

APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS ON 20 February 2024

**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.**

**GENERAL REGULATIONS ON  
OBTAINING THE ACADEMIC DEGREE OF DOCTOR  
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ANTWERP**

**0. Definitions**

- These regulations use the term '**faculty**' to refer to the University of Antwerp's faculties, the Institute of Development Policy (IOB), the Antwerp Research Institute for the Arts (ARIA) and the associated Faculty of Nautical Sciences. All faculties may also delegate authority to sub-entities such as departmental boards.
- **Qualification of a degree:** suffix that refers to a study area (Higher Education Codex, Art. 1.3, sub 39). The qualification therefore indicates the specific title of the academic degree of doctor being conferred<sup>1</sup>.
- **AUHA:** Antwerp University Association (Dutch: Associatie Universiteit & Hogescholen Antwerpen)

**1. Regulations**

**1. General provisions**

1. These regulations determine the requirements and procedures for obtaining the academic degree of doctor at the University of Antwerp (UAntwerp). The charter for PhD researchers<sup>2</sup> included in this document as Appendix 1 applies to all PhD researchers and their supervisors.

APPROVED BY THE FBE FACULTY BOARD ON 02 May 2018 & 28 October 2020 & 27 January 2021 & 01 June 2022 & 31 May 2023

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**ADDITIONAL REGULATIONS ON  
OBTAINING THE ACADEMIC DEGREE OF DOCTOR  
IN THE FACULTY OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS (FBE)**

**1. General provisions**

1. These regulations apply to PhD studies conducted in the Faculty of Business and Economics (FBE) at the University of Antwerp. PhD studies are understood to consist of the doctoral study programme and the PhD by thesis. These additional regulations are supplementary to the provisions specified in the Higher Education Codex of 11 October 2013, ratified by the Decree of 20 December 2013, and to

<sup>1</sup> In these regulations, the research discipline is equated to the diploma qualification.

<sup>2</sup> For readability reasons, we consistently use the following terms: 'PhD researcher'/'PhD student', 'supervisor', 'chair', 'representative'. However, the text applies to all persons regardless of their gender identity (M/F/X).

<p>2. The study areas and qualifications in which the degree of doctor can be obtained at UAntwerp are shown in Appendix 2. The qualification determines which faculty is responsible for overseeing and awarding the PhD. In case of an interdisciplinary PhD, two qualifications on this list are combined to form a new degree of doctor.</p> <p>3. The academic degree of “doctor” (doctor of philosophy, abbreviated to PhD or Dr) is obtained after the public defence of a doctoral thesis. This thesis serves to demonstrate the PhD researcher’s ability to generate new scientific knowledge on the basis of independent, sound scientific research as described in the Higher Education Codex (Art. II.58, § 7).</p> <p>4. Besides preparing a thesis, PhD researchers are also expected to meet the requirements of the doctoral study programme coordinated by the Antwerp Doctoral School. These requirements are described in the additional faculty PhD regulations, which may include the option of imposing a mandatory study programme on PhD researchers.</p> <p>5. The additional faculty PhD regulations describe the modalities and procedures to be used for progress reports, as well as the form and assessment of the thesis and the doctoral study programme. These additional regulations are approved by the faculty upon the recommendation of the Bureau of the Antwerp Doctoral School, which checks them against the general PhD regulations.</p>	<p>the general regulations on obtaining the academic degree of doctor at the University of Antwerp (<i>University of Antwerp PhD Regulations</i>), approved by the University of Antwerp’s Board of Governors on 30 January 2018.</p> <p>2. In the FBE, PhD studies fall within the remit of the Research Committee, which fulfils the role of the FBE’s faculty doctoral committee (hereafter abbreviated to FDC-FBE). The FDC-FBE is chaired by the academic coordinator of the FBE doctoral study programme. The administrative coordinator of the FBE doctoral programme attends the meetings of the FDC-FBE as a secretary.</p> <p>3. With regard to PhD studies, the FDC-FBE has decision-making powers in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The organisation, quality assurance and supervision of the doctoral programme;</li> <li>• Admission to doctoral studies, based on an aptitude check for prospective PhD students and on the proposed research project (cf. Article 8 of the University of Antwerp’s PhD regulations);</li> <li>• The appointment of the supervisor(s) of the PhD thesis (cf. Articles 13 upto 15 of the University of Antwerp’s PhD regulations);</li> <li>• Determining the content of an extra study programme, if required (cf. Article 4 of the University of Antwerp’s PhD regulations);</li> <li>• Determining the content and follow-up of a preparatory programme, if required (cf. Articles 10 and 11 of the University of Antwerp’s PhD regulations); The activities performed in the context of this extra study programme are not honoured within the doctoral study programme.</li> <li>• The approval of the individual PhD commissions’ (IPCs) evaluation reports following the submission of progress reports on the doctoral research and doctoral study programme (cf. Articles 20 and 21 of the University of Antwerp’s PhD regulations);</li> <li>• Granting permission to write the thesis in a language other than Dutch or English (cf. Article 23 of the University of Antwerp’s PhD regulations);</li> <li>• Verification of whether the PhD student has met the requirements of the doctoral study programme before submitting his/her PhD thesis (cf. Article 25 of the University of Antwerp’s PhD regulations);</li> <li>• The granting of exemptions from the University of Antwerp’s doctoral study programme (cf. Article 12 of the University of Antwerp’s PhD regulations).</li> </ul> <p>4. With regard to PhD studies, the FDC-FBE has the authority to advise the FBE Faculty Board on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The composition of the IPC and appointment of the chair upon the prospective student's admission to doctoral studies (cf. Articles 13 upto 19c of the University of Antwerp's PhD regulations);</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The composition of the doctoral jury and the appointment of a chair at the start of the defence procedure (cf. Articles 25 to 29 of the University of Antwerp’s PhD regulations).</li> <li>• The FBE’s additional PhD regulations.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Admission and enrolment</b></p> <p>6. PhD researchers wishing to obtain the academic degree of doctor must enrol as a PhD student every academic year during the enrolment period. For more information about the admission and enrolment procedures, please see Appendix 3 of these regulations.</p> <p>7. Enrolment for the preparation of a doctoral thesis is open to holders of the degree of Master (or equivalent), provided Articles 9), 10) and 11) are taken into account.</p> <p>8. In order to obtain permission to enrol for the preparation of a thesis, candidate PhD students must send a written application to the faculty via the Registrar’s Office (Dutch: Centrale Onderwijsadministratie) containing information about themselves and the PhD project. The faculty will decide on the suitability of the candidate and the research topic within a reasonable period of time following receipt of the application (appendix 3).</p> <p>9. The faculty may waive the admission requirements mentioned in Article 7 for candidates who are not in possession of a Master’s degree or equivalent. This waiver depends on the results of an enquiry whose goal is to establish that the candidate has the research-related competences normally acquired during a Master’s programme on the basis of the Master competences or the Dublin descriptors. The faculty informs both the candidate and the Registrar’s Office of its decision. In the event of doubt, the application will be submitted to the Bureau of the Antwerp Doctoral School.</p> <p>10. For the categories of candidate PhD students listed below, it is possible for the faculty to grant admission conditional upon the successful finalisation of a preparatory programme:  candidates wishing to obtain the degree of doctor in a different discipline from the one in which they obtained their Master’s degree;  candidates with a Master’s degree from an institution outside of the Flemish Community;  candidates who do not hold a Master’s degree.</p> <p>11. The faculty is responsible for the composition and follow-up of the preparatory programme. The candidate should enrol in the preparatory programme on the basis of a diploma contract. Before enrolling as a PhD student, the candidate must</p>	<p><b>2. Admission requirements</b></p> <p>5. As an additional admission requirement, the FBE stipulates that the candidate must have achieved a classification of at least cum laude (or its equivalent) on his/her Master degree. The FDC-FBE decides on the equivalence of degree classifications. Based on the aptitude check the FDC-FBE can decide to admit a candidate with a lower degree classification, possibly conditional on the candidate’s taking an extra study programme. With regard to the discipline of Doctor in Management, candidates must also have at least five years of relevant professional experience.</p> <p>6. The application file for admission to doctoral studies in the FBE consists of (i) the application form, (ii) the curriculum vitae of the applicant, (iii) a copy of his/her Master diploma and supplement, (iv) the research proposal and (v) the name(s) of the proposed supervisor(s). The supervisor(s) must give their written consent for this. An assessment of language proficiency may form part of the aptitude check.</p> <p>7. PhD studies in the FBE are carried out according to the following procedure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The PhD student submits an application for admission to FBE doctoral studies to the Registrar’s Office using the required forms.</li> <li>• Having received the application from the Registrar’s Office, the FDC-FBE decides on the admission of the candidate.</li> <li>• If the FDC-FBE requires the candidate to complete a preparatory programme or extra study programme (see Article 3, items 4 and 5, and Article 5), it informs the candidate of this within a reasonable time frame; The FDC-FBE also sets the period within which the preparatory or extra study programme must be completed.</li> <li>• Following the approval of the application and on the FDC-FBE’s advice, the FBE Faculty Board composes the IPC and appoints a chair.</li> <li>• Every year the progress made in both the doctoral research and the doctoral study programme is described in a progress report written and submitted by the PhD student. The IPC evaluates the progress made. The IPC’s evaluation reports are assessed by the FDC-FBE.</li> </ul>

be able to demonstrate successful completion of all components of the preparatory programme. The faculty may allow candidates to complete their preparatory programmes during the first years of their PhDs. In that case, students must be able to demonstrate that they have passed the preparatory programme before being allowed to enrol in the second year. The preparatory programme is not eligible for recognition as part of the doctoral study programme.

12. UAntwerp PhD students are automatically enrolled in the doctoral study programme. The faculty may exempt PhD students from the doctoral study programme if it can be shown that they fulfil the requirements of the doctoral study programme – as outlined in the faculty PhD regulations – before embarking on their PhDs.

- After completion of the doctoral study programme and acceptance of the draft thesis by the IPC, the FBE Faculty Board composes a doctoral jury on the advice of the FDC-FBE and appoints a chair.
- After the preliminary defence, the doctoral jury assesses whether the thesis is suitable for public defence.
- The PhD candidate then defends the thesis publicly.

### 3. Doctoral study programme

8. During the FBE 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, keeping in mind the specifications and limitations listed in Articles 9 to 12 of these additional faculty regulations.

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

9. In order to complete the doctoral study programme successfully, each PhD student must submit an activity file according to the following general rules:

- the activities undertaken must amount to a total of at least 30 credits.
- only discipline-specific activities 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'.

10. An overview of the activities accepted (activity table) and the credits allocated per activity is included in a separate guide. The most up-to-date version of this

	<p>guide is available on the website of the Antwerp Doctoral School and can be requested from the FBE administrative coordinator of the doctoral programme.</p> <p>11. In exceptional circumstances, activities undertaken after the completion of the Master programme and before the candidate has been admitted to start a PhD may also be recognised in full or in part in the doctoral study programme. The FDC-FBE decides on this on the basis of a well-developed proposal accompanied by the relevant supporting documents.</p> <p>12. In very exceptional circumstances, PhD candidates with particular qualifications can be exempted from the specifications and limitations listed under Articles 8 to 11 of these additional regulations. The FDC-FBE decides on this on the basis of a well-developed proposal accompanied by the relevant supporting documents.</p>
<p><b>3. Supervision - individual PhD commission (IPC) - faculty PhD commissions</b></p> <p>13. The supervisor(s) is (are) responsible for the supervision of the doctoral work. If the nature of the research requires confidentiality, the supervisor(s), in consultation with the Valorisation Office and prior to the discussions by the IPC, contact the chair of the IPC to take the necessary measures to maintain confidentiality. The IPC is responsible for monitoring the progress of the PhD research and for mediation as necessary. The IPC may be convened at any time at the request of the PhD researcher or one of the IPC members.</p> <p>14. Following approval of the candidate and the research topic, the faculty appoints the supervisor(s) and the chair and members of the IPC. The chair should be a member of the senior academic staff (Dutch: <i>zelfstandig academisch personeel</i>, ZAP) at UAntwerp or an emeritus with assignment (contract research staff (Dutch: <i>bijzonder academisch personeel</i>, BAP) statute in accordance with the retirement regulations of UAntwerp), but cannot be the PhD researcher's supervisor. The chair is not necessarily required to be a member of the IPC. If the nature of the research requires confidentiality (reported by the supervisor(s)), the chair will take the necessary measures to maintain confidentiality, prior to the discussions by the IPC.</p> <p>15. The doctoral thesis is generally prepared under the guidance and supervision of one or two supervisors. If additional expertise is required to ensure the high-quality supervision of the PhD research, the faculty may appoint one or two additional supervisors – up to a maximum of four in total, at most three of whom may be affiliated with AUHA.</p>	<p><b>4. Supervision - supervisors - individual PhD commission (IPC)</b></p> <p>13. The FBE Faculty Board composes the IPC on the basis of a proposal from the supervisors and the advice of the FDC-FBE. The IPC should include all of the supervisors and two additional members: a chair and a member who does not belong to the senior academic staff (Dutch: <i>zelfstandig academisch personeel</i>, ZAP) at the University of Antwerp and whose primary appointment is external to AUHA and AMS. One of these additional members must not be directly involved in the research.</p> <p>14. If three or four supervisors are to be appointed, a request should be submitted to the FDC-FBE explaining why the additional expertise is required.</p> <p>15. The IPCs of incoming joint or double PhD students may be composed differently in order to follow up on the PhD research at the University of Antwerp. If a similar doctoral committee exists at the main institution, a smaller IPC consisting of the supervisors and a chair can be appointed. If no similar doctoral committee has been appointed at the main institution, a full IPC should be appointed at the University of Antwerp. The FDC-FBE determines whether a full IPC or a smaller IPC is to be appointed.</p>

16.a. All supervisors should be in possession of the academic degree of doctor or '*geaggregeerde voor het hoger onderwijs*' also taking into account the provisions of Article 19.

16.b. At least one of the supervisors should be a member of the UAntwerp senior academic staff (ZAP) with an appointment of at least 10% or an emeritus with assignment (contract research staff (Dutch: *bijzonder academisch personeel*, BAP) statute in accordance with the retirement regulations of UAntwerp).

17.a. The IPC is composed of all of the supervisors and supplemented by two additional members who have sufficient expertise and affinity with the research field to be able to assess the progress of the doctoral work.

17.b. All IPC members should be in possession of the academic degree of doctor or '*geaggregeerde voor het hoger onderwijs*' also taking the provisions of Article 19 into account.

17.c. At least two members of the IPC should be members of the UAntwerp senior academic staff (ZAP) or an emeritus with assignment (contract research staff (Dutch: *bijzonder academisch personeel*, BAP) statute in accordance with the retirement regulations of UAntwerp). If the PhD is being undertaken in the study area "Nautical Sciences", one of these two ZAP members may be replaced by a member of the teaching staff appointed in Group 3 (OP3) at an AUHA university college.

18.a. In order to guarantee the referee function of the IPC, at least one of the commission members must not be directly involved in the PhD project. The faculty assesses the IPC members' neutrality.

18.b. The following persons can never be appointed as members of the IPC: the PhD researcher's husband, wife or legally cohabiting partner, partner or blood or other relatives up to and including the fourth degree.

18.c. The chair of the IPC may invite additional experts to advise during IPC meetings if it is believed that this would benefit the supervision of the PhD.

19.a. For PhDs in the study areas "Architecture", "Movement and Rehabilitation Sciences", "Conservation and Restoration", "Applied Engineering and Technology", "Product Development", "Applied Language Studies" and "Nautical Sciences", a deviation from the PhD requirement mentioned in Articles 16a and 17b may be possible for teaching staff appointed in Group 3 (OP3).

19.b. For PhDs in the study areas "Audiovisual and Visual Arts" and "Music and Performing Arts", a deviation from the PhD requirement mentioned in Articles 16a

and 17b may be possible for members of staff from the AUHA Schools of Arts provided that these members of staff are in possession of expertise that is essential to the supervision of the PhD research.

19.c. For PhDs that have been prepared in close cooperation with the professional field, deviation from the PhD requirement described in Articles 16a and 17b may be possible provided that the professional advisors concerned are in possession of expertise that is essential to the supervision of the PhD research.

20. On a regular basis – ideally every year and at least every two years – the IPC evaluates the progress of the PhD researcher’s doctoral research on the basis of a report and, if necessary, a personal meeting. The IPC decides whether the progress is sufficient and provides a report of this decision to the faculty. If the PhD researcher fails to submit a report without a valid reason, this automatically leads to a negative evaluation (“insufficient progress”). Following a negative evaluation and recommendation from the faculty PhD commission or other body designated by the faculty, the IPC may refuse the PhD researcher permission to reenrol for the current PhD.

21. Every year, the faculty PhD commission follows up on each PhD researcher’s progress in the doctoral study programme on the basis of a report. The faculty PhD commission reports on this to the faculty and to the Antwerp Doctoral School (ADS).

#### **4. Public defence of the doctoral thesis**

22. The thesis may take the form of a monograph, a collection of manuscripts, an artistic or design work or a combination of these forms. If the thesis consists of a collection of academic manuscripts, the faculty may impose the condition that at least one of these manuscripts has been published.

#### **5. Annual evaluation of the doctoral research and the doctoral study programme**

16. The PhD student is required to submit a progress report through the student information system (SisA) before 1 May each year. The report consists of two parts:

- A report on the progress made in the doctoral research
- A report on the progress made in the doctoral study programme

17. On the basis of the report mentioned in Article 16, the IPC evaluates the progress made in the research and in the activities undertaken as part of the doctoral study programme and assesses whether this progress is sufficient to allow the student to continue the PhD. The PhD student takes the initiative for a personal interview on this matter by inviting all IPC members by email for an interview, at the latest end of May. In the event of a negative evaluation, all IPC members must attend this interview (via teleconferencing if necessary).

18. The chair of the IPC submits the evaluation report through the student information system (SisA) by the third week of June. The FDC-FBE discusses the submitted evaluation reports during its next meeting.

19. In the event that the IPC returns a negative evaluation, the FDC-FBE discusses the file and formulates an advice (cf. Article 20 of the University of Antwerp’s PhD regulations). The PhD student has the right to be heard.

20. The faculty administration follows up on the credits awarded within the doctoral study programme. The credits acquired are confirmed in the student information system (SisA). If the PhD student does not agree with the number of credits awarded, he or she can appeal to the FDC-FBE, which makes a binding decision.

#### **6. Public defence of the doctoral thesis**

21. For each part of the doctoral thesis that was not realised by the PhD student alone, a separate explanatory note should be drawn up detailing the contributions made by the PhD student and the other author(s).

23. The thesis should be written and defended in Dutch or English. It may be written in another language provided that written permission has been obtained for this from the faculty. This permission is not necessary if the topic of the thesis is another language, culture or literature. Dutch and English abstracts must be included in all theses.

24. The thesis must contain the identification details listed in Appendix 4 of these regulations.

25. The faculty determines the composition of the doctoral jury after having verified that the PhD researcher is enrolled as a PhD student at the University of Antwerp and has fulfilled the requirements of the doctoral study programme. The composition of the jury does not imply that the thesis (or draft) has been approved.

26.a. The doctoral jury consists of a minimum of five and a maximum of eight members.

26.b. All supervisors are members of the doctoral jury.

26.c. No more than half of the doctoral jury may be made up of the PhD researcher's supervisors.

26.d. Ideally, the members of the IPC should be members of the doctoral jury.

26.e. At least three members of the doctoral jury must be UAntwerp senior academic staff (ZAP) or an emeritus from UAntwerp (regardless of their statute: with assignment, with occasional activity or without assignment or activity for the university), also taking into account sub i and Article 45.

26.f. At least two members of the doctoral jury should be external to AUHA.

26.g. In order to guarantee the referee function of the doctoral jury, at least two members of the jury must not be directly involved in the PhD project. The faculty assesses the doctoral jury members' neutrality.

26.h. The following persons can never be appointed as members of the doctoral jury: the PhD researcher's husband, wife or legally cohabiting partner, partner or blood or other relatives up to and including the fourth degree.

26.i. In the case of a PhD in the study areas "Audiovisual and Visual Arts", "Music and Performing Arts" and "Nautical Sciences", at least one member of the doctoral jury must have a statutory appointment as a member of teaching staff

22. The FBE Faculty Board composes the doctoral jury on the basis of a proposal from the IPC and the advice of the FDC-FBE. The doctoral jury should include the supervisors and at least four other jury members. The doctoral jury can consist of a maximum of eight members.

23. For joint or double PhDs different or additional rules may be included in the partnership agreement for the composition of a doctoral jury (cf. Article 43 of the University of Antwerp's PhD regulations).



at one of AUHA's university colleges. In the event of deviation from sub e, at least two other members must belong to the UAntwerp senior academic staff (ZAP).

27.a. The members of the doctoral jury must hold PhD degrees or a degree of '*geaggregeerde voor het hoger onderwijs*', also taking into account the stipulations of sub b, c and d.

27.b. Supervisors and other members of the IPC who do not hold PhDs but have been appointed according to Article 19 can also be designated as members of the doctoral jury.

27.c. For PhDs in the study areas "Architecture", "Movement and Rehabilitation Sciences", "Conservation and Restoration", "Applied Engineering and Technology", "Product Development", "Applied Language Studies", "Audiovisual and Visual Arts", "Music and Performing Arts" and "Nautical Sciences", a deviation from the PhD requirement mentioned in sub a may be possible for persons external to the University of Antwerp if this is important for the evaluation of the PhD.

27.d. The deviation from the PhD requirement as described in sub b and c can be granted to a maximum of three members of the doctoral jury, but never to more than half of the jury members.

28. The faculty appoints a chair from amongst the members of the doctoral jury. The chair of the doctoral jury should be a member of the senior academic staff (ZAP) at UAntwerp, but not one of the PhD researcher's supervisors.

29. With regard to study areas or parts of study areas in which UAntwerp provides only Bachelor-level courses, the doctoral jury must include at least one member from a university that is able to offer Master's degrees within the study area concerned (Higher Education Codex, Art. II.73 §3).

30. The procedure for the public defence of the thesis begins when the PhD researcher sends the appropriate number of copies of the draft thesis to the chair of the IPC. The chair is responsible for distributing the draft thesis among the other members of the IPC. Article 6 applies if the procedure for the defence of the thesis extends into the next academic year.

31. The IPC has a maximum of four weeks to issue a written recommendation to the PhD researcher with respect to the draft thesis. If the individual PhD commission's response is negative, it will inform the PhD researcher of its objections and remarks. If their recommendation is positive, the IPC may also formulate a limited number of suggestions for improving the draft thesis. When the IPC consents to the submission of the thesis, the PhD researcher sends

24. The PhD student starts the PhD defence procedure in consultation with his/her supervisor(s).

sufficient copies of the draft, along with a written application to defend the thesis publicly, to the chair of the doctoral jury. The chair is responsible for distributing the draft thesis among the other members of the doctoral jury.

32. The doctoral jury evaluates the draft thesis. This evaluation may include a pre-defence, depending on the additional faculty PhD regulations. If no pre-defence is to be held and a member of the doctoral jury has objections to the public defence of the thesis, the jury must convene for a meeting on this matter. In this case, the member(s) concerned has/have to formulate their criticism in writing prior to the meeting.

33. The doctoral jury has a maximum of six weeks to communicate in writing its decision and justification to the PhD researcher and the faculty. If the jury agrees to the public defence of the thesis, the PhD researcher informs the faculty and the Registrar's Office of this in writing. The PhD researcher can then be registered for the public defence.

34. The public defence can take place no earlier than three weeks after the doctoral jury's decision has been communicated to the Registrar's Office by the PhD researcher. A date must be selected for the defence within six weeks of the communication of the jury's decision. The public defence should take place within a reasonable time period. This period excludes the UAntwerp holiday periods listed in the academic calendar and any maternity or parental leave taken by the PhD researcher. No public defences can take place between 20 July and 20 August.

35. The doctoral jury may decide to accept the public defence of the thesis on the condition that a number of changes are made to the content; these changes must be communicated to the PhD researcher in writing. For the exact procedure to be followed in this situation, please refer to the additional faculty PhD regulations. In this case, the time period described in Article 34 begins when the doctoral jury approves the corrected version of the thesis.

25. The preliminary defence of the thesis is obligatory and takes place within six weeks after the submission of the draft thesis to the chair of the doctoral jury, who ensures that the draft is sent to the other members of the jury in good time. A written report must be drawn up for the preliminary defence. A standard form is available for this purpose.

26. At least two-thirds of the members of the doctoral jury must attend the preliminary defence, via teleconferencing if necessary. Jury members who are unable to attend must submit a written report to the chair. The doctoral jury decides, by majority vote, whether the PhD student may proceed to the public defence of his/her thesis. The supervisors together have one vote. If the supervisors cannot reach a consensus, they too must reach a decision by a simple majority vote. In the event of a tie, the chair has the casting vote.

27. If, after the preliminary defence, the doctoral jury agrees to the public defence of the thesis, the chair of the doctoral jury informs the FBE doctoral administration and the chair of the FDC-FBE. As soon as the PhD student informs the Registrar's Office about the doctoral jury's decision, the time frames described in Article 34 of the University of Antwerp's PhD regulations begin.

28. After the preliminary defence, the doctoral jury may decide to admit the thesis to the public defence on the condition that a number of major mandatory changes are made. The report on the preliminary defence specifies which changes are to be made and the deadline by which the PhD student must submit the revised doctoral thesis. The time allowed for these major mandatory changes may not exceed three months. A new preliminary defence must be held if the required changes take more than three months, as specified in Article 29. The PhD student submits the revised thesis to the chair of the doctoral jury within the required time frame, who ensures that the draft is sent to the other members of the jury in good time. The chair of the doctoral jury informs the PhD student, the FBE's doctoral administration and the chair of the FDC-FBE of the jury's decision in writing within a four-week period. Once the doctoral jury has agreed to the public defence of the thesis, the time frames described in Article 34 of the University of Antwerp's PhD regulations begin. If the doctoral jury is not satisfied with the revisions, or if the PhD student has not completed the revisions within the prescribed period, the procedure for completing the thesis is suspended (see Article 29).

<p>36. The defence of the thesis is public.</p> <p>37. The public defence of the thesis must not take longer than two hours, including examination by the doctoral jury. The defence cannot take place if fewer than two thirds of the doctoral jury members are in attendance, if necessary via teleconferencing; at least two of those in attendance must not be involved in the doctoral thesis. If the chair is unable to attend the defence, the faculty appoints a replacement chair from the UAntwerp senior academic staff (ZAP) who is not one of the PhD researcher's supervisors.</p> <p>38. The doctoral jury meets immediately after the defence and decides whether the PhD researcher has been successful or not before officially announcing the results. Grades are not awarded.</p> <p>39. The decisions of the IPC and doctoral jury should ideally be made by consensus. If no consensus can be reached, a positive decision can only be issued as a result of a simple majority vote in which the supervisors together have one vote. If the supervisors cannot reach a consensus, they too must reach a decision by a simple majority vote.</p> <p>40. The successfully defended thesis should be submitted to the UAntwerp Library Office for safekeeping according to <a href="#">the procedure set out for that purpose</a>. As part of this procedure, the PhD researcher should submit at least a digital version of the thesis prior to the defence.</p>	<p>29. In the event of a negative evaluation of the preliminary defence, or if the requested revisions are not made within the prescribed period, the procedure for completing the thesis is suspended. The doctoral jury informs the PhD student in writing of the steps necessary to restart the procedure. In both cases, a new preliminary defence must be held. In total, a maximum of two preliminary defences can be organised.</p> <p>30. If circumstances require, part of the public defence of the doctoral thesis may be conducted in a language other than Dutch or English.</p>
<p><b>5. Joint, double and multiple PhDs</b></p> <p>41. UAntwerp can award a joint, double or multiple PhD with another Belgian or international university provided that the PhD researchers have done at least six months of research (not necessarily consecutively) at each partner university involved as part of their thesis. Unless otherwise stipulated in the articles below or in the partnership agreement (Art. 43), these general PhD regulations also apply to all joint, double and multiple PhDs. For incoming joint, double and multiple PhDs, a limited IPC is sufficient, consisting of the UAntwerp supervisor(s) and the chair, to monitor the progress of the doctoral research in accordance with articles 13-14 of these regulations.</p>	

42. PhD researchers wishing to obtain a joint, double or multiple PhD degree must submit applications to all of the universities in question at least one year before the submission of the draft thesis. At UAntwerp, a procedure for this has been established by the Antwerp Doctoral School. If the application is approved by the faculty, the PhD researcher has to comply with the administration requirements of both universities regarding enrolment as a PhD student.

43. For every joint, double or multiple PhD, a partnership agreement is drawn up between the PhD researcher and the two or three universities involved, in which exceptions to the standard procedures or additional rules can be established. The regulations of the main institution (see Article 44) take priority, unless otherwise stipulated in the partnership agreement. The defence can take place no earlier than six weeks after the signing of the agreement by all relevant legal entities. In this context, the faculty can exempt PhD researchers whose home institution is not UAntwerp from the UAntwerp doctoral study programme.

44. The designation of the main institution can be determined based on one or more of the following elements: a) Funding: the institution that funds (most of) the doctoral research or the institution to which the supervisor belongs under whose authority the application of the external funding occurred; b) Presence: the institution where most of the doctoral research takes place, where the PhD researchers will spend most of their working hours; c) Start: the institution where the doctoral research was initiated, where the PhD researcher first registered. If these criteria are not sufficient to distinguish between the two institutions, the main institution will be designated by mutual agreement.

45. The thesis has to be defended publicly before a doctoral jury containing at least one member of the senior academic staff (ZAP, or corresponding category in the partner institution) from each institution involved.

46. Only one public defence can take place, the date of which is to be included on the diploma or diploma supplement or – if applicable – on all diplomas or diploma supplements.

47. The diploma supplement(s) for the joint, double or multiple PhD must clearly indicate that the research was carried out at all universities involved.

## **6. Interdisciplinary PhD**

48. UAntwerp can award an interdisciplinary PhD if the PhD researcher has conducted research for which the expertise, knowledge and research methods from two (or more) study areas were substantial and essential for the research proposal to be carried out successfully. An interdisciplinary PhD is a combination

of two existing PhD degree titles at UAntwerp, and cannot be incorporated in a joint, double or multiple PhD.

49. PhD researchers wishing to obtain an interdisciplinary PhD must submit their motivated application to the qualified entity within the faculty. The application must be supported by at least one supervisor from each study area. In case of an interdisciplinary PhD between two faculties, the application must be submitted to both faculties and one of the faculties will be designated as the managing faculty. More information regarding the enrolment and admission procedure can be found in appendix 3.

The interdisciplinary nature of the doctorate will be evaluated at the time of the initial application as well as during, and at the end of, the PhD trajectory based on the following three criteria:

- 1) The study areas and the expertise that each faculty brings to the PhD research, are far enough apart;
- 2) The input of expertise, knowledge and research methods from each faculty is substantial and strictly necessary for carrying out the research proposal correctly. The research is not a combination of monodisciplinary lines of research carried out under the supervision of different researchers. Not one of the study areas is an 'additional/incidental' study area.
- 3) The insights gathered from carrying out the research proposal, result in new scientific insights in both study areas or extends the knowledge in a new (emerging) study area.

Applicants for an interdisciplinary PhD must clearly motivate these criteria. The motivation should be understandable enough to non-specialists without overgeneralising the application.

In the application phase, the initial application for an interdisciplinary PhD will be assessed by the Registrar's Office.

50. Each faculty involved in the interdisciplinary PhD must grant approval for the enrolment in the interdisciplinary degree. The same applies to ongoing PhDs that need to be converted. The application for the interdisciplinary PhD as well as the enrolment in the interdisciplinary programme must be finalised at least one year before the defence.

51. The faculty managing the PhD is responsible for informing the other faculty (faculties) about changes in the enrolment and modalities of the PhD in question. Generally speaking the PhD regulations of the managing faculty take priority.

52. For existing combinations of study areas, the managing faculty is already designated, which can be consulted in the student administration system SisA. In case of a new combination, the designation of the managing faculty can be determined based on one or more of the following elements: a) Funding: the faculty that funds (most of) the doctoral research or the faculty to which the supervisor belongs under whose authority the application of the external funding occurred; b) Presence: the faculty where most of the doctoral research takes place, where the PhD researchers will spend most of their working hours; c) Start: the faculty where the doctoral research was initiated, where the PhD researcher first registered as a PhD student. If these criteria are not sufficient to distinguish between the two faculties, the managing faculty will be designated by mutual agreement.

53. Regarding the composition of the interdisciplinary IPC and the doctoral jury, an equal representation from both study areas will be strived for. When the interdisciplinary IPC evaluates the progress of the PhD research (preferably each year, otherwise every 2 years), it will verify the interdisciplinary nature of the doctorate, taking into account the criteria described in article 49.

54. During the evaluation of the PhD research and considering the defence, the doctoral jury will additionally evaluate the interdisciplinary nature of the doctorate based on the three criteria stated in article 49. In case the criteria cannot be met, the possibility for the interdisciplinary PhD expires and the defence cannot take place. The doctoral jury can in that case propose a fitting (non-interdisciplinary) PhD degree title for which a new application must be submitted to the Registrar's Office. For the application, the respective procedure of the PhD regulations applies.

55. The thesis has to be defended publicly before a doctoral jury containing at least one member of the senior academic staff (ZAP) from each faculty involved.

56. Only one public defence can take place.

## **7. Mediation and appeal procedure**

57. PhD researchers who do not comply with these regulations may find that the deadlines which the faculty must otherwise comply with may be extended.

58. PhD researchers who believe there to be negligence in the application of these regulations are requested to notify the dean of their faculty. The dean will decide on the consequences of the complaint.

59. If the relationship between the PhD researcher and the supervisor(s) breaks down, either party may notify the chair of the IPC and ask that the IPC be

convened. The IPC will assist in rectifying any misunderstandings, mediate between the parties involved and help establish a solution that is acceptable to all parties.

60. To ensure a high-quality mediation procedure for disputes involving PhD researchers, each faculty and the IOB appoints at least one ombudsperson for PhD researchers. The ombudspersons for PhD researchers are appointed for a period of three years, which is renewable after a positive evaluation by a council or commission in which PhD researchers are also represented. The names of the appointed ombudspersons for PhD researchers are communicated to the Council of the Antwerp Doctoral School annually, before the start of the academic year. The ombudspersons for PhD researchers follow a training programme before taking up their assignment. They comply with the regulations regarding well-being at work and participate annually in the intervision moments organised for them.

61. Candidate ombudspersons belong to the AP, OP or ATP, provided that their appointment (min. 80%) does not end or decrease during their mandate as ombudsperson. To avoid conflicts of interest, it is recommended that the policy advisor research, members of the doctoral administration or the faculty director are not eligible for this. The mandate of ombudsperson for PhD researchers is not compatible with the position of (vice) rector, (vice) dean or (vice) chairman of a (faculty) council or committee. The faculties and IOB can impose additional conditions to the fulfilment of the mandate of ombuds for PhD researchers.

62.a. Notwithstanding §d of this article, the ombudspersons for PhD researchers are a first point of contact for all PhD researchers who during the course of their PhD experience problems in relation to the PhD procedure or in case of interpersonal conflicts which can impede the smooth progress of a PhD, such as disputes with their supervisor and/or PhD committee, or problems for which they cannot turn to their supervisor or individual PhD commission (IPC).

62.b. The ombudspersons for PhD researchers are not authorised for content related problems with regard to the PhD trajectory. For these, PhD researchers turn in the first place to their supervisors and the individual PhD commission, who can take on a mediating role in this. In case of administrative problems, PhD researchers turn to the doctoral administration of their faculty or institute.

62.c. The ombudspersons for PhD researchers act as an impartial third party who listen, give advice, and only at the request of and in consultation with the PhD researchers, mediate between the parties involved and help to seek a solution that is acceptable to all concerned. If the problems identified are of an interpersonal nature, the ombudspersons refer to the network of confidential counsellors, in which the choice of a particular confidential counsellor lies with the PhD researchers.

62.d. For cases of transgressive behaviour at work and for interpersonal problems, whether or not related to the doctorate, PhD researchers can also turn directly to the confidential counsellors of UAntwerp or to Mensura's occupational psychologists. In case of sexually transgressive behaviour, referrals will always be made to Mensura's occupational psychologists, with the ombudspersons retaining their mediating role.

63. The PhD researcher preferably contacts the ombudsperson for PhD researchers of their own faculty or institute; if desired, the PhD researcher can also turn to an ombudsperson for PhD researchers of another faculty or institute. If necessary or if the ombudsperson for PhD researchers and the PhD researcher belong to the same research group, the ombudspersons for PhD researchers can assist each other or in consultation with the questioner take over files from each other.

64. The ombudspersons for PhD researchers determine in consultation with the PhD researchers the way in which the PhD researchers' question is followed up. The timing of feedback to the supervisor is also agreed upon with the PhD researchers. At the request of the PhD researchers, the ombudsperson for PhD researchers can also attend, as an observer, the meetings of the individual PhD commission.

65. The ombudspersons for PhD researchers and all persons involved in the mediation procedure are bound to discretion, and agree in advance with the PhD researchers what can be shared and with whom.

66. Annually, the ombudspersons for PhD researchers report anonymously to the Central Ombudspersons, the Faculty (or Institute) Council, the Council of the Antwerp Doctoral School and the Committee for Prevention and Protection at Work on their activities over the past year.

67. If the mediation measures described in Article 59 are insufficient to solve a conflict, the central ombudsperson shall prepare a report which is then submitted to a mediation committee composed of the relevant dean (chair), the faculty or departmental academic PhD coordinator, the Antwerp Doctoral School ZAP coordinator for the relevant scientific field and the chair of the IPC, who will hear the testimony of the parties involved and then make a binding decision. No further internal appeals can be lodged against this decision.

68. A PhD researcher who believes that a decision made by the IPC or doctoral jury represents a violation of their rights, can – with assistance of an ombudsperson if required – submit an appeal, addressed to the dean in the form of a written request for reconsideration of the original decision. The request must



be submitted within a period of seven calendar days following the communication of the original decision to the PhD researcher. The request shall contain a factual description of and justification for the objections raised.

69. The dean decides whether the appeal is admissible. Appeals which are declared admissible are then addressed by the body which made the original decision. This body offers the PhD researcher an oral explanation of their decision if this was requested in the written appeal.

70. All admissible appeals give rise either to a confirmation of the original decision or to a revision of that decision, accompanied by a justification.

71. The decision described in Article 70 is to be communicated to the PhD researcher within a period of twenty calendar days, which begins the day after the submission of the appeal. The PhD researcher will also be informed about who can be contacted for more information about the decision.

After the internal appeal, the PhD researcher can lodge an appeal against a study progress decision with the Council for Disputes about Decisions on Study Progress (<https://onderwijs.vlaanderen.be/nl/raad>). The PhD researcher must submit the appeal within a period of seven calendar days, starting on the day after the decision of the internal appeal procedure was communicated. The PhD researcher will at the same time send a copy of the appeal petition to the Rector by registered letter (postal address: Rector of the University of Antwerp, Middelheimlaan 1, 2020 Antwerp). In case the Council for Disputes about Decisions on Study Progress nullifies an unlawfully taken decision, and if the PhD researcher decides to challenge a new unfavourable decision that was taken following the verdict of the Council, the obligation to use the internal appeal procedure before lodging an appeal with the Council no longer applies.

## 8. Final provisions

72. The PhD researcher strives to comply with the stipulations of the Code of Ethics for scientific research in Belgium, as endorsed by UAntwerp. The Code of Ethics for scientific research in Belgium aims to ensure that high-quality research is carried out and that publications are truthful. Researchers are required to describe their research methods and results in such a way that the research can be replicated by other researchers. The information included in publications must be verifiable. This means that, at a minimum, the results of the literature review, the hypotheses, experimental set-up, research and analysis methods and sources must be correctly reported in a field log, lab notebook or progress report. If the object of the observations is destroyed (e.g. in the case of excavations), the observations must be registered as accurately as possible. All decisions, arrangements and agreements must be recorded and saved. The primary data and the protocols of the study should be retained and remain accessible for at least five years. If publications – especially reviews and syntheses – do not include all of the details necessary for verification, these must nevertheless remain available.

73. In all phases of the research, the PhD researcher demonstrates compliance with ethical recommendations such as those published by or available from the Committee for Medical Ethics UZA-UAntwerp, the Ethics Committee for Animal Testing, the Ethics Committee for the Social Sciences and Humanities and/or the Ethics Committee for Science and Technology (Dual Use), where applicable and according to the relevant laws and regulations.

74. Any publication which proceeds from research conducted by a PhD researcher as part of a PhD being undertaken at UAntwerp must include an explicit reference to the University of Antwerp and, under the author's contact details, an official University of Antwerp address formatted according to the journal's guidelines. All relevant publications are to be reported at the time of their first publication (whether online or on paper) in order to ensure their inclusion in the Academic Bibliography, in accordance with the guidelines included in the Open Access procedure.

75.a. With regard to scholarship holders and PhD researchers paid by the university, Article IV.48 of the Higher Education Codex states that all rights to potentially valorisable research results are legally transferred to the university.

75.b. Upon enrolment at UAntwerp, and unless otherwise agreed in a joint, double or multiple PhD agreement with another university, PhD researchers who are not covered by Article 75a relinquish any rights to potentially valorisable research results to the University of Antwerp, namely research results that appear to be suitable for societal implementation and/or commercialisation and

## 7. Exceptional provisions

31. Academic assistants (Dutch: *mandaatassistenten*) and PhD researchers in the FBE must enrol as PhD students at the start of their first appointment. The following rules apply:

- Researchers with a degree in Economics or Business Economics are required to enrol for PhD studies in the FBE. Only on the basis of a well-founded request the FDC-FBE can grant permission for the PhD student to apply for PhD studies in other faculties or at other universities or institutions;
- Researchers who do not have a degree in the fields of Economics or Business Economics but whose research projects include components linked to these fields are encouraged to enrol for PhD studies at the FBE;
- Researchers who do not fall into either of these two categories are free to enrol for a PhD of their choice.

## 8. Entry into force and transitional measures

32. These regulations come into force on 21 March 2018.

33. Any IPCs and doctoral juries that were composed in accordance with the guidelines of the previous FBE additional PhD regulations remain in force, even if they deviate from the rules described in these regulations.

which came into being through the PhD researcher's participation in a research project in which use was made of knowledge, resources and/or equipment belonging to the University of Antwerp. If the PhD researchers referred to in this article have made no use of University of Antwerp knowledge, resources and/or equipment, the results will accrue to these researchers. If necessary, the rights can then still be transferred by means of a written agreement.

75.c. It is the responsibility of supervisors to make their PhD researchers aware of the provisions of Articles 75a and 75b at the beginning of each PhD research project and to report any findings to the Valorisation Office immediately, including reference to the potential involvement of the PhD researcher.

76. In the event that a PhD is terminated ahead of time, the PhD researcher must cancel the enrolment in line with the enrolment procedure. The PhD researcher should inform the supervisor(s), faculty administration and Antwerp Doctoral School of the termination as soon as possible.