

Supplementary faculty regulations for PhDs and doctoral programmes Science (FWET)

I General provisions

Art. 1. These regulations apply to doctoral studies carried out in the University of Antwerp Faculty of Science. These studies comprise the doctoral programme and the earned doctorate. They are supplementary to the mandated provisions and to the University of Antwerp doctoral regulations.

Art. 2. Within the Faculty of Science, the following boards and commissions are authorised to oversee the doctorate studies: the department boards (DB), the standard Master exam committees (EC), the individual PhD commissions (IPC), the departmental DOCOP committee (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. For PhDs in Science, the Executive Office takes over the responsibilities of the DB and the DDC.

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 any additional educational programme for prospective PhD students who all under Article 10 of the University of Antwerp doctoral regulations and the appointment of the exam committee responsible for assessing it;
- §3. determination of a possible preparatory programme for prospective PhD students falling under Article 11 or Article 13 of the University of Antwerp doctoral regulations and the appointment of the exam committee responsible for assessing it;
- §4. composition of the individual PhD commissions (IPC) and designation of the chair (see University of Antwerp doctoral regulations);
- §5. designation of the departmental doctoral coordinator, who is also a member of the FADOSI and chair of the departmental DOCOP committee (DDC) (see Art. 22 of these supplementary regulations);
- §6. coordination and organisation of discipline-specific activities in the doctoral study programme;
- §7. approval of the IPCs' evaluation reports following the submission of PhD progress reports (see University of Antwerp doctoral regulations);
- §8. granting of permission to write the thesis in a foreign language (see the University of Antwerp doctoral regulations);
- §9. composition of the PhD jury, designation of the chair and specification of the details for the public defence of the thesis (see the University of Antwerp doctoral regulations);
- §10. the points in Art. 4 of these supplementary regulations, as advised by the IPC;
- §11. the advice from the FADOSI (at request of the DB) with regard to the implementation of Art. 21 of these supplementary regulations.

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

- §1. evaluation of the annual progress report on the doctoral programmes of individual PhD students (see the University of Antwerp doctoral regulations);
- §2. disputes between PhD students and their supervisors.
- §3. admission to the preliminary defence based on the draft thesis

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

- §1. evaluation of the annual progress report on the doctoral programme of individual PhD students;
- §2. monitoring of any individual PhD students' educational programmes, as determined by the DB (Art. 3. §2);

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

- §1. coordination and organisation of non-discipline-specific activities in the doctoral study programme;
- §2. the points in Article 5 of these supplementary regulations, as advised by the DDC
- §3. approval of the doctoral study file and the conferral of the doctoral study programme certificate.

Art. 7. The EC has decision-making authority with regard to the fulfilment of conditions for the preparatory programme which the DB may impose upon PhD candidates falling under Art. 3.§3 of these supplementary regulations.

II Conditions of admission

Art. 8. Doctoral studies in the Faculty of Science are open to any prospective PhD student who fulfils the conditions of the decree, 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 results of the aptitude test taken within the framework of Article 9 or Article 10 of the University of Antwerp doctoral regulations have not been announced to the candidate within three months, a positive decision is to be assumed. This does not apply to aptitude tests conducted in the case of Article 11 or 13 of the University of Antwerp doctoral regulations, although decisions on such tests should also be reached within the reasonable period of six weeks.

Art. 11. If the DB requires the candidate to complete an additional educational programme (see Art. 3.§2 of these supplementary regulations), 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 faculty student administration office 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 (see Art. 3.§3 of these supplementary regulations), 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 IPC is composed by the DB when the candidate is admitted to enrol as a PhD student, as specified in the University of Antwerp doctoral regulations.

III Doctoral programme

Art. 14. As part of the doctoral programme, PhD students are expected to hone their competences as young researchers. 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.

Competence categories (from the competence profile)
1. Research skills and techniques
2. Adaptation to the research environment
3. Research management
4. Personal efficiency
5. Communication skills
6. Networking and teamwork
7. Career management

Art. 15. The allocation of credits to each activity must correspond to the following chart containing specifications and limitations, as described in Art. 17 to Art. 20 of these supplementary regulations.

Rubrics	distribution of credits
1. Educational programmes	
1.1. Educational programmes	0.1/hour
1.2. Lectures (or equivalent)	0.1/hour
1.3. Research residencies	0.5/5 working days
2. Teaching duties	
2.1. Supervision of dissertation	1 or 2
2.2. Teaching in higher education	0.2/hour, max 3
2.3. Supervision of practical training and teaching	0.1/hour, max 3
3. Publications	
3.1. with peer review	
3.1.1. first or second author (or equivalent)	3
3.1.2. other authors	1
3.2. without peer review or to popularise science	1
4. Academic communication	
4.1. Speech at conference (or equivalent)	
4.1.1. International	3
4.1.2. National	2
4.2. Poster presentation at conference (or equivalent)	
4.2.1. International	2
4.2.2. National	1
4.3. Organisation of a scientific activity	1/day

Art. 16. In general, the following specifications apply:

- The credits awarded for each activity, as established by the Faculty of Science, apply to all PhD students within 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.

Art. 17. 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 (not including sample collection) 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 programmes may be counted under Rubric 1 but for no more than half of the total number of credits (i.e. 9 credits). Research residencies may be counted for no more than 5 credits.

Art. 18. The following specifications apply to Rubric 2 (Teaching duties):

- The activities must be monitored and confirmed by the supervisor.
- The presentation of the student's research in a class at the request of the course unit coordinator may also be counted under Rubric 2.
- 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. 19. The following specifications apply to Rubric 3 (Publications):

- Publications may only be counted after acceptance (proof from editor or copy of 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. 20. 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.
- Presentations at meetings will not be awarded.
- Credits are only allocated in case of proof of participation.

Art. 21. In highly exceptional circumstances, candidates with special qualifications may be exempted from the obligations and limitations stated in **Fout! Verwijzingsbron niet gevonden.** to Art. 20. The FADOSI provides the DB with advice on this matter (only at the request of the DB) based on a proposal, justification and appropriate supporting documents.

IV Assessment of the PhD and the doctoral study programme

Art. 22. 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 FADOSI and chair of the DDC. With regard to PhDs in Science, we refer to Article 2.

Art. 23. The annual progress report on the PhD 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 IPC. The monitoring of the doctoral programme is linked to the actual start date of the PhD. The supervisor reports this date to the faculty secretariat when the PhD student enrolls in the programme. When starting the doctoral programme, the PhD student sets up an informal introduction with the members of the IPC.

Art. 24. Every year, before 1 May, each PhD student must submit a report on the doctoral programme to the Antwerp Doctoral School (ADS). The progress report must be submitted using the standard electronic form made available for this purpose by the ADS. The activities in the progress report are assessed by the DDC and credits are awarded for the doctoral programme. The DDC submits a report on the evaluations to the PhD student and to the ADS. In case of any dispute, the allocation of credits will be submitted to FADOSI.

Art. 25. 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 IPC. The PhD student will receive an invitation to this presentation from the faculty secretariat, with the chair of the IPC and the departmental doctoral coordinator in cc. 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, including e.g. publications, abstracts from conferences and research residencies, to all members of the IPC, at least 10 working days before the presentation.

Art. 26. The IPC gives feedback on the progress and results of the doctorate and provides advice for further research plans. On the basis of the meeting, the IPC assesses the PhD student and decides whether the student has made sufficient progress to continue the PhD process. The IPC may decide to invite the PhD student for a meeting in the third year as well according to the same procedure and will notify the departmental doctoral coordinator and the faculty secretariat of this.

Art. 27. 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 IPC'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 with enrolment, and notifies the faculty of this decision.

Art. 28. At least once a year, the departmental doctoral coordinator submits a report on the evaluations to the Department Board.

Art. 29. At the start of the second half of the fourth research year, the faculty secretariat invites the PhD student (with the chair of the IPC and the departmental doctoral coordinator in cc) to submit a brief progress report to the members of the IPC at least 4 months before the end of the fourth research year. 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). In case the IPC is not fully convinced of the PhD student's progress after reading the report, the IPC can request an interview with the student, as specified in point 4. Further monitoring and reporting will be performed according to Articles 26-28.

Art. 30. Fourth-year PhD students do not need to hand in a progress report if they submit a draft thesis to the IPC within the time limit prescribed (four months before the end of the fourth year), or if the IPC decides that the student has provided sufficient guarantees that the draft will be submitted before the end of the fourth year. The PhD student and the departmental doctoral coordinator will be informed of this decision by the chair of the IPC.

Art. 31. If the student has not completed their PhD after four years, the PhD student will be assessed by the IPC at the end of each subsequent research year, as specified in Articles 29 and 30. In the case of academic assistants doing six-year research projects, the IPC may decide to make an exception with the departmental doctoral coordinator's approval.

Art. 32. The IPC can be assembled at the request of the PhD student or one of the members.

Art. 33. Every year, the departmental doctoral coordinator submits a report on the evaluations to the FADOSI. Issues relating to the evaluation of both the educational and research components are discussed at the next FADOSI meeting.

Art. 34. In case of a negative assessment by the IPC or the DDC, the DB or FADOSI (respectively) can advise the rector to refuse a subsequent enrolment (see Article 17 of the University of Antwerp doctoral regulations). In addition, the PhD student should have the opportunity to be heard in advance by the DB or the FADOSI. The PhD student can request assistance from the ombudsperson.

Art. 35. PhD students whose doctoral study files are likely to meet the conditions of the doctoral study programme will be invited to submit a complete file by the administrative doctoral coordinator. This complete file should contain a minimum of supporting documents which prove the eligibility of the activities mentioned in the file.

V Doctoral thesis and final stage of the doctoral programme

Art. 36. Published articles by the PhD student concerned may form an integral part of the thesis. The thesis should have a uniform layout.

Art. 37. The PhD student must cover the printing costs.

Art. 38. The internal defence of the thesis is part of the assessment of the thesis. The procedure concerning the preliminary defence of the thesis is applied as follows:

1. The preliminary defence of the thesis is a compulsory part of the assessment of the draft thesis in the Faculty of Science. The opportunity for this defence is specified in the general University of Antwerp regulations approved on 17 March 2009 (Article 33).

2. After submitting the thesis to the individual PhD commission (IPC), the IPC should decide within four weeks whether the PhD student may proceed to the preliminary defence of the thesis.
3. In case of a positive decision, a five-week period between the PhD commission's decision and the preliminary defence is to be observed.
4. The PhD jury is composed by the department board at least three weeks before the preliminary defence. An electronic voting system may be used to compose the jury.
5. The chair of the PhD jury invites the jury members to the preliminary defence. The chair delivers the draft thesis to the other members of the PhD jury.
6. The PhD jury contains the same members for both the preliminary and public defences.
7. It is not necessary for the external jury members to attend the preliminary defence. If they are not present, however, they are required to submit a written report to the chair of the PhD jury. At least four members of the PhD jury must be present at the preliminary defence. External jury members may choose to attend only the preliminary defence, and to submit their questions (and comments) for the defence to the chair.
8. At the request of the PhD student or a jury member, a guest may be invited to attend the preliminary defence.
9. During the preliminary defence, the PhD student is expected to deliver a presentation of no more than 30 minutes on the doctoral research project. Afterwards, the members of the PhD jury will ask some questions. The entire preliminary defence will take no longer than three hours.
10. The preliminary defence of the thesis may be conducted in either Dutch or English, in consultation between the candidate, the chair and the members of the PhD jury.
11. The chair of the PhD jury writes a brief report on both the preliminary and public defences. This report is also signed by the other members of the PhD jury.
12. The preliminary defence can lead to the following decisions:
 - a. the thesis will be accepted without any further conditions;
 - b. the thesis will be accepted, provided minor revisions are made. The responsibility for the revisions lies with the supervisor;
 - c. the thesis will be accepted, provided major revisions are made. The entire IPC should agree on the revisions before the thesis is admitted for the final defence;
 - d. the thesis will not be accepted and should be presented during a new preliminary defence after major revision.
13. In order for the candidate to be admitted to the public defence, they should obtain a two-thirds majority of votes from the members of the PhD jury who were present at the preliminary defence.
14. The public defence should be held between three and six weeks following the preliminary defence. If minor or major revisions are required, this period begins following the jury's approval of the adaptations. The PhD student is to submit the final version of the thesis to the chair at least one week before the public defence.

Art. 39. If the individual PhD commission or jury returns a negative assessment of the (draft) thesis, the procedure concerning the public defence of the thesis 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. 40. These regulations take effect as of 1 October 2014, including for PhDs currently in progress. A PhD student who is in his or her third research year on 1 October 2014 can choose either to submit a written report as specified in the regulations applicable until 30 September 2014 or to deliver an oral report as specified in Article 25.

Art. 41. When preparing their annual doctoral programme progress reports, PhD students with enrolments dating from before 1 October 2011 who have not yet completed the doctoral programme may opt not to use the new progress report, which is structured according to the competence profile.