

# Welcome to your PhD at the department of Chemistry and Pharmaceutical Sciences

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## How is the department of Chemistry and Pharmaceutical Sciences organized?

The department of Chemistry and Pharmaceutical Sciences (CPS) is part of the Faculty of Science. The department is made up of seven sections:

- 1) BioAnalytical Chemistry (BAC)
- 2) Innovations in Human Health & Life Sciences (iH2LS)
- 3) Medicinal Chemistry (MedChem)
- 4) Molecular and Computational Toxicology (MolTox)
- 5) Organic Chemistry (OC)
- 6) Theoretical Chemistry (TC)
- 7) Deep Tech Innovation (DTI)

The PhD coordinators for the department are Yvette Schipper and dr. Daan Geerke ([phdcoordination.sf@vu.nl](mailto:phdcoordination.sf@vu.nl)). Yvette Schipper is your point of contact for questions that your supervisor is not able to answer.

## Tips to get you started with your PhD

- 🔗 Look at the PhD roadmap [here](#) of the Faculty of Science
- 🔗 Register via Hora Finita (HF) via the key users ([secretariaat.sf.beta@vu.nl](mailto:secretariaat.sf.beta@vu.nl))
  - You will receive an email with more information
- 🔗 Get your Training and Supervision Plan (TSP) ready
  - Guidelines for the TSP and courses can be found in appendix A.
  - Fill in the TSP with your Supervisor
  - Must be done within the first three months upon starting your PhD
  - Points to check:
    - Correct addition of the points (ECs)
    - For courses: use footnotes to websites or study guides

- An external supervisor is **mandatory**
- 🔗 Send the TSP first to the PhD coordinator via [phdcoordination.sf@vu.nl](mailto:phdcoordination.sf@vu.nl) for a check and approval
- 🔗 Before submitting your form and TSP in HF, double check all the information! If your application gets rejected, the process can take a lot longer
- 🔗 Sign up for the [VU buddy program](#) (if you want): The aim is to get international students in contact with someone already working at the VU, but from another department. Your buddy could guide you and would be someone you could go to when you are feeling e.g. isolated

## Tips to get you finished on time

- 🔗 You should finish your thesis on time so within 3 to 4 years, depending on your contract. It is your right and both your and your supervisor's duty to ensure so.
- 🔗 Register in HF in time! To finish your PhD, you have to complete the compulsory "Science Integrity" course organized by the VU. You are only invited to participate in this course after you are completely registered in HF, so do not forget it.
- 🔗 As of September 2022, PhD students at the VU need to complete a plagiarism check using the iThenticate tool. More information can be found [here](#).
- 🔗 Requirement to graduate: Thesis should be minimum 4 chapters + introduction + conclusion, so a guideline is to aim for at least 4 articles – More info can be found [here](#) about the regulations.  
*!/ \ it is only a guideline, it can also vary a little. Discuss it with your supervisor.*
- 🔗 Plan ahead: Once your thesis is sent to committee it can take up to **2 months** to be returned with comments for revision. The thesis should be sent to the committee about **4 months** before your end date.
- 🔗 To get a date for the defense can also take about 2 months.

## Contact information, Interesting links & Opportunities

- 🔗 For more information about the VU PhD, please look [here](#).
- 🔗 Science Faculty PhD Council: the Faculty of Science has a PhD council that represents the PhD students. The S&F representative can be found [here](#). If there is a vacancy, you can apply to represent the PhD students of our department!
- 🔗 Confidential counsellors: <https://vu.nl/en/research/more-about/help-support-and-advice-for-phd-candidates>
- 🔗 Departmental Secretary/Hora Finita key users: [secretariaat.sf.beta@vu.nl](mailto:secretariaat.sf.beta@vu.nl)
- 🔗 VU PhD Psychologist, Victor Kraak: [v.c.kraak@vu.nl](mailto:v.c.kraak@vu.nl)

## Appendix

### Appendix A: TSP Guidelines

### General system

A 4-year PhD student should acquire 30 ECs, which equates to 840 hours of study (1 EC = 28 hours of workload). External PhD students could apply for exemptions; this should be discussed with CPS MT. For ITN PhD students we accept the EU-approved teaching plan, but the mandatory courses (e.g. the integrity course) should still be done.

The Training and Supervision Plan (TSP) is split in four parts:

- A. Mandatory (minimum 4 EC)
  - *For the course on Scientific Integrity: Faculty Board (FB) will only admit students to this course after being fully registered in Hora Finita.*
  - *A visit to at least one international conference is mandatory.*
- B. General skills (together with C: minimum 8, maximum 20 EC)
- C. Scientific specialization (together with B: minimum 8, maximum 20 EC)
- D. Research-related activities (minimum 8, maximum 20 EC)

### Why this document/our guiding principles

- PhD students should gain a diverse set of competences throughout their PhD.
- There should be harmonisation for the TSPs within the CPS department.
- It should be as clear as possible which activities we consider as acceptable.

#### **CPS PhD coordinator needs to approve the TSP**

All TSPs need to be approved by the PhD coordinator of the graduate school at the start and at the end of your PhD. Please sent TSPs to this address: [phdcoordination.sf@vu.nl](mailto:phdcoordination.sf@vu.nl). TSPs should **first** be sent to the PhD coordinator before uploading it in Hora Finita, otherwise you risk that your registration will be rejected.

#### **External advisor is mandatory**

Each PhD student should have an external advisor, who will meet with the candidate and his/her promotor at least once during the PhD trajectory. This advisor should be from outside the research section, but can be from within the department or from other departments. This external advisor will help keep track of the progress and can ensure that the thesis is sufficient to comply with standards in the field. Details should be given in the TSP table.

## Training and Supervision Plan guidelines

The CPS guidelines are shown in Table 1 below. Note that ‘once’ means that points will only be given for the first instance that the activity is done (and not per year, but over the entire trajectory).

Table 1: How points should be awarded

No	Activity	How points should be awarded
1	Seminars, journal clubs etc.	Fixed number of ECs: every PhD student gets 4 EC (3-year PhD) or 6 EC (4-year PhD)
2	Poster presentation	1 EC (once) <sup>1</sup>
3	Oral presentation (national)	1 EC (once) <sup>1</sup>
4	Oral presentation (international)	1 EC (each)
5	Attendance conference (national)	1 EC (each, max 2)
6	Attendance conference (international)	2 EC (once) <sup>2</sup>
7	Membership representative body (PhD council, ProVU etc)	2 EC (once) <sup>3</sup>
8	Course	1 EC per two days <sup>4</sup>
9	First author (peer-reviewed paper)	2 EC for the first paper; 1 EC for each additional paper
10	Organisation of workshop/meeting	1 EC (once) <sup>5</sup>
11	Company visit/communication, collaboration with private partners	1 EC (once)

<sup>1</sup>After the first instance you master this and you cannot get additional ECs

<sup>2</sup>One international conference is obligatory for CPS. An international conference is a conference which has an international scope, speakers and audience (some editions may be in NL). Consortium meetings do not count as an international conference

<sup>3</sup>Membership should be at least one year. The limit to the number of points means that representative bodies should be refreshed regularly and more people can be involved in it

<sup>4</sup>PhD students should add up all their course days and divide this by 2 to get to the number of ECs. This number will be floored to get to integer points (floor(x) = is the largest integer less than or equal to x)

<sup>5</sup>This should be a workshop or symposium for scientific purposes. Being a representative on a Master’s day is not enough.

Table 2 summarizes the list of activities within the Training and Supervision Plan that we do and do not accept.

Table 2: Activities that we do and do not accept\*

What we accept	What we do not accept
Courses on learning how to teach	Work discussions (see Table 1, point 1)
	Teaching
	Data analysis
	Representation on a Master’s day

\* This list will, by definition, not be complete. In case of doubts, discuss this with the PhD coordinator prior to sending the Training and Supervision Plan.

## Other general points

- The PhD coordinator of the CPS department needs to approve the TSP.
- An external advisor is mandatory.
- The promotor is responsible for checking if the points have been acquired by the PhD student.
- Only integer points can be given.
- Each student should at least go to one international conference.
- Courses done in the master may be included with the ECs that have been rewarded in the master, **but only**:
  - For courses on soft skills;
  - After consultation with the PhD coordinator of the CPS department.

## Training and Supervision Plan example

Table 3: An example TSP for a 4-year PhD student (30 EC)

Part	Activity	Points
<b>A</b>	<b>Mandatory</b>	<i>(min 4 EC)</i>
	Integrity course	2
	Attendance conference ( <i>international</i> )	2
<b>B</b>	<b>General skills</b>	<i>(B+C: min 8, max 20 EC)</i>
	Courses (total 8 days)	4
	Membership representative body	2
<b>C</b>	<b>Scientific specialisation</b>	<i>(B+C: min 8, max 20 EC)</i>
	Courses (total 8 days)	4
<b>D</b>	<b>Research-related activities</b>	<i>(min 8, max 20 EC)</i>
	Seminars, journal clubs etc.	6
	Poster presentation	1
	Oral presentation ( <i>national</i> )	1
	Oral presentation ( <i>international</i> ) (2)	2
	Attendance conference ( <i>national</i> ) (2)	2
	First author paper (3)	4
	<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>

Credit: These Training and Supervision Plan Guidelines have been set up and written by AIMMS as a former Graduate School and have been adopted by the Department of Chemistry and Pharmaceutical Sciences upon becoming a graduate school.