegs.pdf>

For more information on leaves of absence and intermissions as well as on the procedures to be followed at the SPS Department, please consult the SPS Missions and Research Expenses Guidelines for Researchers.:

<https://www.eui.eu/Documents/DepartmentsCentres/SPS/RulesForms/New-SPS-Mission-and-Research-Expense-Guidelines.pdf>

Appendix 1:

<https://www.eui.eu/Documents/DepartmentsCentres/SPS/RulesForms/Forms/APPENDIX-I.pdf>

1.8 Working groups

A number of researcher-led working groups have been established in the Department. This is an initiative the Department encourages and supports. However, if you wish to organise a working group, please note that:

Each group should have a liaison professor. Their role would not be to interfere in any way with the group's work, but just to be aware of the group's activities and priorities. The assistant to that professor would then be responsible for room booking.

[Working groups](#) should set up webpages and their own mailing lists, so that researchers in SPS and other departments can be informed about the upcoming events. These can be linked to the Department's webpage.

1.9 Hybrid / online teaching

Researchers are required to be present in Florence during the academic year (see [Section 1.7](#)). The department strives to conduct teaching of all seminars and workshops and supervision fully in-person, on location, except in this situation:

If an SPS course or workshop is offered on CIVICA, it will be taught in hybrid, to allow students from partner universities to attend without travel. In these circumstances, EUI students are by default expected to attend in-person, unless the instructor has made different arrangements.

2. FOR FIRST-YEAR RESEARCHERS

Upon arrival, we urge you to open your EUI e-mail account as soon as possible since the SPS Department will communicate with you mainly by e-mail.

2.1 Introductory meetings

7 September 2023, 18:00-20:00, Lower Loggia and Library Gardens

Welcome drinks for new SPS Researchers, Fellows and Visitors

8 September 2023, 15:15-16:15, Theatre

Introductory/Q&A session for new SPS researchers with the SPS Head of Department and Director of Graduate Studies

18 October 2023, 15:00-17:00

Walking tour in Florence organised by EUI4U for new SPS researchers. The meeting point is at 15:00 at Palazzo Buontalenti, where the School of Transnational Governance is located (Via Camillo Cavour, 65a).

2.2 Seminar attendance and the seminars overview

First-year researchers must remain full-time in Florence to fulfil their academic requirements. These requirements take two forms: attendance at seminars and other teaching activities, and reading and planning around the area of the research topic.

The SPS teaching year is divided into three terms, running from October to December, from January to March, and from April until the end of June. For first-year researchers, the year begins already in September with intensive language and other preparatory courses. In the first two terms, there is a programme of seminars organised by the Department, each running for ten weeks at two hours per week, and another programme organised by the Institute's Centre for [Academic Literacies and Languages](#) (CALL). In addition to Italian, German, Spanish, & French language courses, CALL's programme includes a once-weekly Research Writing course prepared to support your writing in the first year.

During their first year, researchers must take one of the four **field seminars** ("Sociology", "Comparative Politics", "Public Policy and Institutions", "International Relations") taking place during the 1st term. There will be an assessment after each course. Passing this assessment will be a requirement to be admitted to the second year of the PhD programme. Second-year students and first-year students who already take this assessment for another field course are exempted from the assessment.

In the third term the language courses continue as before, and the Departmental programme comprises various activities, such as specialised workshops and colloquia (some of these will take place in the 2nd term). Specialised workshops are shorter in duration than seminars and concentrated in a few days (two or three days typically, for a total of 10 hours). They are mostly on research methods. Researchers can also organize bottom-up workshops in coordination with a professor and with the support of the Department. These bottom-up workshops are intended to make possible greater responsiveness to individual researchers' needs that have been identified earlier in the year. It is important that researchers remain in Florence during the third term.

You are required to show satisfactory participation for a **minimum of 110 hours/credits** in seminars and/or workshops (one full seminar counts for 20 hours, one specialised workshop typically counts for 10 hours), in addition to any required language training. Normally, you will take both substantive

and methods seminars in each of the first two terms plus further specialised workshops in the third term. **Any variation from this pattern must be approved by the Director of Graduate Studies and communicated to the Departmental Coordinator, Ms Aurélie Boursier.**

Researchers who fail to reach the minimum of 110 hours/credits may be refused admission to the second year or required to take extra seminars/workshops during that year to achieve the level required. **Please verify your credits carefully with your supervisor's assistant no later than Wednesday 12 June 2024 (before the last Departmental Meeting).**

In addition to the regular seminars, professors organize professorial colloquia for researchers working in their particular fields. Attendance at these colloquia is strongly recommended.

Researchers need to discuss with their supervisor whether they need to take English Academic Literacies courses, which are obligatory for those conditionally admitted with a requirement to improve their English language skills.

Additionally, courses in English academic writing, presentation skills are **strongly recommended**.

2.3 The thesis prospectus

On 24 May 2024 first-year researchers must send their thesis prospectus to their supervisors and the Departmental Coordinator Aurélie Boursier electronically. This constitutes a major contribution towards development of the thesis and a satisfactory prospectus is essential for passage to the second year.

We strongly encourage researchers to share at least one version of the prospectus with their supervisor(s) well before the deadline so that any major problems can already be addressed and researchers can at a minimum incorporate one round of supervisor comments before its formal assessment by supervisor(s) and a second reader.

The prospectus is appraised by the supervisor and a second reader from the SPS faculty, randomly assigned by the Department. The Director of Studies is given the responsibility for the procedure.

The goal of the prospectus is to provide a clear and focused presentation of your research. It provides the answers to the following questions: What do you want to study? Why? How do you plan to go about it?

The prospectus is similar to a driving license test, where people are asked to do all sorts of things that they do not necessarily do in their every-day driving. It may feel as something you cannot use as is elsewhere, but it is important for us as a tool of assessing whether you can write an academic thesis of acceptable standards. Therefore, we will not ask you to revise it even if we disagree with some of the things we read or have objections or suggestions about how to proceed, insofar as we believe that the current version showcases the quality needed for a successful thesis completion. Hence, being asked to revise the prospectus means there is concern among faculty about the researcher's ability to succeed in the programme.

2.3.1 The structure of the Thesis Prospectus

The Thesis Prospectus is intended to set the framework for the research project, regardless of whether the intention, at this stage, is to produce a single manuscript or a collection of papers. We understand that research plans evolve, and projects that start with one intended structure may end up with another. Irrespective of the intended structure, at this stage, the Thesis Prospectus should include several key elements.

The prospectus should begin by stating the central problem or puzzle that the research will address. This problem should be presented as a question or related set of questions to which the research will attempt to find answers.

Your research problem and questions should aim to make a contribution to a recognised body of knowledge or research field. At the same time, they should be manageable within the scope of a four-year research project. One means of testing the manageability of the research questions is by understanding the range of possible answers, and this is why it is important to include one's ideas about what these answers might be.

The prospectus should include a brief discussion of the existing research (the 'state of the art') on the topic. Has this topic been treated before, and how does the approach of the research improve on or differ from earlier and existing approaches? Is it because of new evidence or because of a new argument? The purpose of this section should be to explain the contribution your thesis will make to the literature – not to simply demonstrate that you have read everything possible.

In empirical fields, the prospectus should include a discussion of the proposed research design/empirical strategy for answering the questions or the testing of theoretical ideas. In more theoretical or conceptual work, there need not be formal hypotheses, but thinking of the project in that way can be helpful when drafting the prospectus. The prospectus should also explain the rationale of the case selection if cases are to form the basis for the investigation.

If the intention, at this stage, is to deliver a collection of papers, the discussion of the existing literature, the initial theoretical ideas, and the research design/empirical strategy should focus on the first of these papers. In this case the researcher should think of the prospectus as (i) a well-crafted research problem and detailed research plan for the first paper plus (ii) an outline of at least two more papers, but these outlines can be very brief, as the expectation is that the plans for these papers will evolve over time.

If the intention is to deliver a single manuscript, the prospectus should include a chapter outline. As the researcher prepares the prospectus they should keep in mind that: (1) the final thesis manuscript or collection of papers should not be more than 100,000 words, and, depending on the type of research, should not be less than 60,000 words, and (2) the dissertation must contain at least one solo-authored chapter plus at least one chapter that is not co-authored with an EUI professor.

The prospectus **must not exceed 6,000 words**. This word count excludes footnotes, bibliography and annexes. The prospectus must include the word count on the cover page.

Note that the department offers a Prospectus workshop (check the exact dates on the [SPS Seminars and Teaching webpage](#)) that provides further support and in which you can ask questions about structure and content.

You may request text revision from the Centre for Academic Literacies and Languages. See the [Text Revision webpages](#) for the procedure.

Alternatively or in addition to text revision you may request an Individual Consultation with one of the Academic Literacies teachers at any time.

2.3.2 The first submission of the prospectus

The prospectus is assessed by the researcher's supervisor(s) (1st reader) and a randomly assigned professor (2nd reader) from the department. If you have two supervisors, the main supervisor's assessment becomes the supervisors' collective assessment should the two disagree. The second reader will be anonymous until their report has been discussed in the June department meeting. The second reader cannot be your co-supervisor.

Supervisors and 2nd readers should send their Assessment reports to the Departmental coordinator Aurélie Boursier **by 14 June 2024** in view of the Departmental meeting on 19 June 2024. Researchers will receive their assessment reports from the Departmental coordinator following the Departmental meeting.

If the prospectus is approved by both readers and all other first year requirements have been fulfilled (**please verify this carefully with your supervisor's assistant no later than Wednesday, 12 June 2024**), the researcher will be awarded the academic degree of "Master of Research" and admittance to the second year will be granted by the Entrance Board. The researcher will be expected to begin developing the prospectus into the thesis.

If one or both of the readers request a revision of the prospectus, the Department will give the researcher the opportunity to submit the revised version of the prospectus by **Saturday, 31 August 2024** (see [Point 2.3.3](#) below). The decision on admission to the 2nd year and award of the academic degree of "Master of Research" will be deferred to September 2024.

In case both readers recommend the prospectus be rejected without an opportunity to revise, the Department will not recommend the admission to the second year. The research will be offered the opportunity to complete a substantial master thesis of approximately 15,000 words that is to be submitted within two months after the decision of the Entrance Board on 27 June 2024. If the Master's thesis is approved by the two readers, the researcher will leave the EUI with the academic title of "Master of Research".

The researcher has the right to appeal against decisions of the department regarding their prospectus, but only on procedural grounds (see also Academic Rules and Regulations, chapter 17:

<http://www.eui.eu/Documents/ServicesAdmin/DeanOfStudies/EUI-RulesRegs.pdf>).

2.3.3 The resubmission of the prospectus

The revised version of the prospectus is assessed by the same two readers who have assessed the first submitted version of the prospectus. Thus, the researcher is strongly encouraged to speak to both readers on how to improve their work in view of revising the prospectus.

If the prospectus is approved by both readers and all other first year requirements have been fulfilled (**please verify this carefully with your supervisor's assistant**), the researcher will be awarded the academic degree of "Master of Research" and admittance to the second year will be granted by the Entrance Board by the end of September. The researcher will be expected to begin developing the prospectus into the thesis.

If both readers reject the revised prospectus, the researcher will not be admitted to the second year. Instead they will be offered the opportunity to complete a substantial master thesis of approximately 15,000 words that is to be submitted within two months after the decision of the Entrance Board on 19 September 2024. If the Master's thesis is approved by the two readers, the researcher will leave the EUI with the academic title of "Master of Research".

In case of disagreement between the two readers, they will be asked to confer to determine whether views can be reconciled. If the views of the two readers still differ, the Director of Graduate Studies will appoint a third reader (from among the members of SPS) to review the revised prospectus. If the third reader rejects the revised prospectus, the Department will be asked to make a collective assessment (see below). If the third reader approves the prospectus, their assessment will be shared with the first two readers and the dissenting reader will be given the opportunity to revise their assessment. If the reader's negative assessment of the revised prospectus still stands, the Department will be asked to make a collective assessment.

In the special case of collective assessment of a revised prospectus, SPS professors should in their assessment take into account the quality of the revised prospectus as it stands, and the comments made by the previous readers on the revised prospectus. Professors will individually send their assessments to the Head of Department (SPS.HeadOfDept@EUI.eu). These reports serve as input for the deliberation in the restricted session of the Departmental meeting. Members of the Department present in the restricted session of the Departmental meeting are invited to cast their votes (secret voting) on the resubmitted prospectus.

If the prospectus is rejected by a majority of the votes cast (blank votes count as abstentions and will not be taken into account for determining the result of the vote) the researcher will not be admitted to the second year. The Head of Department informs the researcher about the negative outcome of the Departmental decision, together with the rationale for the collective assessment, based on the discussion in the restricted session of the Departmental meeting. Also, the researcher will receive a compilation of the reports that served as input for the deliberation. They will be offered the opportunity to complete a substantial master thesis of approximately 15,000 words that is to be submitted within two months after the decision of the Entrance Board on 19 September 2024. If the Master's thesis is approved by the two readers, the researcher will leave the EUI with the academic title of "Master of Research".

If the prospectus is accepted by the majority of the votes cast or in the case of a tie between yes- and no-votes, the researcher will be awarded the academic degree of "Master of Research", and admittance to the second year will be granted by the Entrance Board by the end of September

The researcher has the right to appeal against decisions of the department regarding their prospectus, but only on procedural grounds (see also Academic Rules and Regulations, chapter 17:

<http://www.eui.eu/Documents/ServicesAdmin/DeanOfStudies/EUI-RulesRegs.pdf>).

2.4 Admission to subsequent years of the doctoral programme

The doctoral program at the EUI aims to promote academic excellence and original research. Thus, admission to the second and third year of the doctoral program is not automatic, but rather dependent on the positive assessment of the researcher's work and thesis prospectus. Selection at the end of the first year will be particularly thorough since it is at this stage that you must provide a fully worked-out plan for your dissertation for the following three years.

Please note that first year researchers are not permitted to go on research missions or spend periods as visiting students at other universities during the three teaching terms. If you wish to go on mission over the Summer, the final approval of your mission and mission funding will take place at the end of June, provided admission to the 2nd year is confirmed by the Entrance Board in its meeting on 27 June 2024.

For more information on missions funding, please consult to [Section 7.3](#) below.

3. FOR SECOND-YEAR RESEARCHERS

3.1 The research

During the second year the emphasis of your work shifts from following courses – even though these will continue – towards carrying out the research plan which you outlined in the prospectus. At some point during the year, usually in the autumn, it is common for researchers to experience some disappointment and even anxiety that the plan that seemed so clear at the time the prospectus was passed still seems full of unresolved problems. Be willing to talk about these difficulties with your supervisor(s), and agree upon a common plan for research for the forthcoming year before the end of the first term. This plan will help to shape discussions as the challenging task of doctoral research begins.

3.2 Seminar attendance

During this year you are required to show satisfactory participation for a minimum of **60 hours in seminars and/or workshops**, in addition to any required language training. This will normally mean one seminar in each of the first two terms, plus a further 20 hours of workshops/seminars (again plus language teaching). Specialised workshops will usually last ten hours each. In case you did not do so already in your first year, you should now complete your compulsory methods training by taking the compulsory courses to quantitative and/or qualitative methods.

If you are on mission or completing a *stage* during one term, it is possible to make up that term's seminar requirements during the rest of the year, with the permission of the Director of Graduate Studies. In addition, second year researchers will normally attend the colloquia organized by their supervisors.

The requirements for 'satisfactory participation' and attendance are as set out for the first year (see [Section 2.2](#)).

During your second year, you will probably continue to have some academic writing training with CALL. You will also probably continue with language training particularly if you wish to carry out research on a country in whose language you are not fully expert (see [Point 7.2.1](#)).

3.3 The second-year researchers' presentations

A key aspect of the second year of studies is the compulsory "Research Presentation", usually organised at the End of April. This shall provide a key opportunity to review the research progress since the thesis prospectus. The dates for this year are **22 - 24 April 2024**.

The Department will form panels of researchers and professors, along with Max Weber Fellows or Visiting Fellows who have related research interests. Each panel meets for about half a day, during which each researcher makes a presentation of the state of their research to date. You will have one hour for your presentation (including discussion time).

You must send a **brief summary** (4-5 pages) of what you will present to the organising assistant and to the Departmental Coordinator, circa two weeks before the presentation, who will then circulate it to the panel members (the precise deadline will be communicated to you in due time). The purpose of this summary/outline is to present the core elements of 25% of your thesis. There are no special requirements regarding its format (bullet points vs. paragraphs). In addition, researchers may also submit the corresponding written material of the thesis (e.g. the chapter one will present on) to provide additional context for those providing feedback on the presentation.

Other researchers are fully welcome and encouraged to attend and take part in discussions at panels in addition to those for which they are formally listed. First year researchers will find these presentations particularly useful. The researchers are also encouraged to invite other researchers, fellows, visiting fellows or professors to their presentation.

3.4 Missions, exchanges, research funding

For full details of how to take advantage of these various opportunities, please refer to [Section 7.3](#) below. Please note that 2nd year researchers are not permitted to take extended leaves (beyond 30 days) until they have completed their compulsory requirements.

3.5 End of the year assessment

Satisfactory achievement of a doctoral thesis depends on a willingness to keep writing up material as one goes along. Researchers who plan on spending three years 'doing' research and then a few months 'writing it up' are inviting disaster, as one day they will face a vast and unmanageable mass of research notes or analyses which they must somehow start to get into some kind of order. To encourage researchers to develop the initially difficult practice of 'writing as they go', we have set a number of compulsory deadlines for submitting written material. The prospectus is one; the second-year presentations are another; a third is a requirement that must be met if researchers are to pass into the third year:

By Friday, 23 February 2024, the second-year researchers must send to their supervisors, with the Departmental Coordinator, Aurélie Boursier in copy, an electronic version of their written work amounting to **at least 25% of their dissertations** – though this material may well be in draft form. Estimating what amounts to 25% of a dissertation yet to be written may be done on the basis of a tentative chapter structure that you discuss with your supervisor. In case of paper-based dissertation, 25% is typically considered a mature version of the first research paper. Supervisors are required to send their assessment reports to the Departmental Coordinator by 8 March 2023. Researchers will receive the reports from the Departmental Coordinator by Friday 15 March, following the March Departmental meeting.

If your 25% submission is rejected, then regardless of whether you are encouraged to revise and resubmit your 25% of thesis, you have an opportunity to revise and resubmit by the re-submission deadline of Friday, 24 May 2024, in order for the Department to make a recommendation on your admission to the 3rd year at its meeting on 19 June 2024.

If your revised 25% submission is again rejected, the department may invite a second "revise and resubmit" by 31 August 2024.

In the case of a negative supervisor's assessment of the re-submission of the 25% of thesis without an invitation to revise and resubmit a second time, the Director of Graduate Studies will set up a committee of three Professors to examine the re-submission. The recommendation of the Committee will be submitted to the Department at its meeting on 19 June for discussion and approval. The Committee may recommend a second "revise and resubmit" by 31 August 2024, against the supervisor's recommendation, or concur with the supervisor by refusing admission to the 3rd year. In case of a refusal of admission the researcher concerned has an opportunity to appeal to the Institute's Appeals Committee, but only on non-academic grounds of procedure. It is not possible to challenge the departmental professors' view of the academic quality of the work. Full details of the appeal procedure, which applies to both June failures and failures of revised work in September, are specified in Chapter 17 of the Academic Rules and Regulations.

<https://www.eui.eu/documents/servicesadmin/deanofstudies/eui-rulesregs.pdf>

4. FOR THIRD YEAR RESEARCHERS

4.1 The research

During the third year you are still welcome to participate in seminars, and to make presentations at them, but there are no compulsory seminar requirements. You may find the various departmental and interdepartmental working groups particularly interesting at this stage, and you may want to hone your presentation skills and get feedback on your research by offering to give presentations in such groups.

You are now working full-time on research, and you will sometimes be away on missions or taking part in other activities. However, it remains essential to retain close contact with your supervisor, as problems and doubts will still certainly occur, and you will still need to be encouraged to keep writing as you go along. You will be invited to attend, and may be asked to present your work at the occasional colloquia organized by your supervisor with other researchers working in related areas. The Dean of Graduate Studies also organizes a third year progress survey and contacts researchers directly in relation to this.

4.2 Centre for Academic Literacies and Languages (CALL)

You may still have some academic literacies and language training needs. In the third year, Writers' Groups can be particularly useful to help you with peer feedback on your writing, as well as creating intermediary deadlines. For information on Writers' Groups please check:

<https://www.eui.eu/ServicesAndAdmin/LanguageCentre/Languages/English/Academic-Writers-Groups>

If the language you need to work on is not included amongst the CALL offer (English, French, German, Italian, and Spanish), CALL may be able to set up a course for you. Please check the page on Additional Languages:

<https://www.eui.eu/ServicesAndAdmin/LanguageCentre/Languages/AdditionalLanguages>

To book an individual consultation with any of the members of CALL, please check:

<https://www.eui.eu/ServicesAndAdmin/LanguageCentre/About-the-Language-Centre/People>

For information on correction and editing by the language centre please check:

<https://www.eui.eu/ServicesAndAdmin/LanguageCentre/Other-services/Text-Revision-Editing-Service/ThesisEditingProcedure>

4.3 Missions, exchanges, research funding

You will be eligible for departmental funding for missions and research expenses during the third year, although you should not plan longer research missions during the fourth year, when you will be required to stay in Florence to receive your completion grant. We therefore encourage you to take advantage of missions and exchanges as much as possible in your third year.

For more information, please refer to [Section 7.3](#) below.

4.4 The two-thirds requirement

By Friday, 24 May 2024, you have to submit to your supervisor(s) an electronic draft that covers two-thirds of the whole dissertation, with the Departmental Coordinator Aurélie Boursier in copy, and confirm at the same time whether you apply for the first installment of the 4th year completion grant. Supervisors should send their Assessment reports to the Departmental Coordinator by Friday, 14 June 2024 in view of the Departmental meeting on 19 June 2023. Upon this report, the Department will send a recommendation to the Entrance Board as regards the award of the first instalment of the fourth year completion grant. Researchers will receive the report from the Departmental coordinator following the Departmental meeting. Normally, your two-thirds submission will be read and evaluated by your supervisor (and your co-supervisor, if you have one). If you have only one supervisor, the Director of Graduate Studies may appoint a second reader if either your supervisor thinks that your submitted work may not meet the requirements, or if you yourself believe a second assessment of your work may be necessary.

If the manuscript you have submitted does not fulfil the two-thirds requirement, you will be given until **31 August 2024** to revise and complete your draft. If your draft is then accepted, you will receive the first instalment of the fourth year completion grant (see [Section 5.1](#) below).

If you fail to re-submit by 31 August, or if what you submit is judged to fall below what is necessary to meet the two-thirds requirement, you will not receive the completion grant but can still work on completing your thesis without a grant. (See more on this below.)

Researchers who have suspended their status and grant through internships, illness or other absences will terminate their third years at a later point in the year. Their deadlines for the submission of work will be adjusted to the pattern of their registration. See full details:

<https://www.eui.eu/Documents/ServicesAdmin/DeanOfStudies/EUI-RulesRegs.pdf>.

5. FOR FOURTH-YEAR RESEARCHERS

The SPS Department has a good overall PhD completion rate. However, the EUI also aims to improve the rate of completion within four years through a system of incentives and sanctions. In your fourth year at the EUI, you will experience the difficulties of finishing your project and considerable pressure to do so on time. Completing a book-scale academic work is often as difficult as starting it. In consultation with your supervisor, you need to make sure that there will be sufficient time for the final stages of revision and improving the style and language quality of your dissertation so that you can confidently defend it in front of a jury.

5.1 The fourth year completion grant

The transition from the third to the fourth year differs in several ways from previous admissions into the second and third year. During your first three years, you receive a national grant, which is in most cases paid by your home country's government. In your fourth year you can receive a EUI completion grant that is paid from the general EUI budget. At the end of the third year, the Department will not decide on whether you will be admitted into the fourth year, but on whether you are eligible for the EUI completion grant.

Researchers receiving grants for their studies at the Institute will be eligible for a completion grant for up to twelve months. If your two-thirds submission towards the end of your third year is accepted, you will receive the completion grant from the start of your fourth year. If you fail to submit two-thirds or if what you submit is not accepted as sufficient, you can still continue to write your dissertation. If your supervisor agrees six months before the end of your fourth year that the thesis is on track for completion, you may still receive the second instalment of the EUI completion grant from that time onwards.

The four-year period refers to 48 months of registration in our doctoral programme. Periods of suspension without grant are not counted. For these, the deadlines mentioned below will be adjusted accordingly. A condition of receiving a completion grant is that you be resident in Florence.

5.2 The second instalment of the completion grant

The second instalment of the completion grant, which is for six months, is payable once the supervisor and the researcher have agreed towards the end of the first instalment of the grant (i.e. between the 41st and 42nd month of registration – normally between the end of January and end of February) that a final draft of the thesis will be completed and submitted by the 48th month of registration. To this end, the supervisor and researcher will certify to the department and Entrance Board that the thesis is on track for completion by the end of the fourth year of registration. This will normally be carried out by mid-February.

If your supervisor does not agree that your thesis is on track for completion within the fourth year, then your completion grant will be suspended. Payment may be resumed as soon as your supervisor certifies that they expect that you will now be able to complete a final draft by the end of the fourth year. If you enter the fourth year without a grant, you may again become eligible for the second instalment of the completion grant. Your supervisor will again have to certify that you can still finish your dissertation on time. If by mid-year it is impossible to certify that the thesis is on track for completion by the end of the fourth year, such certification may be postponed to a later stage. As long as the certification occurs within the fourth year (i.e. within 48 months), the second instalment of the completion grant will be awarded. Of course, payment of the grant will be delayed in such a case. Eligibility for the second instalment of the grant ceases after 48 months of registration.

In cases where the supervisor and researcher cannot reach agreement on a joint certification to the department and Entrance Board within this period of 48 months, the Department will appoint a second reader. If the original decision is confirmed, the researcher loses the right to the second instalment of the grant but is entitled to appeal on non-academic grounds.

<http://www.eui.eu/Documents/ServicesAdmin/DeanOfStudies/EUI-RulesRegs.pdf> (see Chapter 8).

5.3 Missions

Researchers in receipt of the fourth year grant may apply for mission funding. Residing permanently in Florence is a condition for receiving the completion grant, so you cannot go on long research missions. Those who have already submitted a full draft are not eligible for research funding, fieldwork, exchanges and workshops, but may apply for funding to present their work at conferences. For more information on the procedure to follow, please consult [Point 7.3.1](#) below.

5.4 The final draft

A final draft of your thesis is the version that is accepted by your supervisor as ready to be sent to the jury. You are likely to be asked by jury members to revise parts of your thesis, so the final draft is not necessarily identical to the version that you will defend. Again, your supervisor will be the person to judge whether a manuscript that you submit is a final draft that can be sent to the jury. Our rules permit researchers, however, to send a draft to the jury and to defend their thesis even if the supervisor does not agree that it is ready to be defended. A submission without support from your supervisor (or from the Department in case of appeal) does not make you eligible for the completion grant.

If you have not continuously received a completion grant because you had failed to meet the two-thirds requirement or the 4th year certification requirement, then you must submit a final draft by the end of month 48 of registration in order to retroactively receive the second instalment of your completion grant. If you fail to submit a final draft on time, you will not receive any part of the completion grant. You will find more extensive guidelines for the preparation of the thesis for defence on our departmental website at:

<https://www.eui.eu/Documents/Intranet/SPS/SPSThesisGuidelines.pdf>

<http://www.eui.eu/Documents/DepartmentsCentres/SPS/RulesForms/EUI%20Ph.D.%20defence%20workflow.pdf>

5.5 Language correction and plagiarism check

If your thesis needs language correction, remember to consult the Centre for Academic Literacies and Languages (CALL) in good time and to discuss this with your supervisor, who will have to assess whether language correction of your final draft is needed deadlined and how extensive this correction has to be. Language correction, if needed, will normally be carried out after submission of your final draft and before this draft is sent to the external members of the examination board. You should therefore include the time necessary for correction when discussing with your supervisor the timing of your defence.

Note that theses can be submitted for corrections/editing on the condition that the researchers who have been required to take English writing classes or tutorials have successfully followed these classes. Participation will be certified by CALL and recorded by the department.

For guidelines on thesis correction see your supervisor's assistant and consult:

<https://www.eui.eu/ServicesAndAdmin/LanguageCentre/Other-services/Text-Revision-Editing-Service/ThesisEditingProcedure>

The final thesis draft submitted for defence must first be submitted to a plagiarism check. You will submit your final draft to [Turnitin](#) and your supervisor will then receive both the original and an annotated version of your draft that shows how much and which text is also found in other sources in the Turnitin database. Please see this document explaining Turnitin submission:

<http://www.eui.eu/Documents/ServicesAdmin/DeanOfStudies/ResearchEthics/ProcedureforResearchers.pdf>.

5.6 The thesis jury and the defence

If you have made good progress, before the end of the final year your supervisor will establish your thesis jury.

When your final draft has been language corrected (if necessary) and approved by your supervisor, it will be sent to the other members of your jury. They will then be asked to send their reports within two months. If the reports ask for minor or major revisions, you will have to carry these out before submitting a final version of the thesis for defence. You also need to respond to questions and critiques raised by the jury and explain in detail the changes that you have made. In case of requests for major revisions, you have a maximum time of six months to carry these out.

For details on the composition of the jury, the jury reports and the procedure of the defence, please refer to chapter 9 of the Academic Rules and Regulations:

<http://www.eui.eu/Documents/ServicesAdmin/DeanOfStudies/EUI-RulesRegs.pdf>.

One of the best ways to prepare for your defence is to attend the defences – as they are public – of your fellow researchers. The Department strongly encourages you to do so!

6. AFTER THE FOURTH YEAR

6.1 Publication of the thesis

Article 9.13 of the Academic Rules states that:

Theses can be published on paper or in electronic format with an external publisher or in the open access electronic EUI repository. In the latter case, the copyright remains with the author. If the author decides not to agree to publication of the thesis in the EUI repository but fails to publish it with an external publisher within four years after the defence or has no firm indication of proximate publication, the EUI will automatically acquire the right to publish thesis in the EUI repository. These conditions shall be accepted by the author of the thesis in a signed agreement.

(<http://www.eui.eu/Documents/ServicesAdmin/DeanOfStudies/EUI-RulesRegs.pdf>)

Researchers are encouraged to use this option.

Thesis publication subsidy:

Where a researcher has a contract from a publisher to publish the thesis within 2 years of the defence, they may apply for a subsidy for the preparation of the text. Funds are limited and applications should be made to the Head of Department (SPS.HeadOfDept@EUI.eu).

Consult pages 60-61 of the [Corporate Visual Identity and Publications Manual](#).

6.2 Beyond five years

Researchers who have not submitted a final version of their thesis within five years of their matriculation lose their status and lose their right to defend their theses. In calculating the five years, periods of approved leave are taken into account.

For full details see the Academic Rules, and more specifically article 11.3:

<http://www.eui.eu/Documents/ServicesAdmin/DeanOfStudies/EUI-RulesRegs.pdf>.

7. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

7.1 Research ethics at the EUI

All doctoral researchers are bound by the EUI Code of Ethics in Academic Research as well as all other academic codes and regulations. For more information on the EUI Code of Ethics, please consult

<https://www.eui.eu/Documents/ServicesAdmin/DeanOfStudies/CodeofEthicsinAcademicResearch.pdf>

Consultation and involvement of the EUI Ethics Committee is always voluntary. Ethics reviews of research projects are conducted only at the explicit request of scholars needing an assessment of the ethical dimensions of a research project. Such requests typically emerge in anticipation of a condition imposed either by the funder of a research project or by a publisher.

The Ethics Committee does not conduct ex-post reviews for research that has already taken place or data collection that has already commenced. Please plan your requests for Ethics Reviews in good time before the start date of your research projects and your field work.

For more information about the procedure to request an Ethics Review, you can consult the web page of the Ethics Committee using the following link:

<https://www.eui.eu/ServicesAndAdmin/DeanOfStudies/Procedure-to-request-an-Ethics-Review-by-the-EUI-Ethics-Committee>.

7.2 Centre for Academic Literacies and Languages – courses and text revision service

7.2.1 Courses

Researchers who have been conditionally admitted without an English language certificate or with a level lower than C1 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages will be required to take English academic writing courses during their first and possibly also later years. These courses count among their requirements for admission into the subsequent year of the doctoral programme. Researchers who enrol for an academic literacies or language course must attend regularly. Certificates of attendance and/or progress reports are available on request at the end of the course. All information about learning languages and honing academic literacies skills at the EUI is available at:

<https://www.eui.eu/ServicesAndAdmin/LanguageCentre/Academic-Literacies-and-Language-Courses>

7.2.2 Correction Service

<https://www.eui.eu/ServicesAndAdmin/LanguageCentre/Other-services/Text-Revision-Editing-Service/EUI-Researchers-Text-Revision>

- Text revision is offered for the following:
- Departmental papers (max. 10 pages)
- Second-year chapters (max. 20 pages)
- Purpose statements, Teaching statements, Letters of application etc.
- Articles, conference papers, working papers, etc. can also be corrected internally, *at the discretion of the English Unit.*

If you want a revision of your whole paper, make a special request to the [Centre for or Academic Literacies and Languages \(CALL\)](#).

Final thesis drafts. Subsidies for language correction of thesis drafts will depend on an assessment of correction needs by the supervisor. For more information about thesis correction, please check: <https://www.eui.eu/ServicesAndAdmin/LanguageCentre/Other-services/Text-Revision-Editing-Service/ThesisEditingProcedure>

In order to use this service, researchers should have (i) followed at least 75% of an academic writing course where this has been specified, or (ii) been exempted from following academic writing courses. If you are unsure of your position in this regard, please check with CALL:

<http://www.eui.eu/ServicesAndAdmin/LanguageCentre/Index.aspx>

7.3 On missions, exchanges, research funding, etc.

7.3.1 Missions and research funding

For any kind of mission, regardless of the type of funding, researchers need to submit a **Mission Order Request** on the dedicated [online platform](#). Instructions can be found in the SPS Missions and Research Expenses Guidelines for Researchers (see below).

Please note that first year researchers are not permitted to go on research missions or spend periods as visiting students at other universities during the three teaching terms. If they wish to go on mission over the Summer, the final approval of the mission and mission funding will take place in the case the admission to the 2nd year is confirmed by the Entrance Board at the end of June.

Second year researchers are not granted permission for long term missions or leaves of absence until their completion of the compulsory requirements of their second year.

The Department has limited funds to support researchers' missions and research activities each calendar year. A researcher who wishes to apply for this funding should discuss it with their supervisor and follow the SPS Missions and Research Expenses Guidelines for Researchers:

<https://www.eui.eu/Documents/DepartmentsCentres/SPS/RulesForms/New-SPS-Mission-and-Research-Expense-Guidelines.pdf>

Please note that the above guidelines are valid for 2023 and that following a reform of SPS missions and research funding procedure, new guidelines will be made available for 2024.

7.3.2 Exchange Programmes and Traineeships

Exchange programmes

A number of exchange opportunities with various universities in Europe and in the US are available. For full details see the Academic Service's guidelines for Exchange Programmes:

[International Mobility \(contensis.com\)](#).

In order to be considered for any funding provided by the EUI through specific grants or Erasmus + funding, researchers who plan to go on an exchange (including self-organised exchanges) during the academic year 2024-2025 should apply to the Department by 1 December 2023. More information on the application is available here:

<https://www.eui.eu/ServicesAndAdmin/AcademicService/DoctoralProgramme/ExchangeProgrammes/Exchange-Programmes-for-Social-and-Political-Scientists>

Interested researchers are invited to attend an information session with EUI International Mobility Officer Thanasis Mourikis on Friday 20 October 2023 from 11:00 to 12:00 in Seminar room 2.

Traineeships

Information on traineeships opportunities are available here:

<https://www.eui.eu/en/services/academic-service/academic-professional-development/traineeships>

7.4 Small jobs and academic assistant/collaborator contracts

7.4.1 Small jobs

Small jobs, paid on an hourly basis, up to a maximum of 200 hours per academic year, may be carried out by all categories of researchers, including first- and second-year researchers. For the academic year 2023-2024, the hourly rate for such contracts is 16,50 EUR.

It should be noted that these small jobs do not fall under the category of research assistantships.

It constitutes good practice that the researcher consults the supervisor before accepting a small job contract.

7.4.2 Academic Assistant/Academic Collaborator Contracts

Third, fourth, and fifth-year researchers may accept contracts as academic collaborators (fixed period of three months at fixed thirtieths, 7/30, only one contract per academic year) or contracts as academic assistants (research, project or teaching assistantships up to eighteen months at 3/30 or higher, only one contract while active Ph.D. Status). If more than 7/30 a grant suspension is needed, the Academic Service needs to be consulted well in advance.

For this type of contracts, prior consent of the supervisor is required before a researcher may be contracted.

Overview – Types of contracts

| | | Small jobs | Academic Collaborator | Academic Assistant | | External collaborator |
|----------------|----------------------------------|------------|-----------------------|--------------------|-----------|-----------------------|
| | | | | up to 7/30 | over 7/30 | |
| Researcher | 1st year | OK | NO | NO | | NO |
| | 2nd year | OK | NO | NO | | NO |
| | 3rd year | OK | OK | OK | OK(*) | NO |
| | 4th year | OK | OK | OK | OK(*) | NO |
| | 5th year | OK | OK | OK | OK(*) | NO |
| Ex- Researcher | Thesis submitted and/or defended | NO | NO | OK | OK | OK |

(*) the Academic service should always be consulted beforehand.

Source: Overview of Administrative Procedures, June 2022

For more information or questions, please contact your supervisor's administrative contact.



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