

Additional General PhD regulations- Faculty of Design Sciences (OW)

As approved by the Faculty Boards Design Sciences of 09/12/2020

I General provisions

Art. 1. These regulations apply to doctoral studies carried out in the Faculty of Design Sciences of the Universiteit Antwerpen. These studies include the doctoral study programme and the PhD. They are additional to the mandated provisions specified in the Higher Education Code dated 11 October 2013 ratified by the Decree dated 20 December 2013 with regard to earning a PhD and to the General PhD regulations of the Universiteit Antwerpen, which were approved by the Board of Governors of the Universiteit Antwerpen on 30 January 2018.

Art. 2. Within the Faculty of Design Sciences, the following boards and commissions are authorized to oversee doctoral studies: the individual PhD commissions (Individuele Doctoraatscommissie or IDC), the faculty doctoral programme commission (Facultaire doctoraatscommissie or FDC) and the Faculty Board (Faculteitsraad or FROW). The articles below outline the authority of these boards and commissions with regard to doctoral studies.

II Admission requirements

Art. 3. Doctoral studies in the Faculty of Design Sciences are open to any prospective PhD student who fulfils the conditions described in the General PhD regulations of the Universiteit Antwerpen and who has received explicit notification of admission from the Faculty Board following a suitability assessment.

Art. 4. The assessment of prospective PhD students' suitability is carried out by the Faculty Board on the basis of a file, as determined in Articles 8 to 9 of the General PhD regulations of the Universiteit Antwerpen. The suitability assessment may include a language test.

Art. 5. The results of the suitability assessment must be announced to the PhD student within a reasonable time frame. If the results of the suitability assessment made, with reference to Articles 8 or 9 of the General PhD regulations of the Universiteit Antwerpen, have not been announced to the PhD student within three months, he/she may assume that the decision is positive.

Art. 6. If the faculty board imposes the PhD student to complete a preparatory programme, this will be announced to the PhD student along with the results of the suitability assessment. The preparatory programme, the corresponding period (within which this additional training must be completed) as well as the conditions (pass the exams, ...) are drawn up by the faculty doctoral programme commission. The candidate submits his/her application for PhD studies in Design Sciences to the central student administration using the mandatory forms.

Art. 7. The IDC (see annex 1 and annex 2) is composed by the Faculty Board when the prospective PhD student is granted permission to enrol, as specified in Articles 8 to 12 of the General PhD regulations of the Universiteit Antwerpen.

III Annual assessment of the doctoral research and the doctoral study programme

Art. 8. The Faculty Board appoints a faculty doctoral coordinator to manage the annual evaluations. This coordinator will also function as FDC chair. The FDC annually appoints the peer review commission which will provide advice to the progress report for the doctoral study programme.

Art. 9. The progress of the doctoral programme can be divided into two major components : the research component and the study component (doctoral study programme). Each PhD student is required to submit concise progress reports on their doctoral research and doctoral study programmes via the online 'Studenten Informatie Systeem' (SiSA), by 1 May.

In the progress report on doctoral research the doctoral student demonstrates (1) which research activities he/she has performed as part of the doctoral project and whether the actual research has progressed over the past year, and provides (2) a concrete planning for the future. The progress of the doctoral research is then assessed by the IDC within a six-week period. A meeting may be organized at request of the IDC or the PhD student himself/herself. The progress of the doctoral study programme is evaluated by a faculty peer review commission, which will report to the faculty doctoral programme commission.

Art. 10. The results of the evaluations of the doctoral study programme and the doctoral research are discussed within the faculty doctoral programme commission, which will provide its advice to the Faculty Board (as specified in art. 20 and 21 of the General PhD regulations of the Universiteit Antwerpen)

IV Doctoral thesis and public defense

Art. 11. The faculty board issues guidelines regarding publication requirements (which/how many).

Art. 12. The preliminary defense of the dissertation is part of its official assessment in the Faculty of Design Sciences. The procedure for this preliminary defense is as follows:

1. The composition of the doctoral jury (see annex 2) needs to be approved at Faculty Board level before the start of the defense procedure (as specified in art. 30 from the General PhD regulations of the Universiteit Antwerpen), together with a time-line reflecting the suspected (if the IDC's advice is positive) date of the preliminary defense.
2. After the submission of the (draft) dissertation to the IDC, within four weeks, the IDC will provide a written advice whether the PhD student may proceed to the preliminary defense of the dissertation (as specified in art. 31 from the General PhD regulations of the Universiteit Antwerpen).
3. If the advice is positive (with possible suggested modifications), the (draft) dissertation will be forwarded to the members of the doctoral jury, according to the specifications mentioned in art. 31 of the General PhD regulations of the Universiteit Antwerpen.
4. The doctoral jury will decide, within a period of maximum six weeks, whether she agrees with the public defense, based on the preliminary defense. The preliminary defense will occur within six weeks after the favorable decision from the IDC.
5. The preliminary defense can lead to any of the following decisions:
 - a. the (draft) dissertation is accepted without any further conditions;
 - b. the (draft) dissertation is accepted on the condition that minor revisions are made. The responsibility for overseeing these revisions lies with the supervisor(s);
 - c. the (draft) dissertation is accepted on the condition that major revisions are made. The entire doctoral jury will need to approve the revisions before the dissertation can be accepted for the public defense. The doctoral jury discusses a reasonable and realistic timeline for these revisions together with the PhD student. This timeline is recorded in the predefense report.;
 - d. the (draft) dissertation is not accepted and will need to be presented at a new preliminary defense following extensive revision.

V Special provisions

Art. 13. At the beginning of the second half of the 4th research year (6th research year if it concerns a graduate teaching & research assistant with a six-year research trajectory), the PhD student will receive an invitation (copy from the invitation goes to the IDC and FDC chair) from the faculty administration. The PhD student will be requested to submit a concise report to the members of the IDC, within 4 months before the end of the 4th or 6th research year. This report (max. 1 page, with additional list of publications and conference papers) reflects the current situation regarding research activities and a concrete planning for the finalization of the PhD.

If the IDC is insufficiently convinced of the progress of the PhD, based on the provided report, it may request an oral report by the student.

The above mentioned reporting in the 4th research year (6th research year if it concerns a graduate teaching & research assistant with a six-year research trajectory) is not required if :

- the PhD student provides a reading version of the dissertation to the IDC, within the provided timeframe (4 months before the end of the 4th or 6th research year)
- the IDC judges that there are sufficient guarantees for the submission of a reading version before the end of the year.

The decision regarding this expired requirement will be communicated to the PhD student and the FDC by the IDC chair.

If the PhD has not been finalized after 4 years (6 years if it concerns a graduate teaching & research assistant with a six-year research trajectory), the PhD student will be evaluated at end of each following research year, according to the procedure mentioned in art. 13 of this additional General PhD regulations.

These regulations take effect as of 09/12/2020 (date approval Faculty Board)

Annex 1: The most recent General PhD regulations of the University of Antwerp (30/01/2018) do not make the distinction between main and co-supervisors. The Faculty of Design Sciences asks the IDC to appoint an *administratively responsible* supervisor. They are responsible for the administrative follow-up of the PhD student (e.g. explaining the applicable rules and regulations) and will take the lead in defining the research topic and trajectory (in consultation with the IDC and PhD student). This in no way implies a new distinction between main and co-supervisors.

Annex 2: The Faculty of Design Sciences pursues a gender balance in all IDCs and doctoral juries.