

*Readers should be aware that only the Dutch version of these Regulations has legal force. This English translation is strictly for reference and cannot be invoked as a legal tool.*

## **Supplementary faculty regulations for PhD and doctoral programmes Faculty of Pharmaceutical, Biomedical and Veterinary Sciences (FBD)**

*Approved by the FBD Faculty Board on June 24, 2021.*

### **I General provisions**

Art. 1. These regulations apply to doctoral studies conducted at the University of Antwerp Faculty of Pharmaceutical, Biomedical and Veterinary Sciences (FBD). These comprise the doctoral programme and the doctorate thesis. These regulations are supplementary to the mandated provisions that were specified in the decree of April 4, 2003, which covers the restructuring of higher education in Flanders with regard to earning the academic degree of doctor, and to the University of Antwerp doctoral regulations, and also taking into consideration the University of Antwerp regulations regarding doctoral programmes.

Art. 2. Within the Faculty of Pharmaceutical, Biomedical and Veterinary Sciences, the following boards and commissions are authorised to oversee the doctoral studies: the Departmental Boards (DB), the standard Master Examination Committees (EC), the Individual Doctoral Committee (IDC), the Departmental DOCOP Committees (DDC) and the Faculty Doctoral Commission (FDC). The authority of these boards and commissions with regard to the doctoral studies is detailed in the articles below.

Art. 3. The DB has decision-making authority with regard to the following aspects of doctoral studies:

- §1. admission to doctoral studies, based on an aptitude test for prospective PhD students and on the proposed research project;
- §2. determination of the potential training that needs to be completed during the PhD;
- §3. determination of a potential preparatory programme for prospective PhD students and designation of the examination committee responsible for this preparatory programme;
- §4. designation of the supervisor(s) for the thesis;
- §5. composition of the individual PhD commissions and designation of the chair;
- §6. designation of the departmental doctoral coordinator, who is also a member of the FDC and the DDC;
- §7. coordination and organisation of discipline-specific activities in the doctoral study programme;
- §8. approval of the IPC evaluation reports following the submission of PhD progress reports;
- §9. granting permission to write the thesis in a foreign language other than English;
- §10. composition of the PhD jury, designation of the chair and specification of the details for the public defence of the thesis; checking that the PhD student has successfully completed the doctoral study programme.

Art. 4. The IDC has an advisory role for the DB with regard to the following aspects of doctoral studies:

- §11. evaluation of the progress report for the doctoral programmes of individual PhD students;
- §12. disputes between PhD students and their supervisors.

Art. 5. The DDC plays an advisory role for the FDC with regard to the following aspects of doctoral studies:

- §13. evaluation of the annual progress report for the doctoral programme of individual PhD students;
- §14. monitoring of individual PhD students' training programmes, as determined by the DB.

Art. 6. The FDC has decision-making authority with regard to the following aspects of doctoral studies:

- §15. coordination and organisation of non-discipline-specific activities in the doctoral study programme;
- §16. the points in Article 5 of these supplementary regulations, as advised by the DDC;
- §17. approval of the doctoral programme dossier and the conferral of the doctoral programme certificate;
- §18. providing advice on the doctoral study programme at the request of the faculty or department.

Art. 7. The EC has decision-making authority with regard to the fulfilment of the conditions for a preparatory programme, which the DB can impose upon PhD candidates.

## II Requirements for admission

Art. 8. Doctoral studies in the Faculty of Pharmaceutical, Biomedical and Veterinary Sciences are available to any prospective PhD student who fulfils the requirements referred to in Article 67 of the decree dated April 4, 2003, concerning the restructuring of the higher education system in Flanders, and who have also received explicit notification of admission from the DB following an aptitude test.

Art. 9. The aptitude test for prospective PhD students is conducted by the DB on the basis of a dossier, as specified in the University of Antwerp doctoral regulations. A language test may form part of the aptitude test.

Art. 10. The results of the aptitude test must be announced to the candidate within a reasonable time period. Six weeks is assumed to be a reasonable period. If the candidate is not informed of the result of this test within three months, then a positive decision can be assumed. The latter does not apply when an additional test is required, although examiners should strive to reach a decision within the reasonable time limit of six weeks.

Art. 11. If the DB requires the candidate to complete an additional educational programme during the PhD, the DB will announce this to the candidate, along with the results of the aptitude test. This programme can consist of no more than 30 credits and is part of the candidate's doctoral study programme. The DB also sets the period within which the educational programme must be completed. The PhD candidate has to contact the departmental administrative office to determine the practical arrangements regarding the classes that need to be taken.

Art. 12. If the DB requires the candidate to complete a preparatory programme and examinations, then the DB will announce this to the candidate, along with the results of the aptitude test. This programme can consist of no more than 30 credits. In justified cases, recognition of prior learning and/or qualifications may compensate for all or a portion of the preparatory programme. This programme does not form part of the candidate's doctoral study programme. The candidate must sign a degree contract with the Student Administration office for the components of this preparatory programme. The department requiring the preparatory programme will designate the examination committee that is responsible for assessing it.

Art. 13. The IDC is composed by the DB when the candidate is granted permission to enrol as a PhD student.

## III Doctoral programme

Art. 14. As part of the doctoral programme, PhD students are expected to develop their competences as junior researchers. In order to do this, the PhD student should refer to the competence profile for PhD students at the University of Antwerp, which lists the following competence categories:

Competence categories (from the <a href="#">competence profile</a> )
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

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. In order to complete the doctoral programme successfully, PhD students are required to submit a dossier with their activities according to the following general rules:

- the activities undertaken must amount to a total of at least 30 credits.
- at least one credit must have been earned in at least four categories of the competence profile.
- no more than half of the total number of credits may be earned in a single competence category.

Art. 15. The PhD student can decide which skill a specific activity relates to (with the exception of activities organised by the Antwerp Doctoral School). Several individual activities of the same type can thus be assigned to different skills. However, a single activity may not be assigned to more than one skill, nor is it permitted to reassign an activity at a later stage. Progress will be determined quantitatively using the credits table described in Article 16.

Art. 16. The table below applies to the doctoral study programme:

Competency Category	Activity	Credits per activity	Maximum Credits
A. Research skills and techniques	Course <sup>1</sup> Webinar	0.1/hour 0.1/hour	4
	Attend a lecture <sup>2</sup>	0.1/hour	2
	Attend a conference or internal research day (lectures) - full day - half day	0.8 0.4	
	Research stay of at least 3 working days <sup>3</sup>	0.1/working day	5
B. Adaptation to the research environment	Course <sup>4</sup>	0.1/hour	4
	Board or committee membership	0.1/committee per year	2
	Board of the alumni association - chair - treasurer - vice chair - secretary - board member	1/year 0.5/year 0.5/year 0.5/year 0.2/year	
	membership DDC	0.5/year	
C. Research management	Course <sup>5</sup>	0.1/hour	4
	Supervise Bachelor thesis that contains lab work <sup>6</sup>	1/Bachelor thesis	2
	Supervise Bachelor thesis without lab work	0.5/Bachelor thesis	
	Supervise Master thesis <sup>6</sup>	2/Master thesis	4
	Supervision of a foreign PhD student	0.5/student	2
	Supervision of an Honors College student	0.5/student	
	Organization of a scientific or a science outreach activity: <sup>7</sup>  - Main organiser  - Co-organiser	  1/day for duration of the activity 0.5/day for duration of the activity	2
D. Personal efficiency <sup>8</sup>	Course <sup>9</sup>	0.1/hour	4

<sup>1</sup> E.g. E-Resources, Excel, Access, Scientific Reasoning and Reporting.

<sup>2</sup> E.g. study days, workshops, conferences, VIB seminar or lecture, Biotech Day/Open Day at Companies... Proof of active participation is required (e.g. critical discussion, a copy of your own notes, a short report).

<sup>3</sup> The credits are awarded per 3 working days. A research stay can only be counted if someone actively cooperates within a research group.

<sup>4</sup> E.g. Innovation Management & Entrepreneurship.

<sup>5</sup> E.g. Project Management, Word, Mind Mapping.

<sup>6</sup> The name of the PhD researcher must be stated on the cover page of the Bachelor or Master thesis.

<sup>7</sup> Children's University ('Kinderuniversiteit'), Science Week.

	Peer-reviewed international publication - 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2 <sup>nd</sup> or final author - 3 <sup>rd</sup> and subsequent author	4 2	
	International or national publication without peer review <sup>10</sup> - 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2 <sup>nd</sup> or final author	1	
	Science popularizing publication (1 <sup>st</sup> author)	0.5	
E. Communication skills <sup>11</sup>	Course <sup>12</sup> Language courses	0.1/hour	4
	Lecturing in higher education <sup>13</sup>	0.2/hour of student contact	1
	Practical class and educational guidance (including seminars or exercises) <sup>14</sup>	0.1/hour of student contact	10
	International conference - oral presentation - poster or poster/pitch presentation	3 2	
	National conference - oral presentation - poster or poster/pitch presentation	2 1	
	Research day or science outreach activity - oral presentation - poster or poster/pitch presentation	2 1	
	Knowledge transfer to a wide audience <sup>15</sup>	0.1/hour	1
	Webinar (~invited speaker) <sup>16</sup>	2	
F. Networking and teamwork	Course <sup>17</sup>	0.1/hour	4
	Attend network event	0.1/hour	2
G. Career management	Course <sup>18</sup>	0.1/hour	4
	Active stay in a non-academic environment for a minimum of 5 workdays <sup>19</sup>	0.5/5 workdays <sup>20</sup>	5

<sup>8</sup> Credits for publications can only be awarded after acceptance (proof from editor or copy of publication). The amount of credits awarded is dependent upon the author's contribution to the publication.

<sup>9</sup> E.g. Time Management, Achieving your goals.

<sup>10</sup> No credits will be awarded for 3rd and subsequent author positions.

<sup>11</sup> Credits can only be awarded for presentations if the PhD researcher was the "presenting author".

<sup>12</sup> E.g. Giving presentations, Writing, Communication, PowerPoint, Speed reading, Web design, Writing proposals, Coaching for Writing.

<sup>13</sup> Confirmation from the PhD supervisor is required.

<sup>14</sup> Confirmation from the PhD supervisor is required.

<sup>15</sup> These include: Science Festival, Children's University ('Kinderuniversiteit'), Info Day, SIDIN, Scientists @ Work, PhD Cup.

<sup>16</sup> Is equated with an oral presentation on the Research Day.

<sup>17</sup> E.g. Leadership, Teamwork.

<sup>18</sup> E.g. Job application skills, Career Guidance for PhDs and postdocs course, Career skills workshop,...

<sup>19</sup> E.g. ITN-internship, secondment for a European project.

<sup>20</sup> Credits can only be awarded if the student can demonstrate that he/she stayed there for a longer period of time and was actively doing research during that time (not just delivering samples or attending meetings).

Credits are not awarded for:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- General meetings or presentations at general meetings (these are not lectures or training courses)</li> <li>- For publications: reports or applications, refereeing for publications, conference abstracts, etc. (Credits are awarded for posters and presentations).</li> <li>- science communication activities without doing a presentation.</li> <li>- presentation at a conference: Credits are only awarded to the presenting author or the first author.</li> <li>- company visits</li> <li>- lab visits</li> <li>- lab meetings (internal presentations)</li> <li>- grant applications (writing + defending project): FWO, annual reports</li> <li>- scholarship award / travel grants</li> <li>- judging theses/correcting examinations</li> <li>- examination supervision</li> <li>- reviews (of articles)</li> </ul>
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Art. 17. The above-mentioned table with credits applies to all PhD students who conduct doctoral studies in one of the faculty domains.

Art. 18. Activities, followed after obtaining the diploma that provides access to registration for the preparation of the dissertation, but before the actual registration, may be fully or partially eligible for funding within the framework of the doctoral training. Such applications for funding must be submitted by the doctoral student to the DDC at the start of the PhD.

Art. 19. In very exceptional circumstances, candidates may be exempt from the doctoral training. The DR makes this decision on the basis of a proposal that is submitted by the candidate which provides details of the circumstances, with additional documents provided for evidence.

#### **IV Assessment of the PhD and the doctoral study programme**

Art. 20. To ensure that the progress reporting runs smoothly, the DR will appoint a departmental coordinator for PhDs (DCD) within the department. This DCD is also a member of the FDC and the DDC.

Art. 21. The reporting of the progress of the doctorate is divided into two parts: the research component and the training component (doctoral training). The training component is evaluated annually by the DDC. The research component is evaluated by the IDC at least every two years. The timing of the follow-up is linked to the effective start date of the doctoral research. This date will be communicated to the departmental secretariat upon registration.

Art. 22. Immediately after the composition of the IDC, the doctoral student should take initiative to set up an informal meeting with the members of his/her IDC, and should provide the IDC members with a short summary of the project proposal. This step is not administratively supported or monitored by the departmental secretariat.

Art. 23. In the second half of the second research year (based on the effective start date), each doctoral candidate will give an oral presentation about his/her research progress to the full IDC. He/she will receive an invitation from the departmental secretariat, with a copy also sent to the chair of the IDC and the DCD. The doctoral student is responsible for the organisation of this meeting. The presentation should contain an overview of the research conducted and the planning for the second half of the PhD. When preparing for this, the doctoral student should provide all members of the IDC with a one-page summary of the research conducted and a concise scientific CV, at least 10 working days before the presentation.

Art. 24. In the case of teaching assistants with a six-year research trajectory, an oral presentation about his/her research progress is given to the entire IDC in the second half of the second research year and in the second half of the fourth research year.

Art. 25. The IDC will provide feedback on the progress and results of the doctoral work and, if necessary, will make recommendations for further research plans. Based on this conversation, the IDC will evaluate whether the doctoral student can continue the doctoral studies. The IDC can also decide that the student should be assessed again in their third year, according to the same procedure.

Art. 26. The chair reports the decision of the IDC to the departmental secretariat and to the DCD, at the latest at the end of the doctoral student's second research year. In the event of a negative assessment, this is immediately reported to the department chair and the DCD with a written statement summarizing the reasons for this decision. In this case, the Department Council will make a decision on whether or not to allow further enrolment of the student. If further enrolment is refused, then the departmental secretariat will inform the central student administration.

Art. 27. The DCD reports at least annually to the Department Council on the evaluations conducted.

Art. 28. At the start of the second half of the fourth research year (or the second half of the sixth year for teaching assistants doing a six-year research project), the department secretariat will invite the PhD student (with the chair of the IDC and the departmental doctoral coordinator in cc) to submit a brief progress report to the members of the IDC at least 4 months before the end of the fourth research year (or the sixth research year for academic assistants doing a six-year research project). The PhD student will report on how the research has progressed and provides a plan for the completion of the doctoral programme (1 page max, plus a list of publications and abstracts from conferences). If the IDC is not fully convinced of the PhD student's progress after reading the report, the IDC can request an interview with the student according to Article 26. Further monitoring and reporting will be performed according to Articles 28, 29 and 30.

Art. 29. Fourth-year PhD students do not need to submit progress reports if they submit a draft thesis to the IDC within the designated time limit (four months before the end of the fourth year or the sixth year for teaching assistants doing a six-year research project), or if the IDC decides that the student has provided sufficient guarantees that the draft will be submitted before the end of the fourth year (or the sixth year for teaching assistants doing a six-year research project). The PhD student and the departmental doctoral coordinator will be informed of this decision by the chair of the IDC.

Art. 30. If the student has not completed their PhD after four years (or six years for teaching assistants), the PhD student will be assessed by the IDC by the end of each subsequent research year, as specified in Articles 31 and 32.

Art. 31. The IDC can be assembled at the request of the PhD student or one of its members.

Art. 32. With regard to the doctoral training, every doctoral student needs to submit a progress report electronically via SiSA every year.

Art. 33. PhD students whose doctoral study dossiers are likely to meet the conditions of the doctoral study programme must submit their dossier to the Antwerp Doctoral School, along with the necessary supporting documents.

Art. 34. In case of a negative assessment by the IDC or the DDC, the PhD student can request to be re-assessed by the DB or the FDC respectively, and receive assistance from the ombudsperson if this goes ahead. The DB or FDC may advise the rector to refuse a subsequent enrolment.

## **V Doctoral thesis and public defence**

Art. 35. Within the Faculty of Pharmaceutical, Biomedical and Veterinary Sciences, it is permitted to submit the thesis in English. If a PhD student wishes to write the thesis in any other foreign language, they must submit a request to the authorised Department Board.

Art. 36. A dissertation can be submitted if it contains at least one scientific publication. The scientific publication needs to be a first author article in an international peer-reviewed journal. Reasoned exceptions are only permitted with the approval of the IDC.

Art. 37. Published articles can form an integral part of the dissertation, but a homogeneous layout must be ensured.

Art. 38. The PhD student must cover the printing costs.

Art. 39. The internal defence of the thesis is part of the assessment of the thesis. During the defence, the members of the IDC will evaluate the thesis.

Art. 40. After the internal defence, the PhD student will receive specific advice. This advice can be formulated in three ways:

- positive: only a few small alterations are required and the supervisor is responsible for monitoring and implementing them.
- positive, provided that adaptations are made: the thesis will be accepted, provided that some important adaptations are made. The IDC should agree on the revision in writing (or by email) before the thesis is admitted for the final defence.
- negative: fundamental alterations are necessary and a new internal defence will be organised.

Art. 41. If the PhD commission or jury provides a negative assessment of the draft thesis, the public defence procedure will be suspended. The relevant PhD jury will notify the candidate in writing of the steps needed to resume the procedure. The PhD jury will also determine who will monitor the implementation of these steps (chair or entire committee).

## **VI Special provisions**

Art. 42. These regulations take effect as of October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021.

Art. 43. More practical information regarding these supplementary faculty regulations can be found in the faculty's step-by-step plan.