

Complementary faculty regulations for PhDs and doctoral programmes Faculty of Pharmaceutical, Biomedical and Veterinary Sciences (FBD)

Approved by the FBD Faculty Board on 2 October 2014.

Approved by the University of Antwerp Board of Governors on 16 December 2014.

I General provisions

Art. 1. These regulations apply to doctoral studies carried out in the University of Antwerp Faculty of Pharmaceutical, Biomedical and Veterinary Sciences (FBD). These studies comprise the doctoral programme and the earned doctorate. They are supplementary to the mandated provisions specified in the decree of 4 April 2003 on the restructuring of higher education in Flanders with regard to earning the academic degree of doctor and to the University of Antwerp doctoral regulations, with due consideration for 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 doctorate studies: the department boards (DB), the standard Master exam 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 addressed in the articles below.

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

- §1. admission to doctorate studies, based on an aptitude test for prospective PhD students and on the proposed research project;
- §2. determination of any additional training to be taken during the PhD;
- §3. determination of a possible preparatory programme for prospective PhD students and designation of the examination committee responsible for this preparatory programme;
- §4. designation of the supervisor (or supervisors) 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 IPCs' evaluation reports following the submission of PhD progress reports;
- §9. granting of 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 completed the doctoral study programme successfully.

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

- §11. evaluation of the progress report on 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 on the doctoral programme of individual PhD students;
- §14. monitoring of any 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 file and the conferral of the doctoral programme certificate;
- §18. provision of 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 conditions for a preparatory programme which the DB can impose upon PhD candidates.

II Conditions of admission

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

Art. 9. The aptitude test for prospective PhD students is carried out by the DB on the basis of a file, as determined 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 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, a positive decision may still 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 candidate will contact the department secretariat to find out the practical arrangements regarding the classes to be followed.

Art. 12. If the DB requires the candidate to complete a preparatory programme and exams, 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 for the components of this preparatory programme. The department imposing the preparatory programme designates the exam committee 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 hone their competences as young researchers. In order to do this, the PhD student should refer to the competence profile for PhD students at the University of Antwerp, which distinguishes the following competence categories:

Competence categories (from the competence profile)
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 file 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. It is up to the PhD student to decide which skill a specific activity relates to (with the exception of activities organised by 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 and includes the specifications and limitations listed in Articles 14 to 21 of these supplementary regulations.

Activities (rubrics)	Distribution of credits
1. <u>Educational programmes</u> 1.1 Educational programmes 1.2 Lectures 1.3 Research residencies	0.1/hour 0.1/hour 0.5/5 working days
2. <u>Teaching duties</u> 2.1 Supervision of Bachelor/Master dissertation 2.2 Teaching in higher education 2.3 Supervision of practical training and teaching	1/Bachelor dissertation 2/Master dissertation 0.2/hour 0.1/hour
3. <u>Publications</u> 3.1 International publication (with peer review) 3.1.1 1 st , 2 nd or last author 3.1.2 3 rd and other author 3.2 National or international publication (without peer review) 3.2.1 1 st , 2 nd or last author 3.2.2 3 rd and other author	4 2 1 0
4. <u>Academic communication</u> 4.1 Speech 4.1.1 International conference - invited speaker - presentation 4.1.2 National conference - invited speaker - presentation 4.1.3 Research day (or other activity to popularise science) - invited speaker - presentation 4.2 Poster presentation 4.2.1 International conference 4.2.2 National conference 4.2.3 Research day (or other activity to popularise science) 4.3 Organisation of a scientific activity 4.4 Publication to popularise science	4 3 3 2 - 2 2 1 - 1/day 1

Art. 17. In general, the following specifications apply:

- The credits per activity determined by the Faculty FBD apply to all PhD students in this faculty.
- Activities which were undertaken after completion of the degree which enabled enrolment to prepare a thesis but before actual registration took place may be counted in part or in full within the framework of the doctoral study programme. The PhD student must submit requests for such recognition to the DDC at the start of the PhD.

Art. 18. The following specifications apply to Rubric 1 (Educational programmes):

- Lectures (also in the form of training courses, workshops, conferences, etc.) are eligible for consideration under Rubric 1, provided the file contains proof of participation (e.g. a critical review, a copy of personal notes taken, a short report).
- Meetings do not count as lectures or educational programmes.
- Research residencies may also be counted under Rubric 1. Credits are allocated for units of 5 working days. Research residencies can only be counted under Rubric 1 if the PhD student is member of a research unit.
- Lectures and language courses may each be counted for no more than 9 credits. Research residencies may be counted for no more than 5 credits.

Art. 19. The following specifications apply to Rubric 2 (Teaching duties):

- The activities must be monitored and confirmed by the supervisor.
- Formal mentoring systems can also be counted under this rubric. This activity will be counted for 0.5 credits per academic year. Proof from the department or educational committee is required
- Supervision of a Bachelor dissertation is awarded 1 credit; a Master dissertation is awarded 2 credits.

Art. 20. The following specifications apply to Rubric 3 (Publications):

- Publications may only be counted after acceptance (proof from editor or copy of the publication).
- The number of credits awarded depends on the author's contribution to the publication.
- Abstracts from conferences and similar events are not eligible (though credits may be awarded for posters or presentations).
- Reports and application files are not eligible.
- Referee assignments are not eligible.

Art. 21. The following specifications apply to Rubric 4 (Academic communication):

- A prime example would be a presentation (or poster) at an academic or popular science event, but active involvement in the organisation of such events could be counted as well.
- The number of credits awarded depends on the contribution and the type of conference.
- Presentations at meetings will not be awarded.
- Credits are only allocated in case of proof of participation.
- A publication which popularises science (first author) will be awarded 1 credit.
- Credits can only be awarded/recognised for presentations as a 'presenting author'.

Art. 22. In highly exceptional circumstances, candidates may be exempt from the doctoral study programme. The DB makes this decision based on a justified proposal, substantiated by appropriate documentation.

IV Assessment of the PhD and the doctoral study programme

Art. 23. In order to steer the progress reports in the right direction, the DB appoints a departmental doctoral coordinator within the department. This coordinator is also a member of the FDC and the DDC.

Art. 24. The PhD progress report consists of two components: a research component and an educational component (doctoral study programme). The educational component is assessed annually by the DDC. The research component is assessed at least every two years by the IDC. The monitoring of the doctoral programme is linked to the actual start date of the PhD. The candidate reports this date to the department secretariat when enrolling in the programme.

Art. 25. Immediately after the composition of the IDC, the PhD student sets up an informal introduction with the members of the IDC and submits an abstract of the research proposal. This step will not be supported by the administration or monitored by the department secretariat.

Art. 26. In the second half of the second research year (depending on the actual start date), each PhD student delivers a presentation about their progress to the entire IDC. The PhD student will receive an invitation to this presentation from the department secretariat, with the chair of the IDC and the departmental doctoral coordinator in cc. Students are responsible for the organisation of this presentation. The presentation should provide an overview of the research conducted and of the schedule for the second part of the PhD. In preparation, the PhD student submits a one-page abstract of the research conducted and a brief academic CV to all members of the IDC, at least 10 working days before the presentation.

Art. 27. Academic assistants doing a six-year research project deliver a presentation on their progress to the entire IDC both in the second half of the second research year and in the second half of the fourth research year.

Art. 28. The IDC gives feedback on the progress and results of the doctorate and provides advice for further research plans. On the basis of the meeting, the IDC assesses the PhD student and decides whether the student has made sufficient progress to continue the PhD process. The IDC may decide to invite the PhD student for a meeting in the third year as well, according to the same procedure.

Art. 29. By the end of the PhD student's second research year, at the latest, the chair informs both the department secretariat and the departmental doctoral coordinator of the IDC's decision. In case of a negative assessment, the decision must be immediately communicated in writing to the chair of department and the departmental doctoral coordinator, along with a justification. The Department Board will then decide whether or not the PhD student may continue his or her enrolment.

Art. 30. At least once a year, the departmental doctoral coordinator submits a report on the evaluations to the Department Board.

Art. 31. At the start of the second half of the fourth research year (or the second half of the sixth year for academic assistants doing a six-year research project), the department secretariat invites 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 reports 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. 32. Fourth-year PhD students do not need to hand in progress reports if they submit a draft thesis to the IDC within the time limit prescribed (four months before the end of the fourth year or the sixth year for academic 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 academic 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. 33. If the student has not completed their PhD after four years (or six years for academic 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. 34. The IDC can be assembled at the request of the PhD student or one of the members.

Art. 35. As far as the doctoral study programme is concerned, each PhD student is to submit an annual progress report electronically.

Art. 36. PhD students whose doctoral study files are likely to meet the conditions of the doctoral study programme must submit these files to the Antwerp Doctoral School, along with the necessary supporting documents.

Art. 37. In case of a negative assessment by the IDC or the DDC, the PhD student can ask to be heard 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. 38. 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. 39. Published articles may form an integral part of the thesis, but a homogeneous layout must be ensured.

Art. 40. The PhD student must cover the printing costs.

Art. 41. 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. 42. After the internal defence, the PhD student will receive some advice. This advice can be formulated in three ways:

- positive: only a few small alterations are needed and the supervisor is responsible for monitoring and implementing them.
- positive, provided adaptations are made: the thesis will be accepted, provided 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. 43. If the PhD commission or jury returns 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 is to monitor the implementation of these steps (chair or entire committee).

VI Special provisions

Art. 44. These regulations take effect as of 1 January 2015.

Art. 45. More practical information regarding these supplementary faculty regulations can be found in the faculty's step-by-step plan.