

FACULTY OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS (FBE)

DOCTORAL STUDY PROGRAMME:

STRUCTURE AND CONTENT

(approved by the FDC on 12 March 2018 – adjustments made by the FDC on 25 June 2020, 23 February 2021, 24 June 2021, 15 September 2023, 13 September 2024, 29 April 2025 & 23 June 2026)

1. General provisions

During the doctoral study programme, PhD students are expected to develop their research competences. Using the competence profile for PhD students at the University of Antwerp, and in consultation with their supervisors, PhD students determine the activities that they will undertake.

The Antwerp Doctoral School's competence profile is composed of seven competence categories:

- A. Research skills and techniques
- B. Adaptation to the research environment
- C. Research management
- D. Personal efficiency
- E. Communication skills
- F. Networking and teamwork
- G. Career management

More information about the University of Antwerp's competence profile is available on the [Antwerp Doctoral School's website](#).

2. Structure of the Faculty of Business and Economics (FBE) doctoral study programme

FBE PhD students are required to submit the progress report on their doctoral study programme through SisA every year (before 1 May). In this report, they should list the activities undertaken as part of the doctoral study programme over the last year, include the required supporting documents, complete all mandatory fields per category and allocate credits according to the activity table (see point 3). The following general rules apply:

- The activities undertaken must amount to a total of at least 30 credits.
- Only discipline-specific activities¹ such as those listed in the activity table are eligible for recognition.
- No more than half of the total number of credits may be earned in a single competence category.
- Credits must have been earned in at least four categories of the competence profile.
- At least 12 credits must have been earned by taking PhD courses in Competence Category A 'Research skills and techniques'.
- At least two credits must have been earned in Competence Category F 'Networking and teamwork'.
- PhD students enrolled academic year 2022-2023 and onwards must follow the online course 'Mind the GAP', offered by Antwerp Doctoral School. This course is not eligible for credits in the FBE doctoral study programme.

¹Non-discipline-specific courses taken by PhD students through the Antwerp Doctoral School are included in the doctoral study programme overview in SisA with the reference NVT (*niet van toepassing*, meaning 'not applicable'). These non-discipline-specific courses do not count for credits in the FBE doctoral study programme.

3. Recognised activities per competence category

The following table applies when allocating credits to each activity, bearing in mind the specifications and limitations listed under point 4.

Cat	Competences	Maximum credits	Activities	Credits
A	Research skills and techniques	15 (of which max. 12 for courses)	Mandatory courses: 12 credits - Minimum 6 credits advanced - Minimum 6 credits methodology Review of WoS manuscript (no credits for reviewing articles in journals from publishers MDPI, FRONTIERS and HINDAWI)	credits of the course (unless otherwise specified by FDC) 1 (max. 3)
B	Adaptation to the research environment	6	Additional PhD courses: max. 6 credits	credits of the course (unless otherwise specified by FDC)
C	Research management	4	Supervisor or co-supervisor of a research-related Master dissertation	1
D	Personal efficiency	15	Peer-reviewed publications: - Articles in a WoS journal - Articles in a VABB journal Other academic publications: - Book - Book chapter - Article not in VABB or WoS, or not peer-reviewed - Full paper in proceedings (not an extended abstract) - Working paper - Scientific report No credits for: - Abstracts or extended abstracts in proceedings - Popularising article - Book review - Articles in journals from publishers MDPI, FRONTIERS and HINDAWI (published after 1/1/2025)	6 3 2 2 2 2 2 2 } (max. 6) 0 0 0 0
E	Communication skills	8	Presentations: - With/without peer review - poster - invited speaker	2 2 2
F	Networking and teamwork	4	Doctoral Day – minimum 2 credits: - speaker (presentation) - discussant ⇒ number of participations as speaker ≥ number of participations as discussant	1 1
G	Career management	0	<i>no activities in the FBE doctoral study programme</i>	

4. Specifications and limitations per activity

The following specifications apply to the activities in each of the competence categories:

4.1 Competence Category A. Research skills and techniques

○ **Mandatory courses:**

PhD students are required to take 12 credits' worth of PhD-level courses with the following specifications:

- One or more advanced courses, including assessment (which the PhD student must pass), worth a total of at least six credits.²
- One or more methodological courses, including assessment (which the PhD student must pass), worth a total of at least six credits.
- Mandatory PhD courses may include both those organised by UAntwerp's FBE as PhD courses offered by other educational institutions and organisations.
- The FBE Faculty Doctoral Committee (FDC) determines the list of internal PhD courses. The FDC-FBE may add additional courses to this list at the request of a particular department.
- PhD students may also choose to take external PhD courses in consultation with their supervisors and following approval from the FDC-FBE. External courses are to be presented to the FDC-FBE for approval by the PhD student prior to the start of the course along with the following information:
 - The course is part of a doctoral study programme or aimed at PhD students, or the course is part of a Master's program. In this case, a motivation from the supervisor should be added. Only Master's courses taken from academic year 2025-2026 onwards are eligible for approval.
 - Description of the course.
 - Number of credits that the course is worth (if unavailable, the student workload in hours, which the FDC-FBE will then use to allocate credits).
 - Form of assessment; courses that do not include an assessment are not accepted.
- The FDC-FBE may decide to alter the number of credits assigned to external courses according to the University of Antwerp regulations on student workload.
- Examinations for advanced courses and methodological courses (min. six credits each) must be passed within a period of two academic years after admission to the FBE PhD programme.³
- A maximum of 12 credits can be allocated to courses in Competence Category A. It is possible to earn extra credits for courses under Competence Category B (see below).

Please include: course title, lecturer, university/institute and results achieved.

Supporting documents: the PhD student should attach a certificate or email confirmation of results for all external courses.

○ **Reviewer of WoS manuscript:**

PhD students can earn a maximum of three credits for reviewing manuscripts submitted to Web of Science journals. No credits are given when reviewing articles in journals from publishers MDPI, FRONTIERS and HINDAWI).

- Each manuscript review is worth one credit, regardless of how many versions of the manuscript the PhD student reviewed.

Please include: the title of the manuscript and the name of the journal.

Supporting documents: the PhD student should attach a document proving that the manuscript review took place and showing the name of the journal. The PhD student must receive a personal invitation for the review.

²While a 'pass' is sufficient, lecturers are asked to give scores out of 20. This information enables the PhD commission to make a more accurate assessment of the PhD student's progress.

³If a PhD student is required to take extra courses, the period of two academic years begins only after these extra courses and/or examinations have been completed. The extra courses do not count for credits in the FBE doctoral study programme.

4.2 Competence Category B. Adaptation to the research environment

○ **Additional courses:**

Besides the mandatory PhD courses from Competence Category A, PhD students can earn a maximum of six additional credits for taking discipline-specific courses (methodological and/or advanced courses).

- These courses must meet the same conditions specified for the courses in Competence Category A.
- For all PhD courses not organised as part of the FBE doctoral study programme (see above), prior approval of the FDC-FBE must be requested.
- Approved PhD-level courses count for the full number of credits assigned to each course (unless otherwise specified by the FDC-FBE).
- PhD students must pass all additional courses before they submit their theses.

Please include: course title, lecturer, university/institute and results achieved.

Supporting documents: the PhD student should attach a certificate or email confirmation of results for all external courses.

4.3 Competence Category C. Research management

○ **Supervisor or co-supervisor of a research-related Master dissertation:**

PhD students can earn a maximum of four credits as supervisors or co-supervisors of research-related Master dissertations obtained at the University of Antwerp or Antwerp Management School.

- The supervision (as the main or co-supervisor) of a Master dissertation is worth one credit.
- It is the task of the individual PhD commission (IPC) to confirm whether the Master dissertation is research-related.

Please include: the title of the dissertation, the name of the Master student and the names of all supervisors.

Supporting documents: the PhD student should attach a copy of the list of supervised Master dissertations which shows the names of all supervisors, as well as a confirmation from the supervisor or the chair of the IPC that the dissertation was research-related.

4.4 Competence Category D. Personal efficiency

○ **Publications:**

PhD students can earn a maximum of 15 credits for academic publications;

- Only publications included in the University of Antwerp's academic bibliography will be recognised.
- Only publications mentioning UAntwerp affiliation will be honoured.
- Articles published after 01/01/2025 in journals of the publishers listed below will never be honoured in the doctoral study programme: MDPI, FRONTIERS and HINDAWI.
- Articles in Web of Science journals are honoured with 6 points per publication, excluding publications in journals published by MDPI, FRONTIERS and HINDAWI.
- Articles published in peer-reviewed journals included in the *Vlaams Academisch Bibliografisch Bestand voor de Sociale en Humane Wetenschappen* (VABB-SHW) will be allocated three credits each, excluding publications in journals published by MDPI, FRONTIERS and HINDAWI.
- Other academic publications (books, book chapters, non-WoS/VABB articles, non-peer-reviewed articles, full papers in proceedings, working papers, reports) will be allocated two credits each, excluding publications in journals published by MDPI, FRONTIERS and HINDAWI; A maximum of six credits can be earned for these publications.
- Proceedings with abstracts and extended abstracts, popularising articles and book reviews are not accepted, even when included in the academic bibliography.

Please include: the full reference and type of publication.

Supporting documents: the PhD student should submit the publication to the University of Antwerp Library for [inclusion in the academic bibliography](#) and provides the url as proof.

4.5 Competence Category E. Communication skills

○ ***Presentations at academic conferences:***

PhD students can earn a maximum of eight credits for giving presentations at academic conferences.

- Presentations at academic conferences (including poster presentations) are worth two credits.
- A maximum of two different presentations at one conference will be honoured.
- By academic conference, we mean a meeting of researchers from various educational and/or research institutes both in Belgium and abroad.

Please include: the title of the presentation, the name of the conference, location and date.

Supporting documents: the PhD student should attach a certificate of attendance showing the name of the speaker(s) and the title of the presentation, or provide a link to or copy of the conference programme showing the name of the speaker(s) and the title of the presentation.

4.6 Competence Category F. Networking and teamwork

○ ***Active participation in the annual Doctoral Day:***

PhD students can earn a maximum of four credits for demonstrating active participation in the FBE's annual Doctoral Day. All PhD students are required to demonstrate active participation worth at least two credits.

- All PhD students must attend the Doctoral Day unless they are abroad or otherwise prevented from attending due to research-related obligations.
- Contributing to the Doctoral Day as a speaker or discussant is worth one credit.
- PhD students may give presentations and serve as discussants on more than one Doctoral Day. Upon completion of the doctoral study programme, a PhD student's number of participations as a speaker must be equal to or higher than the number of his/her participations as a discussant.
- For PhD students who are unable to attend the Doctoral Day due to a limited residency in Belgium, the supervisor can ask the permission of the FDC-FBE to substitute the Doctoral Day participation with a doctoral seminar. Only presentations given during research seminars at academic educational or research institutions are eligible for this substitution. The PhD student should invite his/her IPC to the doctoral seminar. A doctoral seminar which has been approved by the FDC-FBE is worth two credits.
- Other seminars will not be recognised.

Please include: participation as a speaker or a discussant; if speaker: the title of your presentation.

For substitute seminars: the title of the presentation, the name of the seminar, location and date.

Supporting documents: no supporting documents are required for active participation in the Doctoral Day. The faculty's PhD administration will check participation.

For doctoral seminars: The PhD student should submit proof of the FDC-FBE's approval and the doctoral seminar programme showing the speaker and the title of the presentation.

4.7 Competence Category G. Career management

No activities from Competence Category G are recognised in the FBE doctoral study programme.

5. Transitional measures

After the 2017 round of progress reports, subtotals of the credits earned according to the old model of the doctoral study programme were drawn up for all PhD students. Credits earned under the old model will remain valid, even if the new maximums are exceeded. All PhD students are expected to use the new model with its credit allocation per competence category from the 2018 round of progress reports onwards.