

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. I.3, sub 39). The qualification therefore indicates the specific title of the academic degree of doctor being conferred¹.
- **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 students included in this document as Appendix 1 applies to all PhD students and their supervisors.

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.

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 student'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).

4. Besides preparing a thesis, PhD students 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 students.

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.

2. Admission and enrolment

6. PhD students wishing to obtain the academic degree of doctor must enrol every academic year during the enrolment period. For more information about the admission and enrolment procedures, please see Appendix 3 of these regulations.

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.

8. In order to obtain permission to enrol for the preparation of a thesis, PhD candidates must send a written application to the faculty via the Registrar's Office (Dutch: *Centrale Onderwijsadministratie*)

¹In these regulations, the research discipline is equated to the diploma qualification.

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.

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.

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.

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 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.

3. Supervision – individual PhD commission (IPC) – faculty PhD commissions

13. The supervisor(s) is (are) responsible for the supervision of the doctoral work. 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 student or one of the IPC members.

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: *zelfstandig academisch personeel*, ZAP) at UAntwerp or an emeritus with a structural 'assignment', but cannot be the PhD student's supervisor. The chair is not necessarily required to be a member of the IPC.

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.

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' (BAP appointment in line with retirement regulations).

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 emeriti 'with assignments'. 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 student'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 student'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 student 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 student permission to reenrol for the current PhD.

21. Every year, the faculty PhD commission follows up on each PhD student'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.

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 student is enrolled 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 student'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 emeriti with structural 'assignments' (BAP), 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 student'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 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 student'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 student 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 student with respect to the draft thesis. If the individual PhD commission's response is negative, it will inform the PhD student 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 student sends 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 student and the faculty. If the jury agrees to the public defence of the thesis, the PhD student informs the faculty and the Registrar's Office of this in writing. The PhD student 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 student. 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 student. 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 student 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.

36. The defence of the thesis is public.

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 student's supervisors.

38. The doctoral jury meets immediately after the defence and decides whether the PhD student has been successful or not before officially announcing the results. Grades are not awarded.

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.

40. The successfully defended thesis should be submitted to the UAntwerp Central Library for safekeeping according to [the procedure set out for that purpose](#). As part of this procedure, the PhD student should submit at least a digital version of the thesis prior to the defence.

5. Joint and double PhDs

41. UAntwerp can award a joint or double PhD with another Belgian or international university provided that the PhD students 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 and double PhDs.

42. PhD students wishing to obtain a joint or double 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 student has to comply with the administration requirements of both universities regarding enrolment.

43. For every joint or double PhD, a partnership agreement is drawn up between the PhD student 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 students 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 students will spend most of their working hours; c) Start: the institution where the doctoral research was initiated, where the PhD student 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 double or joint 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 student has conducted research for which the expertise, knowledge and methodologies 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 or double PhD.

49. PhD students 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 annex 3.

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. 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 students will spend most of their working hours; c) Start: the faculty where the doctoral research was initiated, where the PhD student first registered. 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 IPC and the doctoral jury, an equal representation from both study areas will be strived for. When the individual interdisciplinary PhD commission 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 54.

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 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 methodologies 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 that is carried out under the supervision of different researchers. Not one of the study areas is an 'additional' 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.

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

58. PhD students 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 student 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. PhD students may request additional mediation from the central ombudsperson in the event of further problems. If the central ombudsperson is directly involved as a supervisor or member of the IPC, the dean appoints a neutral member of the senior academic staff (ZAP) as a mediator.

61. If the mediation measures described in Article 57 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 doctoral 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.

62. PhD students who believes that a decision made by the IPC or doctoral jury represents a violation of their rights should – with the assistance of the central ombudsperson if required – submit an appeal following the procedure described in Articles 63 to 66.

63. The PhD student submits 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 student. The request shall contain a factual description of and justification for the objections raised.

64. 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 student an oral explanation of their decision if this was requested in the written appeal.

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

66. The decision described in Article 65 is to be communicated to the PhD student within a period of twenty calendar days, which begins the day after the submission of the appeal. The PhD student will also be informed about who can be contacted for more information about the decision.

After the internal appeal, the PhD student 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 student 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 student 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 student 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

67. The PhD student 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.

68. In all phases of the research, the PhD student 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.

69. Any publication which proceeds from research conducted by a PhD student 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.

70.a. With regard to scholarship holders and PhD students 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.

70.b. Upon enrolment at UAntwerp, and unless otherwise agreed in a joint or double PhD agreement with another university, PhD students who are not covered by Article 70a 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 which came into being through the PhD student'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 students referred to in this article have made no use of University of Antwerp knowledge, resources and/or equipment, the results will accrue to these students. If necessary, the rights can then still be transferred by means of a written agreement.

70.c. It is the responsibility of supervisors to make their PhD students aware of the provisions of Articles 70a and 70b 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 student.

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

Appendix 1: Charter for PhD students

Introduction

The charter for PhD students prescribes common practice for all parties involved in the PhD process. This document complements the university's PhD regulations, the faculty PhD regulations, as well as the various staff regulations that may apply to PhD students.

The charter is intended for and is endorsed by all key players in the PhD process at the University of Antwerp: the PhD students, their supervisor(s) and the representative of the research group.

The commitments expressed in the charter are not legally binding, however.

PhD student

The PhD students are expected to:

1. take the necessary administrative steps to start the PhD process, including registration as a PhD student, and renewing this registration each year;
2. draw up a research plan with the supervisor(s) as soon as possible, and carry out research efficiently and to the appropriate standard, within the proposed time frame;
3. conduct research according to the principles of scientific integrity, as endorsed by the University of Antwerp. Violations of scientific integrity include plagiarism, fabrication and falsification of data, and conflicts of interest;
4. be committed to participating in the mandatory doctoral study programme organised by the Antwerp Doctoral School;
5. submit their work on a regular basis to the supervisor(s), ensuring a reasonable time frame to review the texts;
6. submit a progress report on the PhD research according to the agreed deadlines;
7. submit an annual progress report on the doctoral study programme;
8. submit the written report of their research within the agreed deadlines to allow sufficient time for comments and discussion;
9. decide when they will submit their thesis, taking into account the opinion of the supervisor(s);
10. inform the department/faculty administration office and Registrar's Office, as well as their supervisor(s), if they decide to discontinue the PhD studies;
11. bring any problems, including those of a social or medical nature, to the attention of their supervisor(s), highlighting any issues that could affect their PhD work;
12. act in accordance with the core values of the University of Antwerp;
13. make arrangements with the supervisor(s) about working hours and leave within the prescribed regulations of the University of Antwerp and of the research group;
14. be aware of the social provisions available for illness, pregnancy, etc. according to the applicable staff regulations.

Supervisor

The supervisor(s) is (are) closely involved with the doctoral study programme of the PhD student. The supervisor(s) is (are) expected to:

1. arrange the initial reception of the PhD student within the research group, the department and/or faculty. The supervisor explains the daily operation of the research group, introduces the PhD student to colleagues and makes the PhD student aware of concrete agreements within the research group;
2. facilitate contact between the PhD student and members of the individual PhD commission (IPC);
3. inform the PhD student about the principles of scientific integrity, as endorsed by the University of Antwerp. The supervisor should set an example in the realisation of these principles;
4. make the PhD student aware of the core values of the University of Antwerp;
5. guide the PhD student in developing a research plan, and discuss with the PhD student a realistic timetable and associated research methods;
6. notify the PhD student when specific steps need to be taken in the context of intellectual property rights (IPR), in collaboration with the interface service of the University's Department of Research Affairs and Innovation;
7. provide information to the PhD student, where necessary, on sourcing funding for additional research activities in the framework of the PhD, as well as for the equipment necessary for the PhD research;
8. be available to discuss all aspects of the research at least twice per semester;
9. encourage the PhD students to present their scientific work at various forums; keep them informed of relevant conferences, seminars, summer schools, workshops and similar opportunities; and explain how the PhD student can keep up to date with such opportunities;

10. encourage the PhD students to publish their scientific work and help them find the appropriate channels for this purpose;
11. discuss the division of time between research and education and ensure that the teaching assignments and other tasks of the PhD student are carefully planned, so that the completion of the PhD within the prescribed period is not compromised;
12. discuss the PhD student's training needs with him/her, based on the competence profile of the ADS, and provide advice on how these needs can be met within the framework of the doctoral study programme;
13. determine a realistic and detailed timetable with the PhD students for the completion of their research and for the writing of their thesis;
14. regularly review draft versions of the thesis and give constructive feedback to the PhD student;
15. review incremental progress made and, in consultation with the PhD student, adjust the objectives of the PhD research in light of this progress and any external factors (for example newly published findings);
16. support the PhD students as far as possible in valorising their research work through publications, and in the case of co-authorship, by acknowledging the actual share of work performed by the PhD student;
17. inform the PhD student about the faculty/department regulations and administration relevant to the PhD studies;
18. make the PhD student aware of various career options, even in the non-academic sector;
19. make arrangements with the PhD student about working hours and leave within the prescribed regulations of the University of Antwerp and the research group.

The representative of the hosting research group

The representative of the hosting research group is expected to:

1. facilitate the involvement of the PhD student in the activities of the research group, for example by inviting the PhD student to internal research meetings and social activities;
2. encourage the PhD students to share or present their work during internal research meetings of the research group;
3. facilitate access to the research group's infrastructure;
4. in case of problems, mediate within the research group, for example between PhD students;
5. call the supervisor and/or the PhD student to order if either of them expresses unrealistic expectations.

Individual PhD commission (IPC)

Each PhD student is assigned an individual PhD commission (IPC) at the start of the PhD studies. This commission includes the supervisor(s) and a chairperson who is not the supervisor. The commission is responsible for monitoring the progress of the PhD research. The following expectations apply to the individual PhD commission:

1. the IPC meets according to the deadlines specified in the faculty's PhD regulations for evaluating the PhD thesis progress report;
2. the IPC can ask the PhD student for additional clarifications if needed;
3. the IPC's recommendation may be positive, positive with some conditions or negative, and the PhD student receives feedback on this recommendation;
4. the IPC (impartially) mediates in case problems arise between the PhD student and the supervisor(s);
5. the IPC evaluates the draft thesis, and decides whether the thesis can be submitted to the full doctoral jury.

Faculty/department

The faculty/department has the following responsibilities in the PhD process:

1. inform the PhD student about the administrative procedures involved in doing a PhD;
2. make efforts to organise an adequate range of scientific activities for its PhD students;
3. provide the PhD student the opportunity to be heard in the event that the IPC returns a negative assessment of the progress reports;

Faculty PhD coordinator

Each faculty has an academic PhD coordinator. An overview of all faculty coordinators can be found on the ADS website. The faculty PhD coordinator is expected to:

1. provide advice on the faculty and administrative regulations concerning PhDs;
2. initiate the organisation of discipline-related scientific activities in the faculty;
3. act as the contact person for the faculty's PhD initiatives;
4. gather and provide information about the allocation of faculty funds for the doctoral study programme;
5. coordinate the annual progress reports of the doctoral study programme, in collaboration with the ADS;
6. be a point of contact in case there are problems between the PhD student and supervisor(s).

PhD student representatives in the policy and administrative bodies of UAntwerp

An overview of all PhD student representatives in the various policy and administrative bodies of the university can be found on the ADS website.

Each PhD student representative is expected to:

1. act as the faculty contact for all PhD students who have suggestions, comments and questions about the policy and management of the university with regard to PhD studies;
2. represent the interests of PhD students in the policy and administrative bodies;
3. provide feedback to PhD students.

Central contact persons at the Antwerp Doctoral School

The Antwerp Doctoral School (ADS) has a central coordinator and various administrative staff. Their contact details and specific responsibilities are available on the ADS website.

The central contact persons:

1. are familiar with the central and faculty/department regulations and procedures governing the PhD studies. They can be contacted for administrative problems regarding the PhD studies and can refer the PhD student to the appropriate persons and agencies;
2. keep the PhD student informed of the training opportunities offered by the Antwerp Doctoral School (via a newsletter and the website) as well as the status of the doctoral study programme (progress reports). They draft the supplement to the PhD diploma and the doctoral study programme, with input from the PhD student;
3. coordinate the annual progress reports in collaboration with the faculty coordinators.

Central ombudsperson

The university has a central ombudsperson. The contact details are available on the ADS website.

The central ombudsperson:

1. provides assistance to the PhD students (at their request) in the case of a hearing before the faculty or department board in the event that an individual PhD commission issues a negative evaluation of a progress report;
2. mediates in conflicts at the request of the PhD students;
3. intervenes during the procedure leading to the public defence of the thesis in the event of disputes;
4. handles inquiries and complaints discreetly and confidentially;
5. responds and acts within a reasonable timeframe.

Additional information

Up-to-date information about doing a PhD, the doctoral study programme, the PhD regulations and procedures, are available on the website of the Antwerp Doctoral School (ADS): <http://www.uantwerpen.be/adse>.

Information about the social rights associated with the statute of the PhD student can be found on the Human Resources Department's subsite on Pintra.

Appendix to the Charter for PhD Students: Integrity charter for PhD students and supervisors affiliated with the University of Antwerp

Given the economic and societal importance of conducting and supporting thorough research, the University of Antwerp expects its researchers to adhere to the current standards of scientific integrity. The university subscribes to the Code of Ethics for Scientific Research in Belgium and The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity. Some of the basic principles in these codes are briefly described below.

Each PhD student and supervisor is expected to be aware of these values and to take them into account in the implementation and supervision of PhD research.

Basic principles of scientific integrity and ethical research

1. Diligence

Researchers should conduct their research in an accurate, nuanced and truthful manner, while always observing the applicable protocols. They should develop sufficient knowledge of the status quo and should be sufficiently qualified to conduct research. A research leader always exercises adequate supervision over the research of colleagues.

2. Caution

While the concern of the researchers focuses primarily on gaining and expanding their knowledge, it is important to avoid unnecessary or excessive risk. The researchers should always show respect for people, animals and objects that are part of the research. If mistakes are made, they should assume responsibility and try to repair the damage to the best of their ability.

3. Reliability

Research results should always be presented in an accurate and precise manner, and all unauthorised additions, deletions or manipulations are to be avoided. The applicable principles regarding intellectual property are always respected in this regard.

4. Verifiability

The results of all phases of the research and the resources used should be described correctly so that research accuracy can be tested through replication. The primary data and the protocols of the study should be retained and remain accessible for a sufficiently long time.

5. Independence

Research commissioned by external parties should be conducted without any involvement from these parties. The client and external financiers, as well as their relationship to the researcher should be made public with the publication of the research results. Clients and researchers/research institutions should always make clear contractual agreements.

6. Impartiality

Researchers are entitled to their own opinions and preferences but these should not interfere with their academic work or when performing a peer review. In such cases, the distinction between scientific assessment and personal preference should be clearly indicated.

Appendix 2: University of Antwerp PhD degree titles

(Approved by the Board of Governors on 27/05/2008, 31/01/2012, 23/04/2013, 24/06/2014, 15/12/2015 & 30/01/2018)

Study areas and qualifications	Faculties responsible
Study area: Architecture Doctor of Architecture Doctor of Heritage Studies Doctor of Interior Architecture Doctor of Urbanism and Spatial Planning Doctor of Monument and Landscape Conservation	Faculty of Design Sciences
Study area: Audiovisual and Visual Arts* <i>see combined study areas</i>	ARIA
Study area: Biomedical Sciences Doctor of Biomedical Sciences	Faculty of Pharmaceutical, Biomedical and Veterinary Sciences
Study area: Conservation and Restoration Doctor of Conservation-Restoration	Faculty of Design Sciences
Study area: Veterinary Medicine Doctor of Veterinary Sciences	Faculty of Pharmaceutical, Biomedical and Veterinary Sciences
Study area: Pharmaceutical Sciences Doctor of Pharmaceutical Sciences	Faculty of Pharmaceutical, Biomedical and Veterinary Sciences
Study area: History Doctor of History	Faculty of Arts
Study area: Industrial Sciences and Technology Doctor of Applied Engineering	Faculty of Applied Engineering
Study area: Medical Sciences Doctor of Medical Sciences	Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences
Study area: Music and Performing Arts* <i>see combined study areas</i>	ARIA
Study area: Nautical Sciences* Doctor of Nautical Sciences	Associated Faculty of Nautical Sciences
Study area: Education Sciences Doctor of Education Sciences	Faculty of Social Sciences
Study area: Product Development Doctor of Product Development	Faculty of Design Sciences
Study area: Political and Social Sciences Doctor of Social Sciences Doctor of Social Sciences: Sociology Doctor of Social Sciences: Communication Studies Doctor of Social Sciences: Political Science Doctor of Social Sciences: Political Communication Doctor of Social Sciences: Social Work Doctor of Information and Library Science Doctor of Film Studies and Visual Culture	Faculty of Social Sciences Dr of Information and Library Science: Faculties of Social Sciences & Arts
Study area: Law, Notarial Law and Criminology Doctor of Law	Faculty of Law
Study area: Linguistics and Literary Studies Doctor of Linguistics and Literary Studies Doctor of Literary Studies Doctor of Linguistics Doctor of Theatre Science and Intermediality	Faculty of Arts

Study area: Biological Sciences Doctor of Bioscience Engineering	Faculty of Science
Study area: Applied linguistics Doctor of Translation Studies	Faculty of Arts
Study area: Economics and Business Economics Doctor of Applied Economics Doctor of Transport and Maritime Economics Doctor of Management	Faculty of Business and Economics
Study area: Science Doctor of Science Doctor of Science: Biochemistry and Biotechnology Doctor of Science: Biology Doctor of Science: Chemistry Doctor of Science: Physics Doctor of Science: Computer Science Doctor of Science: Mathematics	Faculty of Science Faculty of Pharmaceutical, Biomedical and Veterinary Sciences (Biochemistry)
Study area: Philosophy Doctor of Philosophy	Faculty of Arts
Combined study areas	
Study area: Economics and Business Economics Study area: Political and Social Sciences Study area: Law, Notarial Law and Criminal Sciences Doctor of Development Studies	Institute of Development Policy
Study area: Audiovisual and Visual Arts Study area: Music and Performing Arts Doctor of Arts*	ARIA
Study area: Political and Social Sciences Study area: Sciences Doctor of Environmental Science	Faculty of Social Sciences Faculty of Science
Study area: Economics and Business Economics Study area: Political and Social Sciences Doctor of Social and Economic Sciences	Faculty of Business and Economics Faculty of Social Sciences
Study area: Economics and Business Economics Study area: Law, Notarial Law and Criminal Sciences Doctor of Safety Sciences	Faculty of Business and Economics Faculty of Law
Study area: History Study area: Linguistics and Literary Studies Study area: Applied Linguistics Study area: Philosophy Doctor of Digital Humanities	Faculty of Arts

*: Codification (11 October 2013) of the decree provisions governing higher education, Art. II.74: "A university can confer the degree of doctor in the fields of Audiovisual and Visual Arts, Music and Performing Arts, and Nautical Sciences, or in specific disciplines within these fields, provided the PhD project is embedded in a joint research environment consisting of the university and one or more university colleges. According to Articles II.83 to II.101, such university colleges should be authorised to offer Master-level courses in the field of study concerned."

Appendix 3: Procedure for enrolling as a PhD student at UAntwerp

- In order to obtain permission to enrol, the candidate PhD student should send a written application for admission to start a PhD to the Registrar's Office (Dutch: *Centrale Onderwijsadministratie*). Students who hold a Master's degree conferred in the Flemish Community or in the Netherlands may use the Dutch application form "Toelating voor doctorandi (op basis van een Vlaams of Nederlands masterdiploma)". Students who hold a Master's degree conferred outside of the Flemish Community or the Netherlands should use the application form "Admission for PhD students with a foreign diploma". The application forms include detailed instructions. They are available at <https://www.uantwerpen.be/en/research-and-innovation/phd/getting-started/registrars-office/>
- The Registrar's Office transfers the application and a recommendation form to the faculty. The faculty aims to decide within a reasonable time frame (i.e. within six to eight weeks) whether the candidate PhD student can be granted permission to enrol in the desired study area and qualification. This time frame cannot be guaranteed between 20 July and 31 August. If the faculty accepts the candidate and the subject, it will immediately establish the individual PhD commission and appoint the supervisors, taking into account Articles 14-19.
- The faculty informs the Registrar's Office of its decision regarding the application using the recommendation form. The Registrar's Office then informs the candidate PhD student and, in the event of a positive decision, provides further information about the next steps in the enrolment procedure.
- These application forms must also be used if, during the course of the PhD, the PhD student decides to change study area or qualification. The application must be submitted before reenrolment and at least one year before the defence of the doctoral thesis. The change is then recorded at the start of the academic year following the application.
- An application for enrolment as a new PhD student can be made until 31 May of the academic year in question.
- The PhD student must reenrol every academic year using the SisA self-service. Reenrolment must be completed before 15 October during the academic year in question. Reenrolment between 15 October and 31 May during the academic year in question is only possible if the faculty has granted permission for this in SisA. The provisions of the enrolment procedure apply. If the PhD student has any questions about the administrative procedure, he or she should contact the Registrar's Office through the helpdesk http://uahost.uantwerpen.be/helpdesk/ro_helpdesk/.
- Tuition fees are payable for PhD programmes, including joint or double PhDs, in accordance with the enrolment procedure. Tuition fees must be paid for the first enrolment as a PhD student and for the defence of the PhD. If both of these events occur in the same academic year, both tuition fees must be paid.
The tuition fees payable for the defence may be waived for incoming joint or double PhD students if the defence will take place abroad (i.e. not at UAntwerp) *and* if the foreign institution provides the degree certificate (alone). With regard to joint or double PhDs undertaken in cooperation with another Flemish university, no tuition fees are payable to UAntwerp for these incoming joint or double PhD students.

Appendix 4: Required identification details for the doctoral thesis

The thesis should include the following details *on the cover* of the thesis as a minimum:

UANTWERP LOGO	
(faculty) (department, if applicable)	
Title of the thesis in the language in which the thesis is written²	
Thesis submitted for the degree of doctor of (qualification of the degree)³ at the University of Antwerp to be defended by First Name⁴ SURNAME	
Name of supervisor(s)⁴	Antwerp, year

Please contact the New Media Service (Dutch: *Nieuwe Media Dienst*) for advice on layout.

² The Dutch translation of the title should be included inside the thesis if the thesis is written in another language.

³ See Appendix 2.

⁴ First name according to the preferences of the author or supervisor(s), written in full.