

**GESS**

Graduate School  
of Economic and  
Social Sciences

 UNIVERSITY  
OF MANNHEIM



# CDSB Guidebook

2018/2019

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# 1. General Overview

## 1.1 Graduate School of Economic and Social Sciences

The [GESS](#) is a central research institution of the [University of Mannheim](#) and is funded by the Excellence Initiative of the German federal and state governments. As such, it has its own personnel and manages its own facilities and budget. All GESS faculty is anchored at the department or school level of the university, making the professors full members of the respective departments or schools.

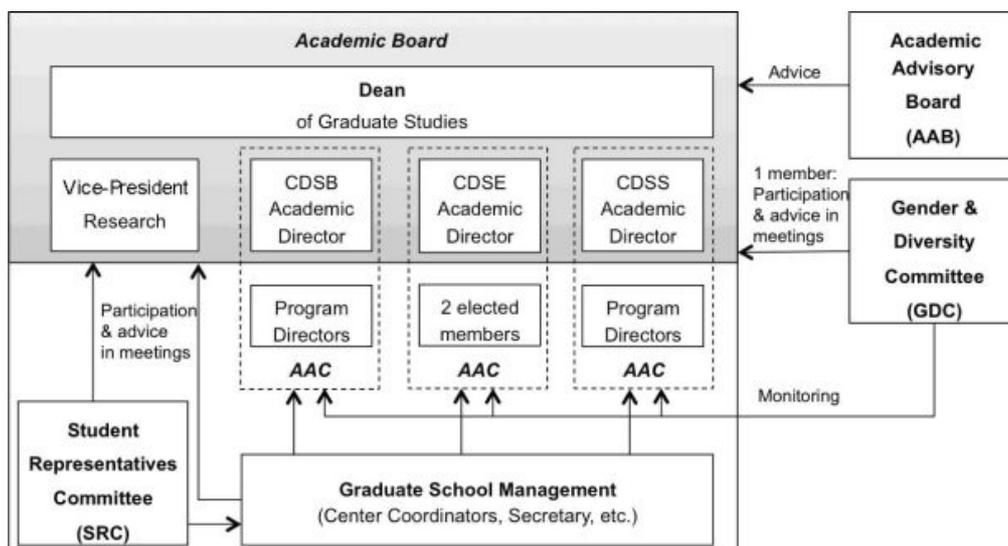
The GESS integrates the disciplines of business, economics and the social sciences into a coherent curriculum, making it one of the few graduate schools worldwide that foster the exchange of ideas, methods and research-approaches across the boundaries of the economic and social sciences. It comprises

- the [Center for Doctoral Studies in Business \(CDSB\)](#)
- the [Center for Doctoral Studies in Economics \(CDSE\)](#)
- the [Center for Doctoral Studies in Social and Behavioral Sciences \(CDSS\)](#)

The graduate school is characterized by a joint focus on empirical and quantitative methods and their applications in the respective disciplines.

Within this framework, the GESS has established an internationally competitive structured doctoral program contributing to the strong scientific reputation of the University of Mannheim. Former GESS students have taken up assistant professorships and post-doc positions at internationally leading academic institutions as well as positions in renowned international organizations and in the private sector.

The GESS is governed by the [GESS Board of Directors](#) and advised by a number of additional committees and boards:



## 1.2 Center for Doctoral Studies in Business

The Center for Doctoral Studies in Business (CDSB) represents the postgraduate training pillar of the [Business School](#) of the University of Mannheim, which is triple accredited by AACSB, EFMD (EQUIS) and AMBA. The CDSB is the first graduate school in Germany offering structured doctoral programs in all areas of business with a strong focus on empirical and quantitative methods.

### CDSB in brief:

- Specialized doctoral programs in business: Accounting, Finance, Information Systems, Management, Marketing, Operations Management and Taxation
- Scholarships available for covering living expenses
- Excellent research environment
- Interdisciplinary exchange of ideas with CDSE and CDSS students
- International student body
- Excellent reputation of the participating Business School of the University of Mannheim
- Entire program in English

## 1.3 Financial support

The CDSB commits to funding students for a period of 14 months (1.250€ per month). The ongoing financial support depends on the successful completion of the first year and your academic performance in later semesters.

During the subsequent years students are typically either funded 1) by a teaching or research assistantship (employment contract) at the University of Mannheim 2) through a continuation scholarship or 3) by external funding the PhD student raised herself/himself.

Scholarships are granted by the GESS: Therefore the Graduate School is responsible for the administration of this kind of financial support while employment contracts are handled by the Business School and the university administration (human resources).

## 2. The Program

The CDSB PhD program stretches over a four to five year-span. The three to four semesters are designated as the Course Phase. At the end of the first year students have to write and hand in a dissertation proposal which will be assessed by their supervisor.

After successfully completing the course phase, students are admitted to the three-year Thesis Writing Phase which is mainly reserved for writing the dissertation.

In the fifth year, students enter the Placement Phase in which they prepare a job market paper to be presented at international conferences. Mock interviews with faculty members and practice job talks with faculty members will provide useful feedback and academic job market training.

To help new students accommodate to their new academic environment, each student is assigned a mentor from the faculty of the Department of Business at the beginning of the first year. The respective professor will act as a contact person within the department. The mentor is not necessarily the thesis supervisor who is chosen by students in their first year.

Students are expected to meet with their mentor twice a year on their own initiative to report on their progress and discuss possible problems. To confirm continuous contact, the mentor will sign your CDSB-Milestones sheet. Find the document [here](#).

The GESS has set up Milestones for each center which outline the specific tasks and activities that you and your supervisor are expected to perform throughout the five-year program. Also, the Center Manager of the CDSB will ask you for insight on an annual basis to check on the progress of your studies. Note that it is the student's responsibility to keep the document.

The curriculum of all programs can be found in the appendix of the [study regulations](#) (Studienordnung).

### **3. Courses and Course Requirements**

The course program for current semesters (plus an archive of past courses) can be found [here](#). Please check the website regularly for any changes. In each course, the assessment type may vary and is determined by the respective lecturer.

#### **3.1 Registration**

For any course you would like to join, please register online by using the registration form in the Course Catalog of the CDSB. For all courses the registration deadline is February 1 for the spring term and August 25 for the fall term. During the first third of an elective course, students may still sign off. Afterwards de-registrations are no longer accepted and students will be automatically registered for the exam in the respective course.

For CDSE or CDSS courses please register online via the respective center's course catalogue. If you would like to take a course which is not in the GESS course catalogue please contact your Center Manager.

Please note that the GESS administration automatically registers students for the core courses of the program within the first year.

### 3.2 Course requirements

In order to successfully pass the program, 90 ECTS points have to be accomplished.

**a) Core and Core Elective Courses:**

In the first year students attend the mandatory core and core elective courses of the respective course program. In case less than three quarters of these courses are completed with the grade 4.0 ("fair") or better, the student cannot continue in the program. Please find the details for your respective program in the Appendix of the Study Regulations.

**b) Elective Courses:**

The choice of the electives is to be made after consultation with the mentor or supervisor. The electives may be chosen from other CDSB programs or even other centers of doctoral studies of the Graduate School (CDSE, CDSS).

**c) Bridge Course:**

A course of another center (CDSE or CDSS) of the GESS shall be completed.

**d) Area Seminar:**

For each semester of the doctoral program, participation in the Area Seminar of the respective program is mandatory.

**e) English Academic Writing course:**

The course is mandatory for all students and should be taken within the second year.

**f) Dissertation Proposal:**

At the beginning of the third semester (Deadline: August 31), a written dissertation proposal shall be submitted to the admission and examination committee. The mentor or prospective supervisor of the dissertation comments on the proposal before the committee. The admission and examination committee consents to the continuation of the doctoral program by accepting the dissertation proposal and recognizing the successful coursework of the first year of study. The Guidelines for the preparation of the Dissertation Proposal can be found [here](#).

**g) CDSB Milestones:**

After each semester, the successful course of study shall be confirmed by the mentor and/or supervisor in the [CDSB-Milestones](#) form, that shall be forwarded to the Center Manager once a year at the beginning of the fall semester.

### 3.3 Evaluation

The registration is a prerequisite for the evaluation of the courses. As we strive to constantly improve the program we ask all students to carry out evaluations of all courses they attended. Evaluation is anonymous. A link with the questionnaire will be sent to students by e-mail after they have registered for their courses.

### 3.4 Grades and ECTS points

The following grades are used in the graduate school:

1.0	excellent
1.3	
1.7	
2.0	good
2.3	
2.7	
3.0	satisfactory
3.3	
3.7	
4.0	fair/pass
5.0	fail

For a detailed list of ECTS credit points required and assigned to the courses/modules, please check the study regulations.

### 3.5 Dissertation

There are two ways how a dissertation at the CDSB can be organized. It can either consist of three original essays in one area, which are publishable in good scholarly journals or it can be in the classical form of a dissertation (a longer text analyzing one topic in depth). The latter one should, however, also have the clear perspective that the contents of the dissertation will be used towards articles published in scholarly journals. While a paper-based dissertation is preferable, the final decision about the form of the thesis is made by the student and the thesis supervisor.

After the successful completion of the course program, the submission of the dissertation and the disputation, you will be awarded the degree "Dr. rer. pol."

### 3.6 Studying abroad

The CDSB offers students the opportunity to do part of their research abroad after the completion of the course program at Mannheim. In most cases the supervisor has contact to professors at other universities who can be of special help to support the research.

### 3.7 Travel support

Students are encouraged to present their work at international conferences. If their papers are accepted, the CDSB grants financial support for the participation of students at top international conferences. The amount reimbursed depends on the importance of the conference visited.

[For travel reimbursement the following rules apply.](#)

## 4. Working at the GESS

### 4.1 Office space

All students of the CDSB (unless otherwise agreed) are provided with a shared office space in the GESS building. Your office space is equipped with a desk and cabinet, a whiteboard, and a telephone.

At the start of your first semester, the Center Manager will hand over your office keys as well as your personal laptop with the following software:

- Windows 7
- Microsoft Office
- Adobe Reader
- LaTeX

### 4.2 Office supplies

The GESS provides office materials, which can be obtained from the team assistant [Marion Lehnert](#) during office hours. Books for personal use cannot be financed by the GESS.

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### 4.3 Software

Should you need any additional software, please follow the software order instructions that will be given to you by the IT staff of the GESS. Always get in touch with them through the [IT helpdesk](#). GESS students with employment contracts should refer to the respective chair or research institute for commercial software.

In order to install free-of-charge software on your computer, please contact our IT administrator Patrick Schmitt (☎ extension -2235). Further information is available on the [webpage](#).

### 4.4 Making phone calls

Each office space is equipped with a telephone. The phone number is noted on the phone. To make an in-house call (within the university), just dial the respective 4-digit number (e.g. -2034 for the GESS team assistant). These calls are free of charge. For any other calls there are two possibilities:

- For official calls dial 0 followed by the number you wish to call
- For private calls dial 81 followed by the number you wish to call

You will receive a monthly invoice for your private calls which you have to pay yourself. For official calls the GESS will receive a monthly itemized invoice stating all numbers called as well as the length and cost of the calls. These invoices will be paid centrally through our means.

#### 4.5 Sending and receiving mail

The university's post office is located in the university administration building in L1, 1 (ground floor). You can send mail via:

- **Internal mail:** Please use the brown paper envelopes available from the GESS office or at the university's post office.
- **External mail (for work related post only):** Please see the GESS team assistant.

Mail for CDSB students will be delivered by the university's postal service. Always include "Universität Mannheim, GESS" in the address field.

#### 4.6 Libraries

Also known as "UB" ("Universitätsbibliothek"). The Mannheim University Library system consists of different libraries:

Library	Specialty	Loan period for registered GESS students
Schneckenhof (West entry)	InfoCenter for library, IT and ecUM, closed stacks library for all disciplines, pick up desk for books from the closed stacks and inter-library loans, Learning Center (group work)	28 days (renewals may be possible)
Schneckenhof (South entry)	Business Studies	One semester (renewals may be possible)
Ehrenhof	Economics, Accounting & Taxation, Law, History, Geography; Training classroom	One semester (renewals may be possible)
A3	Psychology, Psychological tests, Multimedia collection, Languages	One semester (renewals may be possible)
A5	Sociology, Political Science, Mathematics, Informatics	One semester (renewals may be possible)
Ehrenhof West	Textbooks for all disciplines	28 days (no renewals!)

Please check the web page for the current opening hours (<http://www.bib.uni-mannheim.de>).

All books, journals and databases of the libraries can be searched in the library catalog (<http://primo.bib.uni-mannheim.de>).

The UB offers introductory sessions for GESS students and courses on citation management tools, author workshops etc. Furthermore, you can use the publication platforms of the library: MADOC for (working) papers and your PhD thesis and MADATA for your research data.

Questions regarding the library can be addressed to the subject librarian for Business Studies Dr. Irene Schumm, [irene.schumm@bib.uni-mannheim.de](mailto:irene.schumm@bib.uni-mannheim.de).

## 5. Studying in Mannheim for International Students – Before your arrival

### 5.1 International students: visa and entry requirements for Germany

A visa may be required to enter Germany. The homepage of the [Federal Foreign Office](#) provides a list of countries which can help you to identify whether you need to apply for a visa not. When a visa is required, you must apply for it in person while still in your home country (or your country of residence).

Please make an appointment at the embassy and keep in mind that it can take weeks to get an appointment. It may take another 6-8 weeks to get the visa, so please apply for it as soon as possible.

The Welcome Center provides information on the visa procedure [here](#).

### 5.2 International Students: Register with the Welcome Centre of the University of Mannheim

The Welcome Center is the central consultation and service point for international researchers at the University of Mannheim. In cooperation with the Center Managers of the GESS, they are happy to assist you in organizing your arrival in Mannheim.

The Welcome Center will send you a 'check-in questionnaire' in preparation for the Orientation Days, which will take place from 29 to 31 August 2018.

International students please also refer to the Welcome Center's [guidebook](#).

## 6. Studying in Mannheim – After your arrival

### 6.1 Enrollment procedures

To **enroll as a student at the university level** please go to the Student Services („Studienbüro“) in L1, 1 and register there. Check their opening hours [online](#).

Please bring the following documents:

- your grant contract or letter of confirmation from the Academic Director/Center Manager
- your diploma
- a confirmation of your health insurance (see below)
- a completed enrollment form, which you can get at the Studienbüro
- proof that you transferred the “Semesterbeitrag” (Administration Fee) of 160,40 €
  - Transfer the correct amount to the following account:  
 Universität Mannheim  
 Baden-Württembergische Bank Mannheim / LBBW  
**IBAN:** DE23600501010001379273  
**BIC:** SOLA DE ST 600  
 Subject: First Name, Last Name and „Neueinschreibung Herbstsemester 2018“

Enrollment as a student is **mandatory** for doctoral students and it comes with many benefits, e.g.:

- eligibility for student accommodation ([Studierendenwerk](#)).
- reduced entrance fees for museums, theaters, movies, etc.
- eating at the student cafeteria of the university at reduced prices
- student ticket for local public transport (“Semesterticket”); please check [vrn.de](#).

For your re-registration/enrollment for the next term, you will automatically receive an email from the Studienbüro in which you are requested to pay the next administration fee.

International students may make an appointment with the Welcome Center for the enrollment procedure. If you attend the orientation meeting, this can also be done then. Here’s a [link](#) with some more information about the enrollment of international students.

**Enrollment as a doctoral student at the faculty level** is mandatory and necessary in order to obtain your doctoral degree. New students joining the GESS have to enroll at the Dean’s office of the Business School within six months after starting the program. Should they not manage to complete enrollment within this period, their scholarship will be cut by 50% from the seventh month onward and until they have properly enrolled as doctoral candidates.

Together with your PhD Milestones (page one and two), please submit an admission request to the Dean of the Business School (informal). Please state your topic (working title) in your letter and hand in the following documents:

- CV (incl. place and date of birth, nationality, phone number, university e-mail)
- **Certified** copy of Graduate degree certificate
- Declaration of [consent to data processing](#)

The Dean’s Office of the Business School examines the request regarding the requirements for acceptance and sends out a confirmation of acceptance as a doctoral candidate.

A guideline for the doctoral degree process can be found [here](#).

## 6.2 ecUM

The ecUM (electronic card of the University of Mannheim) is your identity card.

Once you have charged the designated terminals, it can be used to pay for food at the university cafeteria or for photocopying. If you buy a “Semesterticket” then the card also serves as your public transportation ticket.

Go to the Info Center of the university library to get your ecUM. Don’t forget to bring your letter of acceptance as a GESS PhD student.

With the ecUM you also get your user ID account which you will need to access your computer. The User ID will be issued at the same location. Ask them to print out your “rumms account credentials”. In order to use your user account for e-mail, you will have to change the password

and set up a security question. Please follow this link: [passwort.uni-mannheim.de](https://passwort.uni-mannheim.de). The Welcome Center also offers a short manual upon request.

## 7. Living in Mannheim

### 7.1 About Mannheim

Situated at the confluence of the Rhine and Neckar rivers and at the heart of the tri-state area of Rhineland-Palatinate, Hesse and Baden-Württemberg, Mannheim is home to approximately 320.000 inhabitants, making it the third largest city of the state of Baden-Württemberg. Due to its favorable location between two big waterways, Mannheim was traditionally and still is today a center of industry and commerce while also strongly branching out into the cultural and creative industries. Mannheim is somewhat unusual among German cities because of its status as a planned city: The streets of the city center are laid out in a grid pattern made up of rectangle blocks, the so-called “Quadrat” which are named in alphabetical order. The GESS, for example, is located in B6, 30-32. This unique design dates back to the 17<sup>th</sup> century and the contemporaneous notion of an ideal city, i.e. a city conceived in accordance with a rational and/or aesthetic regime.

Today, Mannheim is a vibrant city with bustling cultural life: Numerous museums and theatres – among them the oldest communal theatre, the Nationaltheater – as well as many concerts and cultural events, offer lots to explore for the residents. Moreover, the city’s many parks and river banks are ideal recreational spots. The Palatinate Forest (“Pfälzer Wald”) in the west and the Odenwald in the east are within short travelling distance and make for scenic trips. Heidelberg with its medieval city center and the old castle towering above the city is only a few kilometers from Mannheim. For those looking for big city life, continental Europe’s financial center Frankfurt am Main can be reached by train in less than an hour.

### 7.2 Residency

You will find in depth information about the Mannheim housing market on the web page of the [Welcome Center](#).

The following neighborhoods are particularly popular among international researchers given their proximity to the university:

- Innenstadt (Inner City)/Quadrat/City
- Schwetzingen Vorstadt
- Lindenhof
- Neckarstadt-Ost
- Oststadt

However due to their central locations, rent in these neighborhoods will be more expensive. Neighborhoods such as e.g. Almenhof, Neckarau, Neuostheim, Feudenheim, Waldhof, Käfertal are well connected via public transport and worth considering as well.

We recommend that (international) PhD Students apply for a room in a student dormitory for the first semester. During this first semester, you'll then be able to decide whether to stay in the dormitory or to look for an apartment. Apply for the student dormitory [online](#) as soon as possible.

Should you arrive in Mannheim before you can move into your apartment, the [youth hostel](#) offers (shared) rooms at a reasonable price.

### 7.3 Health Insurance

Germany has a complex social insurance system. Yet, as a scholarship holder, you are excluded from enrollment in the social insurance system. However, PhD students must get their own (private) health insurance and insure themselves “voluntarily” if they receive a scholarship. They cannot be insured as regular students. Some insurance companies have special offers for doctoral students. In order to enroll in private health insurance, you will need to have a German Bank Account first (see 7.7)

International students may also refer to the Welcome Center for [further information](#).

International students please note: Health insurance coverage is required from your first day in Germany. However, insurance coverage associated with a PhD program begins only on your first day of enrollment. Consequently, for the time between your arrival and the first day of enrollment, we recommend enrolling in a travel health insurance which you can obtain in your home country.

### 7.4 Personal liability insurance

The GESS strongly recommends that all PhD students take out personal liability insurance. In Germany, anyone can be held responsible for accidental damages inflicted upon a third party. Follow this [link](#) to get more information on personal liability insurance provided by the Welcome Center.

### 7.5 To Do for non-EU International Students I – Residence Permit from Foreigners' Office

Non-EU students need to register with the German authorities (“Ausländerbehörde”/ Foreigners' Office) to get a residence permit. The Center Manager issues a written confirmation for foreign non-EU students for that purpose. The Ausländerbehörde is located in K7 (☎ +49-621-293-3221; [webpage](#)). Please note that non-EU students need to get a residence permit within 90 of their arrival – even if they have a visa!

The Welcome Center Team will assist new PhD students with obtaining a residence permit during the orientation meeting in the last week of August before classes start in September. You will find all necessary information [here](#).

- Do not allow your residence permit to expire and apply for an extension well in advance (8 weeks).
- Consult the Welcome Center whenever you need to go to the Foreigner's Office: They'll help you.

## 7.6 To Do for International Students II – Registration with City Authorities

Within the first week of your arrival in Mannheim, you must register your address with the authorities ('Meldepflicht'). You will find all necessary information [here](#).

## 7.7 To Do for International Students III – Open Bank Account

In order to receive your scholarship/salary and pay your bills, you will need to open a German bank account. Follow the [link](#) provided by the Welcome Center to learn more about banking in Germany.

# 8. Miscellaneous

## 8.1 German language courses

Consult the Welcome Center's [homepage](#) for up-to-date information on German language courses.

Depending on available funds the GESS may offer financial support for its international (non-German speaking) students should they decide to attend a German language course (maximum of two courses at 250 € each). Please inquire with the Center Manager whether financial support is available before signing up for a course.

## 8.2 Gender & Diversity

Diverse backgrounds and ideas of scholars and students are crucial to take full advantage of human potential in all of its facets. Implementing policies of gender equality and social diversity is a cross-sectional task, affecting the university in all of its departments and units. The GESS takes a variety of measures to achieve these goals:

- Transparency and documentation of female representation
- Creation of gender equality structures
- Reconciliation of a scientific career and family
- Support for female scientists
- Recruitment of qualified women
- Creation and implementation of gender knowledge

If you have question or problems concerning these issues, please let us know or get in contact with the [Gender & Diversity Committee of the GESS](#).

## 8.3 Parents and children

The university has been certified as a family-friendly work and study environment ('Familiengerechte Hochschule').

The GESS offers specific support measures for doctoral students with children:

- Parent offices: special work offices where parents can bring their children along to work.
- Information about childcare (nursery schools) can be found here.

## 9. Get in contact

Your contact persons for academic questions are your mentor (assigned at beginning of the program), your supervisor(s) after the second year and the Academic Director of the CDSB.

In case of any questions or problems on the administrative side, please contact either the

- CDSB Center Manager Kirstin Niedernolte ([cdsb@uni-mannheim.de](mailto:cdsb@uni-mannheim.de); Tel: 2033; B6, 30-32 – room 243)  
or
- GESS team assistant Marion Lehnert ([gess@uni-mannheim.de](mailto:gess@uni-mannheim.de); Tel: 2034; B6, 30-32 – room 253)

For personal and/or academic questions you feel uncomfortable addressing directly to the academic or administrative leadership, please do not hesitate to get in contact with the CDSB student representatives who can then forward your problems and/or complaints anonymously to the CDSB or even the GESS board. Currently, the CDSB student representatives are

- Annika Havlik ([annika.havlik@gess.uni-mannheim.de](mailto:annika.havlik@gess.uni-mannheim.de))
- Sabine Bernard ([sabine.bernard@gess.uni-mannheim.de](mailto:sabine.bernard@gess.uni-mannheim.de))
- Marius Krömer ([marius.kroemer@gess.uni-mannheim.de](mailto:marius.kroemer@gess.uni-mannheim.de))