



Guidelines for Student Researchers

Version 2, September 2023

These guidelines offer you an overview of the objectives, content and evaluation of the student researcher programme, so that you know exactly what is expected of you and which activities are typically undertaken during the course of the programme.

1. Objectives

The student researcher programme introduces you to scientific research and helps you build a CV for either an FWO application (or a PhD in general), or a general research career.

Even if you do not pursue scientific research in your later career, being a student researcher is still a great addition to your CV.

2. How to apply?

You apply for the position of student research by means of a form consisting of two parts. In the first part, you indicate how you meet the criteria as listed in the regulations for student researchers. These criteria gauge your motivation, your academic profile and your research skills. In the second part of the form, your supervisor will support your application and possibly add extra motivation.

You cannot apply for a student researcher position without the approval of your supervisor. This is why it is important to have a preparatory interview with your supervisor before applying. In mutual consultation with the supervisor, you can, for example, also propose a thesis topic that was not yet in the list of regular thesis topics or thesis topics for student researchers.

The deadline for applying is the same as the deadline for regular students' thesis topics as stipulated in the Master Project regulations (Monday of class week 4).

3. PhD and FWO fellowship

You can choose whether or not to complete the programme with an application for a [FWO PhD fellowship](#).

An FWO fellowship means that you apply for a grant from FWO (Fonds Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek-Vlaanderen) with which you can devote four years full-time to scientific research after graduation, and complete a PhD. The degree of 'doctor' in a certain discipline is the highest title you can obtain at a Flemish University. Want to know more about what exactly a PhD entails? You can find more information on the [UAntwerp website](#) and [the Faculty of Law website](#).

If it is not clear to you at the start of the programme whether or not you want to apply for an FWO PhD fellowship, a meeting with the supervisor at the end of the first master year offers the opportunity to formulate clearer objectives. Before the end of the first master year at the latest, you will have to



decide whether you will join the FWO track. At that moment you report to the Research Office whether or not you are entering the FWO track.

Since The University's "Dive-into-PhD" training starts in May, the meeting with your supervisor should ideally take place in April of the first master year. This trajectory, which spans a full master year, supports young researchers step-by-step in preparing for an FWO PhD fellowship. Participating in the 'Dive-Into-PhD' training is not mandatory in the student researcher FWO track, but it is strongly recommended for those who are considering to apply for an (FWO) PhD fellowship.

Should you follow the general track in the student researcher programme and later still decide you want to do a PhD, you can. Following the FWO track in the student researcher programme is not a prerequisite for a PhD, nor is being a student researcher in general. The student researcher status neither implies an obligation to apply for PhD funding but ideally, that is the end goal.

You can change tracks during the course of the student researcher programme (e.g. from the FWO track to the general track, or vice versa). However, please discuss any change with your supervisor in advance, and notify the Research Office as soon as possible.

4. Content of the student researcher's programme

The student researcher programme runs concurrently with the master's years. However, it does not add any extra credits on top of the ECTS of the course units you take up during your master's programme. Do take into consideration the fact that in most cases, the activities you undertake for the student researcher position will still require a limited extra workload. For instance, student researcher's thesis topics are often slightly more challenging. Moreover, you can already get a taste of academic research by, for example, giving a presentation at a conference, or communicating your initial research findings in a publication (e.g. a legal note).

Different types of activities are formulated, of which you must have completed a minimum number at the end of the student researcher's programme. [The table in annex](#) provides an overview of possible activities, but you can also propose activities yourself in the final report.

The master's thesis is a compulsory component for both tracks. A positive evaluation for the master's thesis only is not sufficient for a positive evaluation as a student researcher.

If you follow the general track, you will participate in at least three recommended activities, spread over the two master years.

Should you want to follow the FWO track, you opt for a more defined programme, in which you include at least three activities from the "FWO track" list. These are activities that prepare you for a funding application and strengthen your research CV. You can also propose other additional activities in the final report. Activities of the first master year count too, of course.

5. Reporting

At the end of the second master year, you submit your final report to the Research Office. The Research Office will provide a template of the final report. The report consists of two parts:



1. a part that you fill in as a student and in which you report on the activities you have undertaken in the past two years;
2. a part in which your supervisor reports on how you functioned as a student researcher during your master years. This part concludes with a positive or negative advice.

You submit this report no later than the end of the second exam period of the second master year. In exceptional, thoroughly justified circumstances or in the case of a thesis semester due to force majeure, a deviation from this deadline is possible.

The reports will be assessed by the Research Reflection Group (ROZ). The group can decide to follow the advice of your supervisor and therefore award you the certificate of student researcher, or not to follow the advice. In the latter case, no public mention will be made. A negative advice has no consequences for your final result in the master's programme.

6. Contact

For all queries please contact the Research Office via Research.Law@uantwerpen.be or in room V.041 (Venusstraat 23, 2000 Antwerp).



FWO-track

Compulsory part

1. Master's thesis

*The student completed the master's thesis on time.
The student obtained a good score on the master's thesis*

Recommended Activities (min. 3)

1. Dive-into-PhD
2. Methodology
3. Grant application
4. Publication

5. Presentation on a(n international) academic conference
6. International experience

*The student participated in the 'Dive into PhD' programme
The student took one or more methodological courses or other methodological training.
The student prepared a draft version of a research project that can be submitted to FWO.
The student has written a (publishable) article or juridical note in an academic or practice-oriented journal, or was co-author of such a publication.
The student presented a paper on an academic conference or was co-author or co-presenter of such a paper.
The student participated in an international exchange programme (e.g. Erasmus) or another international activity.*

General Track

Compulsory Part

1. Master's Thesis

*The student completed the master's thesis on time.
The student obtained a good score on the master's thesis.*

Recommended Activities (min. 3)

1. Presentation for a non-academic audience
2. Attending a scientific conference, study day, seminar, or similar activity
3. Teaching support
4. Research support

*The student presented a paper on a study day, seminar, or similar activity for a non-academic audience.
The student attended such an activity and wrote a short report.
The student gave a class or seminar.
The student worked on a grant application, the publication of a book or article, the organisation of a scientific conference or study day, or a similar activity.*



5. Summer school
6. Traineeship
7. Extra courses
8. Extra training

The student attended a summer school.

The student did a traineeship other than the one required in the master's programme.

The student took one or more extra courses.

The student took one or more trainings inside or outside the university that are relevant for a research career.

9. Dive-into-PhD
10. Methodology
11. Grant application
12. Publication

The student participated in the 'Dive into PhD' programme

The student took one or more methodological courses or other methodological training.

The student prepared a draft version of a research project that can be submitted to FWO.

The student has written a (publishable) article or juridical note in an academic or practice-oriented journal, or was co-author of such a publication.

13. Presentation on a(n international) academic conference
14. International experience

The student presented a paper on an academic conference or was co-author or co-presenter of such a paper.

The student participated in an international exchange programme (e.g. Erasmus) or another international activity.