



# Social Work PhD programme



## ● Social Work PhD programme

The PhD programme in Social Work offers an innovative institutional setting integrating UAS & University contexts. With small classes and an individually tailored programme it provides solid knowledge in social work theories, research methods, & a transdisciplinary perspective on a chosen field of expertise. It prepares for academic careers, teaching & leading position in social work.

## ● Innovative. Individual. Transdisciplinary.

**Innovative:** This unique PhD programme results from a fruitful institutional collaboration between the University of Applied Sciences Western Switzerland and the University of Neuchâtel. The PhD students are co-directed by university and UAS professors of different disciplines.

**Individual:** The general programme encompasses small class seminars in epistemology, theory, research methods, as well as necessary soft skills for research and academia. The programme is individually adapted considering the educational background of each PhD student.

**Transdisciplinary:** Based on the diverse institutional background and the co-direction of the PhD, social problems are studied in a transdisciplinary way. This leads to the development of inventive scientific knowledge and tools in social work by new conceptual and methodological intertwinement of diverse disciplines, institutional and professional contexts. It allows for a new, theoretically founded perspective on social work practice for social and institutional change.

## ● PhD in Social Work

During the first 18 months, students accomplish an individual 30 ECTS programme and then submit their project. Beside the offers of the programme, students are coached by their supervisors and the PhD committee. Once the project accepted, students continue empirical and theoretical work for their PhD, participate in relevant scientific conferences and submit articles in high ranking scientific journals. The submission deadline for the PhD is five years after registration.



## ● PhD Student Profile

Are you curious, perseverant and keen to achieve new, scientific, systematic, solid, empirical knowledge about a specific question of a social problem? Do you plan to pursue an academic career in social work, do high level research with external funding, or teach future social worker at BA, MA or PhD level? Do you strive for an equal recognition of professional knowledge in action-oriented discipline of social work next to physicians, lawyers, psychologists, pedagogics? Do you need to elaborate a theoretically founded, reflective positionality in your professional environment for an officially recognised leadership role in your institutional field? If so, a PhD in social work is the right choice.

The ITTS accepts PhD students from Switzerland and from abroad, as long as the formal criteria are met, the social work relevance and the connection with a PhD supervisor at University of Neuchâtel are given. The ITTS is multilingual and seminars take place in English. PhD students are advised to set aside two days per week over a five-year period for writing their thesis. Options for funding a PhD include participating in an externally-funded research project, working as a part-time lecturer at universities (of applied sciences) or part-time social worker (in institutions oriented towards social work publics or administrative social work authorities), or receiving a scholarship.

## ● Development of the ITTS

The institute promotes a new generation of professors, trained at postgraduate level in social work. It aims to train social work experts who are able to examine theoretical and practical foundations of social work and who contribute through their scientific work to the development of new knowledge in social work. The institute develops, in collaboration with other research institutes of social work, social and economic sciences at universities and universities of applied sciences, as an (inter-) national center of competence in social work education and research.

## ● Social Work as an action-oriented science

The scientific perspective of the ITTS is inspired by the international definition of social work. Therefore, the PhD programme deals with agency, advocacy, social justice, social change and different types of knowledge. It considers arising social, professional and institutional problems and current issues in social work and social policy. It debates on social work as a discipline and action science in an internationally comparative approach. Its research fields are:

- individuals, groups and their access to relevant and specific societal contexts;
- professional developments and forms of intervention according to emerging social problems;
- social politics, organisations, and institutional change.

## ● ITTS PhD Programme

(first three semesters after registration)

- Introductory seminar (PhD process, scientific writing)
- 6 ECTS of social work theory
- 6 ECTS of qualitative social work research method
- 6 ECTS of quantitative social work research methods
- 6 ECTS of topical, discipline bound seminars
- 6 ECTS of free chosen postgraduate seminars or conferences

## ● Application as PhD Student at UniNE

- the registration request form, completed and signed
- 2 passport-sized photographs (not scanned)
- a copy of a document which proves the candidate's identity
- a copy of completed secondary studies diploma
- a copy of the Bachelor degree diploma
- a copy of the Master degree diploma (if already obtained)
- copies of certificates of previous university education
- a copy of the agreement with the professor acting as thesis director
- a certificate of exmatriculation from the last university or Swiss high school attended

## Degree awarded

PhD in Social Work in  
partnership with HES-SO

## Teaching language

English

## Admission conditions

A Master's degree is required. Holders of a Master's degree in social work from a University of Applied Sciences (UAS) and holders of a Master's degree in economics, social sciences or law from a Swiss University (or a deemed equivalent Master's degree from a foreign University), with an overall grading average of at least 4.75 / 6.00 and a mark of at least 5 / 6 in the Master's thesis (or assessments deemed equivalent).

## Application deadline

Mandatory participation in one spring information session (end of March)

June 30<sup>th</sup> for the Autumn semester (mid- September)

## Registration

Bureau des immatriculations  
Av. du 1<sup>er</sup>-Mars 26  
CH-2000 Neuchâtel  
+41 32 718 10 00  
[www.unine.ch/immatriculation](http://www.unine.ch/immatriculation)

## Information

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