

On January 1, 2015, the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam implemented new doctorate regulations. With these general regulations, the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam aims to promote the quality of PhD programmes and to streamline rights and responsibilities regarding education and supervision.

PhD programmes include 4-year programmes (now the norm), 3-year programmes, longer part-time programmes, external doctorate programmes, doctorates that are the result of a position as a junior researcher, MD/PhD programmes et cetera. To accommodate this diversity, the doctorate regulations seek to minimize any discrepancies in the quality of the resulting PhD, which means that ALL PhD candidates have to comply with the 30 ECTS rule. Quality control of the training component will mainly be the responsibility of the supervisory team and the PhD Education Committee (PEC, as mandated by the Dean of the Faculty of Behavioural and Movement Sciences), but also the PhD candidate. Supervisors and PhD candidates must together specify the required training and supervision in Hora Finita, which will then be assessed by the PEC.

All PhD candidates appointed by or affiliated with the Faculty of Behavioural and Movement Sciences must comply with the general Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam doctorate regulations and the criteria specific for the Faculty of Behavioural and Movement Sciences. All programme requirements must be met before the doctorate degree can be applied for and conferred. Upon application, the PEC will evaluate if the training requirements are fulfilled.

A. Guidelines and regulations regarding the Training and Supervision Plan

Procedure

Step 1: Submission

- The supervisor(s) and PhD candidate together make an outline of the project in Hora Finita, in accordance with the general doctoral regulations of the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam and the criteria specific for the Faculty of Behavioural and Movement Sciences (see Section B);
- The training part must include a minimum of 30 and a maximum of 36 ECTS (1 ECTS = 28 study load hours). For PhD candidates appointed by or affiliated with the Faculty of Behavioural and Movement Sciences, the compulsory *subject areas* are listed below. All courses must be on (at least) a Master level. Note that there are no compulsory courses (i.e. the PhD candidate may consult with the supervisor to decide which courses are taken; see also Section B and exemption scheme below).
 - o Research ethics and integrity. This may be a course offered by the Faculty of Behavioural and Movement Sciences, *or* another course on research ethics/integrity offered at either VU, VUmc or ACTA or another university for *minimum* 2 ECTS. Alternatively, PhD candidates who write a proposal for the ethics committee / METC may claim *maximum* 1 ECTS for this, in combination with an online (UBVU) integrity course for 1 ECTS).
 - o Research data management;
 - o Personal development;

- Academic writing / Presenting in English;
 - Research methods;
 - Subject-related training;
 - Colloquia / Conference attendance
- The supervisor approves the training and supervision plan in Hora Finita;
 - The registration in Hora Finita must be completed within the first year of the PhD project.
 - A PhD candidate is not formally admitted to the PhD trajectory until the trajectory has been approved in Hora Finita.

Step 2: Assessment

- The PEC will assess the training plan in accordance with the general doctorate regulations of the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam and the criteria specific for the Faculty of Behavioural and Movement Sciences (see Section B).
- The PhD candidate and supervisor will be informed of the approval via Hora Finita.

Step 3: Monitoring

- The supervisor(s) and the PhD candidate ensure that the progress of the project is in accordance to the plan set out in Hora Finita. The progress should be assessed in the annual performance reviews.
- Any major changes to the training plan must be registered in Hora Finita and re-approved by the PEC. In such cases, the amended training plan will be evaluated in accordance with step 2. Minor changes (i.e. swapping one MA-course or (international) congress for another) do not have to be re-approved.

Step 4: Certificate Supplement

- The PhD candidate is responsible for collecting and archiving records of course completions or other relevant completed components by building a portfolio of completed courses and activities. The supervisor (first promotor) is ultimately responsible for the definitive list of training and courses taken.
- Successfully completed courses and programmes, exemptions granted, and other relevant components (e.g., certificates for conferences attendance, written declarations from supervisor(s), et cetera) must be included in the portfolio in Hora Finita.
- The supervisor (first promotor) approves the training courses and activities registered in Hora Finita before the PhD candidate can apply for the degree.
- The PEC will evaluate the portfolio in accordance to the general doctorate regulations of Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam and the criteria specific for the Faculty of Behavioural and Movement Sciences. Upon approval, the PhD candidate will receive a Certificate Supplement signed by one of the chairs of the PEC.

Exemptions¹

- The training components are typically completed during the PhD project. However, exemptions can be requested for courses or components completed prior to the PhD project. Credits can be awarded for such components if they comply with the general doctorate

¹ As per 1/9/2023; courses taken in advance of the PhD track, should be no older than 2 years prior to the START of the PhD track.

regulations of Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam and the criteria specific for the Faculty of Behavioural and Movement Sciences.

- Exemption requests for components are assessed by the PEC, including the proposed ECTS for these components. Exemptions must be justified in written form by both the supervisor(s) and the PhD candidate and uploaded to Hora Finita. Any motivation should indicate the academic level of the courses and training activities in question to enable the PEC to evaluate quality and relevance.
- Approved exemptions must be included in the training plan with their corresponding ECTS.
- Exemptions may include both compulsory and optional topics. Examples for granting exemptions include courses taken during a Research Master's programme (typically within the topic 'Research Methods') or other courses at the Master level. The courses can be taken at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam or other academic institutions, including summer schools.
- PhD candidates holding a junior researcher position, or who follow a programme that does not require registering a PhD trajectory within the first year, but who have taken courses in the first year, may use these for the training component by requesting exemption and enclosing evidence.
- Compulsory topics as outlined in the general doctorate regulations of the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam and the criteria specific to the Faculty of Behavioural and Movement Sciences must be covered even if the credits of followed/exempted courses exceed the mandatory 30 ECTS.

Appeal procedure:

- For complaints about decisions of the PEC (for example with respect to exemptions), PhD candidate and/or supervisor(s) can lodge an appeal directly to the Graduate School Director. The following documents must be submitted:
 - i. The written and substantiated complaint.
 - ii. In the case of the denied request of an exemption, the written and substantiated notice from the authorized PEC chair.

B. Criteria Faculty of Behavioural and Movement Sciences degree conferral for PhD candidates

| Faculty of Behavioural and Movement Sciences courses and training components | |
|--|---|
| <p>All PhD candidates appointed by or affiliated with the Faculty of Behavioural and Movement Sciences must comply with the general Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam doctorate regulations and the criteria specific to the Faculty of Behavioural and Movement Sciences. The PhD candidate and supervisor(s) together draw up a training plan that includes a minimum of 30 and maximum of 36 ECTS (1 ECTS = 28 study load hours). Courses cover several compulsory and optional topics (electives).</p> <p>The training plan must be discussed during every annual performance review and may be adjusted if necessary (this may require re-assessment by the PEC). Upon completion of the PhD trajectory, the supervisor must approve the training activities in Hora Finita, followed by the approval by the PEC that, upon approval, issues a Certificate Supplement.</p> | |
| Compulsory components | 22 - 36 ECTS (range) |
| - Research ethics and integrity | 2 (<i>minimum</i>) |
| - Research data management ¹ | 1 (<i>minimum</i>) |
| - Personal development | 3 (<i>minimum</i>) |
| <p>This is a broad topic that should be used for the benefit of the PhD candidate's interests and personal development. The courses and activities on the topic are of a general character including, but not limited to, teacher training, courses on time- or project management, (female) leadership training, mindfulness, learning a new language, committee membership (1 ECTS per committee) or lectures to a layperson audience (NO teaching). The topic also covers general outreach activities, including, but not limited to, working at an academic workplace, AISS, and entrepreneurship activities.</p> | |
| - Academic writing/Presenting in English | 3 (<i>minimum</i>) |
| - Research methods | 6 (<i>minimum</i>) |
| - Subject-related PhD training courses linked to PhD subject | 6 (<i>minimum</i>) |
| <p>In this topic no <i>specific</i> courses are compulsory; every PhD candidate can take courses relevant to their PhD track or interest.</p> | |
| - Colloquia (including PhD transmission meetings) / Conference attendance (1 ECTS for attendance, 2 ECTS with oral and/or poster presentation) | 1 (<i>minimum</i> – 6 <i>maximum</i>) |
| <p>¹ Compulsory for PhD candidates starting as of September 1, 2019</p> | |
| Optional subjects (electives) | 1.5 – 5.5 ECTS (range) |
| - Training on the job (e.g. supervising MA / BA-students (0.5 ECTS per supervised MA / BA-student); teaching assistance; conference organisation; work visits abroad e.g. to another research institute) | 4 (<i>maximum</i>) |
| - BROK ² (Basiscursus Regelgeving en Organisatie voor Klinisch Onderzoekers) (if applicable, mandatory elective) | 1.5 |
| <p>² Legal requirement for all Medical Research (Human Subjects Act)</p> | |
| Total | 30 – 36 ECTS (range) |

