Doctorate Regulations at the Faculty of Behavioural and Movement Sciences

Version 23 February 2017

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 obligations 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, a programme after completing a research Master’s, MD/PhD programmes et cetera. To accommodate this diversity, new doctorate regulations seek to minimize discrepancies in the quality of the resulting PhD. Quality control 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. In particular, supervisors and candidates must draw up the Training and Supervision Plan (TSP) that will be assessed by the PEC.

All PhD candidates appointed by or affiliated with the Faculty of Behavioural and Movement Sciences (FGB) 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 based on the TSP portfolio. Upon application, the PEC will evaluate whether the TSP has been fulfilled.

A. Guidelines and regulations regarding the Training and Supervision Plan

TSP procedure

Step 1: Submission
- The supervisor(s) and PhD candidate set up the TSP 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 TSP must include a minimum of 30 ECTS (1 ECT = 28 study load hours). For PhD candidates appointed by or affiliated with the Faculty of Behavioural and Movement Sciences, the corresponding courses cover several compulsory and optional topics (see Section B and exemption scheme below):
  o Ethics and integrity
  o Personal development
  o Writing/Presenting in English
  o Research methods
  o Colloquia / Conference attendance
- The supervisor(s) and PhD candidate must sign the TSP and submit it to the PEC by sending the form and any additional documents to PEC committee using: pec.fgb@vu.nl.
- The TSP must be submitted within the first year of the PhD project.

**Step 2: Assessment**
- The PEC will assess the TSP 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 PEC will inform both the supervisor (first promotor) and the PhD candidate upon approval.
- The PEC will forward the TSP to the secretary of the Board of the Faculty of Behavioural and Movement Sciences to allow for annual monitoring.
- The secretary of the Board of FGB ensures that the HRM department receives the TSP including an indication describing the targeted duration of the PhD project.

**Step 3: Monitoring**
- The supervisor(s) and the PhD candidate ensure that the progress according to the TSP is evaluated in every annual interview.
- If the TSP has to undergo major changes, it will have to be resubmitted to the PEC. In this case, the renewed TSP will be evaluated in accordance with step 2.

**Step 4: Degree certificate**
- The PhD candidate is responsible for collecting and archiving records of course completion or other relevant completed components (i.e. build a portfolio of completed courses and activities). The supervisor (first promotor) bears final responsibility for the definitive list of training and courses taken and for the supervision received by the student.
- 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 TSP portfolio.
- The PhD candidate submits the complete portfolio to the PEC, signed by the supervisor (first promotor) when applying for the degree.
- The PEC will evaluate the TSP portfolio in accordance to the general doctorate regulations of the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam and the criteria specific for the Faculty of Behavioural and Movement Sciences. Upon approval, the PhD candidate will receive a signed degree certificate within four working weeks.

**Exemptions**
- TSP 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 regulations of the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam and the criteria specific for the Faculty of Behavioural and Movement Sciences.
- Exemption requests for components will be assessed by the PEC, including the proposed ECTS for these components. Exemption must be motivated in written form by both the
supervisor(s) and the PhD candidate. 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 TSP 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’), other courses within or outside the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, and summer schools.
- PhD candidates holding a junior researcher position or who follow another programme that does not require a TSP in the first year of the PhD project but did take courses taken in the first year may let them enter in the TSP 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 for courses exceed the mandatory 30 ECTS (e.g., ‘Ethics and integrity’ and, if applicable, the ‘BROK course’ have to be part of the TSP).

**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 Faculty Board (portfolio holder for research). The following documents must be submitted:
  i. The written and substantiated complaint with regards to the decision.
  ii. In the case of the denied request of an exemption, the written and substantiated notice from the authorized PEC chairman.
B. Criteria Faculty of Behavioural and Movement Sciences degree conferral for PhD candidates

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty of Behavioural and Movement Sciences courses and training components</th>
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<tr>
<td>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. PhD candidate and supervisor(s) draw up a TSP that includes a minimum of 30 ECTS (1 ECTS = 28 study load hours). Courses cover several compulsory and optional topics (electives). The TSP must be discussed during every annual interview and may be adjusted if necessary (this may require re-assessment of the PEC). When applying for the PhD certificate the TSP portfolio and any records of the courses and training components taken, signed by the supervisor (first promotor) have to be submitted.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Compulsory components</strong></td>
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<td>- Ethics and integrity</td>
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<td>- Personal development</td>
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<td>- Writing/Presenting in English</td>
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<td>- Research methods</td>
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<td>- Colloquia / Conference attendance (1 ECTS without, 2 ECTS with oral and/or poster presentation or conference organization)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Optional subjects (electives)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Subject-related education linked to PhD subject</td>
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<tr>
<td>- BROK* (if applicable, mandatory elective)</td>
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<td>* Legal requirement for all Medical Research (Human Subjects Act)</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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