

# PHD PROGRAM IN LAW APPLICATION - GUIDELINES

Thank you for the interest you have expressed in the [Doctoral program in Law](#).

Your application will be examined by a jury made up of [Sciences Po Law School](#) faculty. At the end of this examination, the jury will short list some candidates, recommend them to the executive committee of the Doctoral School for financial aid/support and take a final decision considering the committee deliberation.

The jury will meet twice a year in February and June. Be careful, students who want to be admitted in M1 and have obtained an undergraduate diploma in France shall pass an exam to be accepted in the master program. So please, check the [admissions calendar](#).

The jury would like to draw the candidates' attention to the special importance of writing a personal statement and a research project (cf. infra).

## Choice of Program

The academic requirements of the doctoral program in law of Sciences Po consist in the validation of 264 hours of pre-requisite courses and the defense of a doctoral thesis.

The program takes place in 3 or 5 years:

- ❖ It is therefore open to students holding a Bachelor's degree and in that case takes place over five years (master + PhD). **If you hold a Bachelor's degree**, you must choose the entry "PhD program (entry in 1<sup>st</sup> year)", then the master of Law within which you will carry out your doctoral curriculum.
- ❖ It is also open to students holding a Master's degree and in that case, takes place over 3 years (PhD). **If you hold a Master's degree**, you must fill out the form entitled "PhD program (entry in 3<sup>rd</sup> year)".

## The Admission File

- **Personal information**  
Complete this section
- **Correspondence**  
Complete this section
- **Academic Recommendations**  
In addition to academic recommendations (minimum two) by professors who are not members of the Sciences Po faculty, you can enclose, *following the same process*, a letter from a member of the faculty of Sciences Po who could become your principal supervisor (this letter is not compulsory).
- **Professional Recommendations**  
The only approved professional recommendations for this program are those associated with the academic world.
- **Academic Qualifications**  
It is mandatory to enclose (in the section « enclosed documents ») all detailed statements of grades since the High school diploma.
- **Academic/Research Credentials**  
This section allows you to add all elements that can help the jury get an idea of your ability to carry out research. We recommend that you join to the file all essays, articles, studies, reports, etc. that you have had the opportunity of writing and which seem relevant to you

- **Language of the Program**

The language of the program is either French or English. Fluency in just one of these languages is required.

The thesis is written in French or in English depending on the choice of the student.

- **Professional Experience or Internship**

This section does not need to be filled out unless you are entering the PhD program in M1.

- **Specific cover letter for the program in law**

*Letter signed by the Phd advisor: as mentioned above, this letter is not mandatory*

*Summery of your Phd/thesis proposal: this document is required.*

- **Section no. 1:** This section is the standard "personal statement" in which you describe your intellectual career and your aspirations, motivation to pursue a PhD, what you expect from this PhD, your long term projects. The letter will not be longer than 2000 words. We recommend that you consider this statement as a high priority; it is one of the essential elements for the jury, especially for students who enter in the first year.
- **Section no. 2:** The program is open to students who have never studied law and the fact no course work has been done in the legal field is in no way a criterion of selection for the jury. Knowledge about your previous academic career, self evaluation of your knowledge of law are however important elements to determine the extent of your academic requirements within the program that consists of 264 hours of pre-requisite doctoral courses.
- **Section no. 3:** This section allows you to provide the jury with all the elements that can help get an idea of your ability to pursue a research track. We recommend that you enclose in the file all essays, articles, studies, reports, etc. that you have had the opportunity to write and which seem relevant to you.
- **Section no.4 "name of supervisor":** The principal supervisor has to be a member of Sciences Po Law School faculty accredited to supervise a thesis; You might already have an idea of who could be your principal supervisor; we request you indicate your preference. You may (but it is not mandatory) contact the designated professor, and in some cases, ask him to support your application (cf. section "academic recommendations"). Conversely, if you do not know who you wish to work with, relay this information. In all cases, it is the admissions jury that designates the supervisor.

During the first year of the PhD program, the PhD student is supervised by the principal supervisor and by 2 secondary supervisors. Each of these supervisors sees the candidates at least 4 to 5 times per year, monitors his/her readings and in some cases gives him assignments (reading reports, summaries). The secondary supervisors are chosen from different fields but still have a link with the topic of the thesis. You can suggest names of fields of research and of secondary supervisors, if you so wish. Secondary supervisors can be professors from the Law School, from other departments of Sciences Po. or from other establishments.

- **Section no. 5 "thesis topic":**

You must write a research project describing the thesis that you wish to defend in your doctoral work. Your project must be detailed enough for the jury to presume that, it would represent a significant theoretical contribution to the understanding of juridical phenomena, in a given field of law. The jury is especially attentive to the coherence, originality and relevance of the project. A general bibliography backs the project; Its length should be about 3000 to 5000 words, without the bibliography. We recommend that you give careful attention to the elaboration of this section; this is one of the essential requirements evaluated by the jury, especially for students entering in 3<sup>rd</sup> year.

- **Financial aid/support**

Students in the program receive financial support outside of exceptional cases. They can also benefit from the Sciences Po. scholarship program (see next section).

## Contact

For any information about SciencesPo Law School: <http://droit.sciences-po.fr>

For advice and answers to your queries concerning your application: [zina.osmani@sciences-po.fr](mailto:zina.osmani@sciences-po.fr)