



# VU Doctorate Regulations

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# Doctorate Regulations

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## Section 01

# General provisions

### Article 1 Definitions

These Regulations assume the following definitions:

Act	The Higher Education and Research Act (WHW; <i>Wet op Hoger Onderwijs en Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek</i> )
College of Deans	The College of Deans as defined in the Management Regulations
Co-supervisor	The individual who, as an expert in the subject described in the dissertation, assists the supervisor in supervising the PhD candidate
Dean	The dean of the faculty within which the PhD programme (to the extent that it concerns VU Amsterdam) is completed (unless it appears otherwise from the context)
Degree certificate	Written evidence that the Doctor or Doctor of Philosophy degree has been awarded to the PhD candidate
Designation <i>Cum laude</i>	Qualification to be awarded for the Doctor or Doctor of Philosophy degree if the dissertation is of an excellent academic quality
Director of the Graduate School	The director of the Graduate School as defined in the Management Regulations
Dissertation	The academic discourse on the basis of which the title of Doctor or Doctor of Philosophy is awarded by the Doctorate Committee to the PhD candidate on behalf of the College of Deans
Doctorate Committee	The committee appointed by the College of Deans in accordance with Article 7.18, paragraph 4 of the Act
Double doctorate	Two doctorates obtained simultaneously, one at the university and one at a foreign institute of academic education, based on one dissertation
EC	European credit (1 EC credit = 28 hours)

Faculty	The faculty within which the PhD programme (to the extent that it concerns VU Amsterdam) is completed (unless it appears otherwise from the context)
<i>ius promovendi</i>	The right to act as a supervisor
Joint degree	Simultaneously acquiring a single degree certificate from the university and from one or more Dutch or foreign institutes of academic education, based on one dissertation
Management Regulations	VU Amsterdam's Management Regulations
PhD candidate	The individual who has been admitted to the PhD programme
PhD ceremony	The public defence of the dissertation and the conferral of the Doctor or Doctor of Philosophy degree
PhD programme	The process that leads to the PhD ceremony and conferral of the degree
Training programme certificate	Supplement attached to the degree certificate showing the training components that have been successfully completed
Supervisor	The person who supervises the PhD candidate in the production of their dissertation and its defence
Training and supervision plan	Agreements on the training and supervision that the PhD candidate is to receive during the PhD programme
University	Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (VU Amsterdam)

In the Doctorate Regulations, we use gender-neutral job titles and personal designations. In some cases, the originally male designation has become generic, such as the Dutch term for PhD candidate, '*promovendus*'.

## Article 2

Based on a PhD candidate's successful public defence of their dissertation, they may be awarded a Doctor or Doctor of Philosophy degree. The Doctor or Doctor of Philosophy degree is conferred by or on behalf of the College of Deans. The PhD ceremony takes place in the presence of a Doctorate Committee.

## Article 3

In these Regulations, we usually refer to the *supervisor* or *co-supervisor* in the singular. In some cases there are multiple *supervisors* or *co-supervisors*.

## Article 4

After the public defence of the dissertation, the Doctorate Committee holds a closed meeting. The matters discussed at the meeting are strictly confidential.

## Article 5

PhD candidates, supervisors and co-supervisors must at all times observe the standards of academic integrity as formulated in the Netherlands Code of Conduct for Research Integrity.

## Article 6

The following persons cannot be supervisors, co-supervisors or members of the Doctorate Committee:

- a. the partner of the PhD candidate, supervisor, or co-supervisor;
- b. first or second-degree relatives, by blood or by marriage, of the PhD candidate, supervisor, or co-supervisor;
- c. other persons whose relationship with the PhD candidate is such that their independence or impartiality could be called into question.

# Admission to the PhD programme

### Article 7 Conditions

1. Candidates are admitted to the PhD programme if:
  - a. in accordance with Article 7.10a, paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of the Act, the candidate is in possession of a Master's degree or has successfully obtained an equivalent qualification from a foreign institute of higher education;
  - b. the candidate has met the additional conditions set by the faculty;
  - c. they have submitted an approved training and supervision plan; and
  - d. they have agreed to adhere to the Netherlands Code of Conduct for Research Integrity.
2. In exceptional cases, the College of Deans may admit a candidate to the PhD programme who meets conditions 1b, 1c and 1d, but not 1a.
3. In exceptional cases, the College of Deans may admit a candidate to the PhD programme who meets conditions 1a, 1c and 1d, but not 1b.
4. Candidates who are already in possession of the degree of Doctor or an equivalent qualification may not be admitted to the PhD programme, unless they intend to pursue a PhD based on a dissertation devoted to research in an academic domain other than that of their initial PhD.
5. The PhD candidate supplies the following information and documents via the system referred to in Article 8, paragraph 1:
  - a. the training and supervision plan;
  - b. a document showing that the requirement in Article 7 paragraph 1 sub a has been met, unless Article 7 paragraph 2 applies;
  - c. the subject of the dissertation;
  - d. the signed copy of the Netherlands Code of Conduct for Research Integrity, and,
  - e. a copy of an identity document that is legally valid in the Netherlands.

If the documents under b and e are not written in Dutch, English, French, or German, the Beadle may request the applicant to add an approved Dutch or English translation.
4. If the proposed PhD programme is to be completed at a faculty other than that where the prospective supervisor holds their position, then the documents referred to in Article 8, paragraph 1 of these Regulations must be submitted to the dean of the other faculty.
5. The dean will assess the training and supervision plan according to the procedure laid down by the faculty to which the plan has been submitted.
6. The dean may authorize the director of the Graduate School to implement the provisions of paragraph 5.
7. The College of Deans decides whether or not to admit the prospective PhD candidate to the PhD programme. The College of Deans also decides on the appointment of the supervisor and the co-supervisor; in doing so, it observes the provisions in Section 3 of these Regulations. The prospective PhD candidate, the supervisor and the co-supervisor (where applicable) are notified of the decision. The dean may decide on behalf of the College of Deans whether to admit the prospective PhD candidate to the PhD programme.

### Article 8 Procedure

1. The prospective supervisor registers the PhD candidate with the dean by using the designated system.
2. The prospective supervisor supplies the following information:
  - a. the name and e-mail address of the PhD candidate;
  - b. the name, e-mail address and the professorship (or the area of expertise) of the proposed supervisor; and
  - c. if applicable, the name and the professorship (or the area of expertise) of the proposed co-supervisor.

# The supervisor and the co-supervisor

### Article 9

#### *Ius promovendi*

1. In accordance with the Management Regulations, full professors and professors occupying an endowed chair shall have *ius promovendi* and, provided they have not been dishonourably discharged of their position, retain it for five years after the end of their professorship. This article also grants the College of Deans the right to award *ius promovendi* to other members of staff at the university. Any such member of staff shall retain their *ius promovendi* for five years after the termination of their employment, provided they were not dishonourably discharged of their position.
2. *Ius promovendi* may be awarded by the College of Deans to anyone who has obtained a doctorate and who, in the opinion of the College of Deans, is competent to act as a supervisor.
3. On behalf of the College of Deans, a dean may grant *ius promovendi* to an associate professor of their own faculty. The dean evaluates the competence of the staff member concerned in relation to the relevant criteria set by the College of Deans.
4. If the dean decides not to grant *ius promovendi* to an associate professor, the latter may ask the College of Deans to grant it to them instead. The associate professor in question must provide reasons for their request. Once the dean concerned has given their view, the College of Deans will decide on the request.
5. Whether the requirement set out in paragraph 2 has been satisfied can also be determined by the College of Deans on the basis of a request, as described in Article 10, paragraph 6.

### Article 10

#### Appointment of the supervisor

1. for each PhD candidate, the College of Deans appoints a university employee or a professor occupying an endowed chair as their supervisor.
2. The College of Deans appoints a second supervisor for each PhD candidate - a supervisor or a co-supervisor.
3. In derogation of the provisions of paragraph 1, the College of Deans may appoint a staff member from another Dutch university or a foreign institution for academic higher education as the supervisor. The college may also appoint a professor occupying an endowed chair at such an institution as the supervisor. In all these cases, the College of Deans will appoint a university employee or a professor occupying an endowed chair as the second supervisor.
4. The dean makes the proposal to appoint a supervisor or a co-supervisor. The dean first consults a substantial number of professors from the faculty. Professors will be selected based on a rule that is part of the Regulations mentioned in Article 38, paragraph 2.
5. Supervisors must be full professors or otherwise have *ius promovendi*.
6. If a dean wishes to appoint a staff member as a supervisor who has a PhD, but has not yet been granted *ius promovendi*, the dean will propose to the College of Deans that *ius promovendi* be granted to the relevant staff member. When requesting that the staff member be admitted to the PhD programme, the dean will state why the granting of *ius promovendi* to the individual concerned is justified.
7. No more than two supervisors may be appointed for each PhD candidate. If more than one supervisor has been appointed, they themselves allocate their collective duties, having first consulted the PhD candidate on the matter.



8. If it becomes clear that the supervisor is unlikely to have *ius promovendi* at the time the PhD candidate is expected to defend their dissertation, the College of Deans, having consulted the PhD candidate and the dean, will nominate another supervisor in their place. If more than one supervisor has been appointed, the College of Deans may dispense with any such nomination. The college may appoint the previous supervisor as co-supervisor.
9. The dean may decide on behalf of the College of Deans on the appointment of the supervisor and co-supervisor.

### **Article 11** **The supervisor's duties**

1. The supervisor is responsible for supervising the PhD candidate and must ensure that the PhD candidate conducts their research independently.
2. During the period of supervision and while the PhD candidate is preparing their dissertation, the supervisor and PhD candidate will consult at least once a year or as many times as agreed in the training and supervision plan.
3. If the supervisor thinks that changes to the dissertation are needed, they will discuss this with the PhD candidate (and co-supervisor, if one has been appointed).
4. The supervision referred to in paragraphs 2 and 3 is partly aimed at ensuring that the dissertation is completed by the deadline stated in the training and supervision plan and that it complies with the requirements in these Regulations.

### **Article 12** **Appointment of the co-supervisor and the co-supervisor's duties**

1. on the advice of the dean, the College of Deans may appoint one or, if necessary, two co-supervisors. The dean discusses with those involved whether they are willing to become co-supervisors.
2. The dean proposes the appointment of a co-supervisor after having consulted the supervisor and other professors, as set out in Article 10, paragraph 4.
3. The co-supervisor is an expert in the dissertation subject and assists the supervisor in supervising the PhD candidate. Co-supervisors must be professors or hold a PhD.
4. The supervisor and co-supervisor decide, in consultation with the PhD candidate, on how the co-supervisor is involved in the periodic meetings between the supervisor and the PhD candidate as referred to in Article 11, paragraph 2.
5. The dean may decide on behalf of the College of Deans on the appointment of the co-supervisor.

# The doctorate committee

### Article 13 Composition

1. On behalf of the College of Deans, the dean appoints the members of the Doctorate Committee for each PhD programme. This takes place after the supervisor has approved the dissertation. The supervisor submits a reasoned proposal for the composition of the Doctorate Committee and, if the dean agrees, verifies that they are willing to be part of the committee.
2. For the appointment of the members of the Doctorate Committee, the dean requires the consent of the professors, as referred to in Article 10, paragraph 4.
3. The dean is also authorized to relieve the members of the Doctorate Committee from their duties.
4. Each Doctorate Committee has at least five members, including at least one man and one woman. At least one member, and two at the most, must also be associated with the faculty, and no more than one members may be associated with the supervisor's work unit. At least two members of the committee must be affiliated to a university other than the one that is to confer (or co-confer) the degree. These external members may not have co-authored articles that are included in the PhD candidate's dissertation. Exceptions to this are permitted in special cases, following a reasoned proposal made by the supervisor and with the written consent of the dean. This is subject to the condition that no more than one member of the Doctorate Committee may have co-authored no more than one article included in the dissertation.
5. The members of the Doctorate Committee must be full professors or have obtained a PhD. At least two members of the committee must be full professors and the majority must have *ius promovendi*.
6. Following a reasoned proposal by the supervisor, the dean may decide to appoint an advisor to the committee who is not in possession of a PhD or doctorate, such as expert in the arts, from the business community or from civic organizations.
7. The Doctorate Committee is chaired by a full professor affiliated to the university, or another staff member of the university who has *ius promovendi*, or a professor occupying an endowed chair at the university.
8. The supervisor and co-supervisor may not be members of the Doctorate Committee.
9. The Doctorate Committee is convened for the first time by the dean, who also appoints the committee chair. The committee is subsequently convened by the chair. After the decision on admitting a candidate to the defence has been taken, the chair is relieved of their duties.

# The training programme

### Article 14

#### Scope and content

1. in consultation with the supervisor, the PhD candidate must set down the content of the training programme in their training and supervision plan. The training programme consists of at least 30 EC.
2. In all cases, training programmes include a component on current insights and regulations regarding academic integrity and, where relevant, a component on current scientific methods and techniques in research. The training and supervision plan always includes a planning of the PhD programme, including a scheduled go/no go decision as well. The plan also states to which Graduate School, Research School or Research Institute the PhD candidate is affiliated.
3. The dean is responsible for providing a training programme of sufficient quality and for ensuring that the candidate has sufficient time and resources to complete the programme.
4. The dean may grant exemptions for components of the programme, provided the way in which the PhD candidate has met the final requirements of the relevant components is shown.
5. In the first two years of the PhD programme, a plagiarism check is carried out on an appropriate product. The plagiarism check consists of a scan and an interview about the results of the scan. The university determines how the scan is carried out, and the interview is between the supervisor (or, at their request, a co-supervisor) and the PhD candidate. The supervisor (or co-supervisor) draws up a brief report of the interview, which states whether or not any plagiarism has been identified. The report is stored in the system referred to in Article 8, paragraph 1. The dean may allow the plagiarism check in a specific case, or in general throughout the faculty, or in a particular field, to take place at a later time. Exemptions from the plagiarism check are not possible.
6. The dean may authorize the director of the Graduate School to implement the tasks assigned to the dean in paragraphs 4 and 5.

### Article 15

#### Assessment of training programme

1. After the supervisor has approved the dissertation, the PhD candidate should submit a request to the faculty to issue the training programme certificate.
2. The dean assesses the training programme in the manner laid down by the Faculty Board.
3. The dean ensures that the training programme certificate is produced and awarded to the PhD candidate.
4. The dean may authorize the director of the Graduate School to implement the tasks referred to in paragraphs 2 and 3.

# The dissertation

### Article 16 Conditions

1. The dissertation may consist of:
  - a. a scientific monograph on a specific subject; or
  - b. a collection of a number of separate scientific articles. Some or all of the articles should be in the public domain. The articles must demonstrate sufficient cohesion;
  - c. a monograph (a) or collection of articles (b) combined with an artistic and/or technological component that forms an integral part of the dissertation and is of significance to for knowledge development.
2. A faculty may set additional rules relating to the dissertation, which are part of the Regulations set out in Article 38, paragraph 2.
3. The dissertation may not contain any material that is *contra Deum aut bonos mores* ('against God or good morals').
4. If the dissertation consists of a collection of articles, the PhD candidate describes how they are interrelated in an introductory or concluding chapter.
5. If the dissertation consists of a collection of articles by multiple authors, the PhD candidate must demonstrate that, for each article, their own contribution is essential. This is done by adding a page to the dissertation containing a list of references with, for each article, an overview of the authors and an explanation on the contribution by the co-authors.

### Article 17 Joint dissertation

1. Where research is jointly conducted by two or three PhD candidates, the results of the research may be expressed in a joint dissertation. In that case, the following conditions must be met:
  - a. The supervisor has determined that each of the authors has made an independent, clearly identifiable contribution that merits the award of a doctorate.
  - b. Each of the authors bears personal responsibility for a clearly identifiable part of the dissertation and for the coherence of the dissertation as a whole.
  - c. The dissertation clearly states the part played by each of the authors in its production.
2. In the case of a joint dissertation, the supervisor submits to the dean a written declaration regarding the contribution of each of the authors. This statement is signed by the supervisor and by each of the authors.
3. In the case of a joint dissertation, the procedures and rules laid down in these Regulations apply to each PhD candidate individually.

### Article 18 Language

1. the dissertation will be written in Dutch, English, French or German. Approval for writing the dissertation in another language must be obtained from the dean.
2. If the dissertation is written in Dutch, then a summary in Dutch and an English translation of the title and summary of the contents will be appended to the dissertation.
3. If the dissertation is written in English, then an English summary of the contents must be appended to the dissertation.



4. If the dissertation is written in a language other than Dutch or English, then an English translation of the title and summary of the contents must be appended to the dissertation.

## **Article 19**

### **Title page**

1. The dissertation must contain a title page according to the model stipulated by the College of Deans. The Rector Magnificus must approve this title page before any copies are made of the dissertation. This provision also applies to double doctorate programmes and joint degrees (see Articles 33 and 34).
  2. The name of the supervisor and co-supervisor (where applicable) must be stated on the page following the title page of the dissertation. The members of and any advisors to the Doctorate Committee referred to in Article 13 are also included on that page.
  3. In cases where the PhD project was made possible with support from outside the university, this must be mentioned on the page referred to in paragraph 2.
5. The PhD candidate will submit a number of copies of the dissertation, as specified by the College of Deans, to the Beadle of the university at least three weeks prior to the PhD ceremony, as described in paragraphs 2 and 3. These copies are intended for the Rector Magnificus, the dean and the University Library.
  6. The University Library publishes a digital version of the dissertation. This takes place at least four weeks before the PhD ceremony. If the dissertation is wholly or partly subject to a publishing embargo, the electronic publication of the dissertation will be restricted to the parts not subject to the embargo and to the cover, the title page, the table of contents and the summary of the dissertation in English and, if available, in Dutch. Any other parts of the dissertation will be published when the embargo is lifted.
  7. The publication of an electronic version of the dissertation, as referred to in paragraph 4, is subject to the following conditions:
    - a. At least six weeks prior to the PhD ceremony, the PhD candidate must provide the university with a licence for the non-exclusive publication of the dissertation in electronic form, if necessary with a temporary publication embargo.
    - b. Before granting the licence, the PhD candidate must sign the standard licensing agreement adopted by the Executive Board.
    - c. In accordance with the licensing agreement, the PhD candidate is entitled to a fee for the provision of the dissertation as described in paragraphs 4 and 5.

## **Article 20**

### **Copies**

1. responsibility for copying and distributing the dissertation lies with the PhD candidate.
2. The PhD candidate decides whether the dissertation is printed or copied in a similar manner. A condition here is that the dissertation must be easily legible.
3. The dissertation is published in a conveniently-sized format and in glue-bound or spiral-bound form, or with a stitched binding.
4. The PhD candidate will submit an electronic version of the dissertation, in its definitive form and layout, at least six weeks prior to the PhD ceremony. The director of the University Library determines how this is done.

# The assessment of the dissertation

### Article 21 Requirements

1. The dissertation must show the following:
  - The PhD candidate is able to contribute towards extending the frontiers of knowledge by conducting original research that withstands the rigours of peer review.
  - The PhD candidate demonstrates a systematic understanding of a knowledge domain and is competent in the skills and methodology needed for conducting research in this domain.
  - The PhD candidate is able to design, develop, implement and modify a research project.
  - The PhD candidate is capable of critically analysing, evaluating and synthesizing new and complex ideas in their field.
  - The PhD candidate can participate in academic discourse with peers from their field and the wider scientific community regarding their specific field of expertise.
2. The dissertation must meet any other requirements set by the faculty.
3. If the provisions of paragraphs 1 and paragraphs 2 are met, then the dissertation meets the requirements as meant in these Regulations.

### Article 22 Assessment by the supervisor and co-supervisor

1. The dissertation is assessed by the supervisor and co-supervisor (if one has been appointed).
2. The supervisor and the co-supervisor verify that the dissertation meets the requirements.
3. If the supervisor and co-supervisor are satisfied that the dissertation meets the requirements, then they will approve it. The supervisor notifies the dean and the PhD candidate as soon as possible of the fact. Unless the dissertation is to be subjected to a plagiarism check in accordance with Article 22a, the supervisor then submits it to the Doctorate Committee for its assessment.

### Article 22a Plagiarism check on the completed dissertation

1. The completed dissertation will be subjected to a plagiarism check in the following cases:
  - if plagiarism is established during the plagiarism check referred to in Article 14, paragraph 5, or
  - if this is prescribed by the rules referred to in Article 38, paragraph 2.
2. The plagiarism check consists of a scan and an assessment of the results of the scan. The university decides how the scan is to be carried out. The assessor is appointed by the dean.
3. The assessor produces a report containing a reasoned assessment as to whether the dissertation contains any plagiarism and, if so, its extent and its significance. The supervisor, the PhD candidate, and the dean receive the report from the assessor.
4. After receiving the report, the dean assesses whether the dissertation contains plagiarism. The dean may decide that plagiarism has been committed only after the PhD candidate has been given the opportunity to respond to the report in writing.
5. The dean may allow the PhD candidate an opportunity to rectify the dissertation. The dean will assess the result in this case.
6. If the dean decides not to offer the PhD candidate the opportunity to rectify any plagiarism that has been detected or finds that such plagiarism has not been rectified even after the dissertation has been changed, then the PhD programme will be ended.
7. If the dean determines that no plagiarism has been committed in the dissertation or that any plagiarism has indeed been rectified, then they will inform the supervisor who will then submit the dissertation to the Doctorate Committee for its assessment.

## Article 23 Assessment by the doctorate committee

1. The supervisor explains why the dissertation meets the requirements.
2. The supervisor and co-supervisor maintain no contact regarding the dissertation with members of or advisors to the Doctorate Committee.
3. The Doctorate Committee verifies that the dissertation meets the requirements. The members and advisors give the chair their reasoned assessment. They may add suggestions and recommendations to their assessments.
4. Within 30 days of receipt of the dissertation, the chair of the Doctorate Committee informs the dean about its findings. The report is accompanied by a reasoned assessment from each individual committee member and advisor. The dean may extend the time period referred to by a single additional period of 30 days.
5. If every member of the Doctorate Committee finds that the dissertation meets the requirements, the chair will give the dean a positive recommendation on the dissertation on behalf of the committee.
6. If any member of the Doctorate Committee finds that the dissertation does not meet the requirements, the chair will ensure that there is a mutual exchange of opinions within the committee.
7. If, after the mutual exchange of opinions within the committee, every member finds that the dissertation meets the requirements, the chair will give the dean a positive recommendation on the dissertation on behalf of the committee.
8. If, after the mutual exchange of opinions within the committee, any member still finds that the dissertation does not meet the requirements, the chair assesses whether the PhD candidate can amend the dissertation within a short period of time in a way that can be expected to meet the approval of every member:
  - if this is the case, then the chair will give the PhD candidate, on behalf of the Doctorate Committee, an opportunity to modify the dissertation within 60 days. After receipt of the modified dissertation, paragraph 4 applies again;
  - if this is not the case, the chair will notify the dean of the views of the committee members.

## **Article 24**

### **Decision on the dissertation**

1. After receipt of the report from the chair of the Doctorate Committee, the dean decides whether to approve the dissertation or not.
2. The decision-making process referred to in paragraph 1 is subject to the following:
  - a. if one member of the Doctorate Committee is of the opinion that the dissertation does not meet the requirements but the other members disagree, then the dean can only approve the dissertation with explicit supporting arguments;
  - b. if two members of the Doctorate Committee are of the opinion that the dissertation does not meet the requirements but the other members disagree, then the dean may only approve the dissertation after consulting with the College of Deans, stating compelling reasons that justify the decision;
  - c. if more than two members of the Doctorate Committee are of the opinion that the dissertation does not meet the requirements, then the dean may not approve the dissertation.
3. If the dean does not approve the dissertation, the PhD candidate is given the opportunity to submit a revised version within a period to be determined by the dean, but no longer than twelve months, unless the dean has compelling reasons to believe that the PhD candidate will be unable to submit a revised dissertation that meets the requirements within this period. In the latter case, the dean will terminate the PhD programme.
4. Revised dissertations are assessed in the manner described in Article 23. The dean then either approves or rejects the revised version. If the dean rejects a revised dissertation, they will terminate the PhD programme.



## Section 08

# The PhD ceremony

### **Article 25 Procedure for admission to the defence of the dissertation**

The dean decides to admit the PhD candidate to the defence after approval of the dissertation if the PhD candidate has received the training programme certificate described in Article 15 and met all other requirements in these Regulations.

### **Article 26 Format**

1. The PhD ceremony takes place in public, in the presence of the relevant Doctorate Committee.
2. The public meeting of the College of Deans during which the PhD ceremony takes place is chaired by the Rector Magnificus. One of the following may deputize for the Rector Magnificus:
  - a. a member or former member of the College of Deans;
  - b. the faculty's deputy dean;
  - c. a full professor who is the chair of a department of the faculty; or,
  - d. with the permission of the College of Deans, a full professor or an emeritus professor at the faculty.
3. The time and place of the PhD ceremony are determined by or on behalf of the Rector Magnificus, in consultation with the supervisor, the dean and the PhD candidate.
4. The College of Deans sets the protocol for the public session. The College of Deans also determines the official pronouncements prior to and after the public defence of the dissertation, and the official pronouncement of the conferral of the doctorate.
5. Where appropriate, the PhD candidate, supervisors, co-supervisors, and members of the Doctorate Committee may, with the approval of the Beadle, use online means for taking part in the public meeting of the College of Deans and at the meetings of the Doctorate Committee on the day of the PhD ceremony. They will then be deemed to

be present, under the terms of these Regulations. This is subject to the condition that everyone involved in the PhD ceremony is able to hear everyone else, and preferably see them as well.

### **Article 27 The defence**

1. For a period of one hour, the dissertation is defended by the PhD candidate against reservations and queries raised by the Doctorate Committee and anyone else who has received permission from the Rector Magnificus to be part of the opposition. In consultation with the PhD candidate, the chair may give the PhD candidate a maximum of ten minutes at the beginning of this hour in which to present a general explanation of the research that forms the basis of the dissertation.
2. Dutch, English, French or German is spoken during the defence. Another language is possible if the Rector Magnificus has given their permission.

### **Article 28 Meetings of the doctorate committee during the PhD ceremony**

1. The Doctorate Committee meets in a closed session both before and after the defence.
2. The following people take part in these closed meetings:
  - a. the members of the Doctorate Committee;
  - b. the advisor referred to in Article 13, paragraph 6;
  - c. those authorized by the Rector Magnificus to be part of the opposition;
  - d. the supervisor and the co-supervisor;
  - e. any full professor at the university wishing to take part.
3. Only the members of the Doctorate Committee have voting rights at the meetings. The other participants at the meetings have an advisory vote.

4. The meetings are chaired by the chair of the public meeting of the College of Deans during which the PhD ceremony will take place.
5. The supervisor acts as the secretary at these meetings. In exceptional cases, another member of the Doctorate Committee may be appointed as secretary by the chair of the meeting.
6. The dean, in consultation with the supervisor, ensures that at least five members are present at the meeting, of whom at least three are members of the Doctorate Committee.
7. During the meeting after the defence, the Doctorate Committee decides on behalf of the College of Deans whether to confer the doctorate or PhD. Among the factors considered in the decision is the defence of the dissertation by the PhD candidate. The decision regarding the conferral of the Doctor or Doctor of Philosophy degree is taken by a simple majority of votes. If the decision is in favour of conferral, the Doctorate Committee respects the preference of the PhD candidate for the title of Doctor or Doctor of Philosophy.

## **Article 29**

### **The PhD ceremony**

1. Following the closed meeting of the Doctorate Committee, the chair reopens the public session and announces the results of the deliberations.
2. If a Doctor or Doctor of Philosophy degree is to be awarded, the ceremony is carried out by the supervisor. The supervisor uses the official pronouncement for the conferral and presents the degree certificate to the PhD candidate.
3. The supervisor then addresses the newly invested Doctor. The co-supervisor may speak instead of the supervisor, with the permission of the chair.

## **Article 30**

### **Degree certificate**

1. Anyone awarded a Doctor or Doctor of Philosophy degree receives a degree certificate. The degree certificate is in Latin, signed by the Rector Magnificus and the supervisor, and bears the seal of the university.
2. The certificate may also be signed by the co-supervisor.
3. If the doctorate or PhD is conferred with the designation *Cum laude*, this is included on the degree certificate.

# The distinction *Cum laude*

### Article 31

#### Procedure for awarding the distinction

1. If the doctoral candidate has demonstrated outstanding competence in the dissertation, then the distinction *Cum laude* may be awarded. To this end, the supervisor or co-supervisor must submit a written and detailed request to the dean at least 60 days prior to the PhD ceremony. Every member of the Doctorate Board can also submit this type of request. The same 60-day period applies.
2. If the dean has received a request to grant the *Cum laude* distinction, they will submit the request to the Doctorate Board for advice as soon as possible.
3. The Doctorate Board will then respond in writing within 14 days, informing the dean of its recommendation regarding the distinction *Cum laude*. If there is more than one vote against in the Doctorate Board, the Board will advise against granting the distinction.
4. If the Doctorate Board is in favour of conferring the distinction *Cum laude*, then the dean will immediately appoint two external referees.
5. The referees must be Full Professors or Associate Professors, and experts in the field of the dissertation. The referees may not be members of the Doctorate Board.
6. The referees will be asked to submit their recommendations to the dean in confidence.
7. The dean will submit the request for the distinction *Cum laude* to the closed meeting of the Doctorate Board prior to the defence. During the meeting, a copy of the request and the Board's recommendations will be distributed to all attendees, with the exception of professors who are not Full Professors associated with the faculty (as stated in Article 28, paragraph 2e).

### Article 32

#### Decision on conferral

On behalf of the College of Deans, the Doctorate Board decides during the meeting after the defence whether the distinction *Cum laude* should be conferred. The distinction *Cum laude* is not awarded if more than one of the persons entitled to vote in the meeting votes against.

## Section 10

# Joint doctorate programme

### **Article 33** **The joint doctorate programme and the joint degree**

1. A joint doctorate programme at the university may only take place with the prior written permission of the Rector Magnificus. The Rector Magnificus may attach conditions to the agreement concluded between the institutions involved.
2. Any request for a joint doctorate programme must be submitted in writing to the Rector Magnificus by the supervisor and the dean as part of the PhD candidate's training and supervision plan. The request must demonstrate that the dissertation is being written within the context of a formal partnership between the two universities concerned and as part of a joint research programme.
3. The request for a joint doctorate programme must be drawn up in accordance with a model developed for this purpose.
4. The PhD candidate carries out their research under the supervision of a professor from the university and a supervisor from the institution that is part of the partnership.
5. The joint degree is subject to the rules and regulations of the institution where the dissertation is to be defended.
6. The degree of Doctor is conferred by the College of Deans, together with a similar body from the partner institution.

### **Article 34** **The joint doctorate programme and the double degree**

1. A double doctorate programme at the university may only take place with the prior written permission of the Rector Magnificus. The Rector Magnificus may attach conditions to the agreement concluded between the institutions involved.
2. Any request for a double doctorate programme must be submitted in writing to the Rector Magnificus by the supervisor and the dean as part of the PhD candidate's training and supervision plan. The request must demonstrate that the dissertation is being written in the context of a joint research programme based on a formal partnership agreement between institutions.
3. The request for a double doctorate programme must be drawn up in accordance with a model developed for this purpose.
4. All requirements that apply to PhD programmes also apply to double doctorate programmes at the university. The following also applies:
  - a. The PhD candidates carry out their research under the supervision of a professor from the university and a supervisor from the institution that is part of the partnership.
  - b. The dissertation must be approved in accordance with the rules of the university and with those of the partner institution.
  - c. The defence of the dissertation at the university and at the partner institution must take place within a period of 120 days.



## Section 11

# Problems and disputes

### Article 35 Problems

1. If a supervisor believes that a PhD candidate will not be able to complete their PhD programme due to a lack of commitment or ability, or for any other reason, they must notify both the PhD candidate and the dean. The same applies if the supervisor believes that the PhD programme will take an unacceptably long time. After being so notified, the dean discusses the situation with the supervisor, any co-supervisors, and the PhD candidate. The dean then makes a reasoned decision to:
  - a. request the supervisor to continue the PhD programme, if necessary with any additional measures to assuage the concerns of the supervisor;
  - b. request the College of Deans to appoint another supervisor; or
  - c. terminate the PhD programme.
2. If a PhD candidate believes they will be unable to complete their PhD programme due to issues with supervision or that it will take an unacceptably long time to complete, they must notify the supervisor and the dean. After being so notified, the dean discusses the situation with the supervisor, any co-supervisors, and the PhD candidate. The dean then makes a reasoned decision to:
  - a. request the supervisor to continue the PhD programme, if necessary with any additional measures to assuage the concerns of the PhD candidate;
  - b. request the College of Deans to appoint another supervisor or co-supervisor.
3. If a PhD candidate wishes to terminate their PhD programme, they should notify the supervisor and the dean. The dean subsequently terminates the PhD programme.
4. If a supervisor refuses to approve the dissertation, the College of Deans may decide to appoint another supervisor at the request of the PhD candidate. The College of Deans discusses this with the dean after consulting with the supervisor, the co-supervisor, and the full professors referred to in Article 10, paragraph 4.
5. If a request is submitted to the College of Deans on the basis of this article to appoint another supervisor, both the dean and the PhD candidate may suggest suitable nominees. If the College of Deans is unable to find a suitable person willing to take over the role of supervisor, the dean terminates the PhD programme and informs the College of Deans.

### Article 36 Disputes procedure

1. The dean will act as a mediator in the event of a dispute during the PhD programme or with regard to the approval of the dissertation by the supervisor or the co-supervisor.
2. If mediation does not lead to a resolution within eight days, then any of the parties involved may refer the case to the College of Deans with a clearly defined request.
3. The College of Deans will establish a committee to advise on the dispute. The committee consists of three full professors who are not involved in the PhD programme.
4. The committee hears the parties involved and may consult experts. The committee then issues a fully substantiated recommendation to the College of Deans in writing, which is to be formulated as a draft decision. This happens no later than 60 days after receipt of the request referred to in paragraph 2.
5. After the College of Deans has received the recommendation, it will reach a decision on the dispute within 30 days. The College informs the parties involved about this decision.
6. The College of Deans may extend the period referred to in paragraphs 4 and 5 by a single additional period of 30 days if there is an urgent reason for doing so.

## **Article 36a Request to reverse termination by the dean of the PhD programme Disputes procedure**

If a dean terminates a PhD programme in accordance with Article 22a, paragraph 6, or Article 35, paragraph 1 under c, the College of Deans may, at the request of the PhD candidate, examine whether the assessment that resulted in the termination was justified. If the College of Deans decides that the PhD programme may indeed be continued, it will state how and under what conditions this is to be done. Article 36, paragraphs 3 to 6, apply by analogy to the processing of the request.

## Section 12

# The degree of Doctor *honoris causa*

### Article 37

1. The College of Deans may grant an honorary doctorate (Doctor *honoris causa*) in accordance with Article 27, paragraph 5 of the Management Regulations, following a nomination by a dean. It makes its decision after consulting the Executive Board on the matter.
2. The candidate nominated by the dean for the award of the degree of Doctor *honoris causa* must meet one or more of the criteria listed below:
  - a. The candidate delivers scientific achievements without formal academic recognition. This is reflected in publications that are generally regarded as being of high quality.
  - b. The candidate is involved in multidisciplinary academic research. This is reflected in publications that are generally regarded as being of high quality, in lectures by invitation at international scientific meetings, and at scientific institutes.
  - c. The candidate performs activities of clear societal and/or cultural significance that are consistent with the special character of the university, or that express the particular character of the university. There should be clear written or other tangible evidence that the candidate meets this condition.
3. Anyone previous recipients of honorary doctorates are not eligible. The College of Deans may make an exception if it believes that circumstances justify this.
4. The College of Deans determines where and when the ceremony for awarding the Doctor *honoris causa* degree takes place.

## Section 13

# Final and transitional provisions

### Article 38

1. In cases not covered by these Regulations or in cases where an article is open to various interpretations, the final decision rests with the College of Deans.
2. The dean may impose additional rules with regard to the PhD programme, after consulting the full professors at the faculty. Any such rules must be approved by the College of Deans.

### Article 39

The College of Deans is responsible for amendments to these regulations. This is done by simple majority.

### Article 40

In the case of applications for admission to a PhD programme dated before 1 April 2015, the College of Deans may allow deviations from these Regulations. In such cases, any action taken must be in compliance with the Regulations in force between 1 April 2010 and 1 April 2015. There should also be compelling reasons for deviating from the Regulations.

### Article 41

These Regulations entered into force on 1 September 2002 and were most recently amended on 1 September 2022.



# Procedural regulations

1. An application for admission to the PhD programme is submitted once a PhD candidate has commenced employment, but no later than one month after the date of commencement of employment.
2. If a member of staff at the university is approached to act as a supervisor for an aspiring PhD candidate who is not taking up employment at the university in that capacity, the following guideline applies: once it is clear that the project in question is of genuine academic value and the prospective supervisor has assessed the candidate as being capable of completing a dissertation of sufficient quality, admission to the PhD programme should be applied for using the system referred to in Article 8, paragraph 1.
3. The College of Deans has set the following two criteria that the dean uses to assess whether an associate professor is sufficiently competent to act as a supervisor:
  - a. the prospective supervisor is an excellent researcher, as evidenced by positive appraisals and recognition by peers, such as grants for externally funded research or the description of applications for said grants as 'excellent', or multiple peer-reviewed publications of excellent scientific quality; and
  - b. the prospective supervisor is an excellent supervisor, as evidenced by at least two successfully completed PhD programmes that they have supervised in the formal role of co-supervisor.
4. Notwithstanding the provisions of Article 10, paragraph 7, and Article 12, paragraph 1, the College of Deans may decide, in exceptional circumstances and following a reasoned proposal by the dean, to appoint a third supervisor or co-supervisor. Under no circumstances may there be more than four supervisors - supervisors or co-supervisors - per PhD candidate.
5. With regard to Article 14, the programme components may vary from specialist courses to participation in seminars and conferences, and activities and courses to enhance the PhD candidate's transferable skills. A minimum number of credits has been determined for the compulsory academic integrity (2 credits) and conferences (1 credit for conference attendance, 2 credits for conference attendance with paper and/or presentation) components.
6. Agreements with the Beadle on the date and time of the PhD ceremony can only be made once the dean has approved the dissertation referred to in Article 24. As a rule, the public defence will begin at 09:45, 11:45, 13:45 or 15:45.
7. The degree of Doctor of Philosophy is stated as standard on the certificate (*Philosophiæ Doctor*). If the PhD candidate prefers, the degree of Doctor may be stated on the certificate instead. The PhD candidate should indicate their choice when submitting their title page to the system referred to in Article 8, paragraph 1.
8. Professors at the university, those from other universities, and anyone taking part in the closed session may walk in the procession. At the public meeting of the College of Deans and the meetings of the Doctorate Committee on the day of the PhD ceremony, the supervisors wear the ceremonial cap and gown. Co-supervisors and opponents who are not professors should wear dark clothing appropriate to the occasion.



9. Professors and supervisors who use online means for taking part in the public meeting of the College of Deans and the meetings of the Doctorate Committee on the day of the PhD ceremony should, if possible, wear their ceremonial cap and gown, or dark clothing appropriate to the occasion.
10. During the PhD ceremony, PhD candidates should wear white tie or other clothing appropriate to the occasion. Appropriate clothing is also defined as appropriate traditional clothing from the PhD candidate's own country. The PhD candidate accepts the judgement of the Beadle as to whether particular clothing is appropriate to the occasion.
11. The PhD candidate is assisted by two ceremonial assistants during the PhD award ceremony. The ceremonial assistants are subject to the same dress code as the PhD candidate. If a PhD ceremony is held in the auditorium, the PhD candidate may dispense with the support of ceremonial assistants if they so wish.
12. The PhD ceremony, and in particular the defence of the dissertation, is open to individuals aged eight years or older. The PhD candidate must mention this age limit on any invitations they send.
13. PhD ceremonies are listed on the university website and in the weekly press newsletter (schedule for PhD ceremonies). The professors at the university receive a monthly schedule from the College of Deans on which all PhD ceremonies are listed.
14. If the PhD candidate intends to acknowledge support for their doctoral research that came from outside the university, then this may only be done in writing, in consultation with the supervisor and with the permission of the Doctorate Committee. Statements of a commercial nature are not allowed in the dissertation.
15. In the case of the conferral of a double doctorate as referred to in Article 33, a reference to the partner institution that is party to the double doctorate is included on the front of the degree certificate and on the statement appended to the certificate.

