

# DOCTORATE REGULATIONS



**VU**  UNIVERSITY  
1535 AMSTERDAM

LOOKING FURTHER



# DOCTORATE REGULATIONS

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# SECTION 01 > GENERAL PROVISIONS

## ARTICLE 1 DEFINITION OF TERMS

These regulations assume the following definitions:

Management Regulations	The Management Regulations of VU University Amsterdam, adopted on 14 June 2011
College of Deans	The College of Deans as defined in the Management Regulations, also the Doctorate Board as referred to in the Act.
Co-supervisor	The professor or holder of a PhD appointed in this capacity by the College of Deans
Final Doctoraal examination:	The final degree for students in academic higher education prior to 2002.
Double doctorate conferrals	The granting of two doctorates by both VU University Amsterdam and a foreign university for academic education, based on one and the same dissertation.
EC	European credit (1 EC credit = 28 hours)
Final attainment levels	A specification of the knowledge and skills that the graduate will have at the conclusion of the PhD programme.
Faculty	The faculty responsible for the PhD programme.
Joint doctorate	The granting of a single doctorate by both VU University Amsterdam and one or more foreign universities for academic education, based on one and the same dissertation.
Master's degree	A degree conferred in accordance with the final degree audit of a Master's programme at a university or university of applied sciences as referred to in the Act.
Graduate School	An institute within or affiliated with the University that provides education leading to the degree of Master or Doctor.

Thesis Committee	The committee referred to in Article 13.
Degree supplement	Supplement to the degree certificate listing the courses within the curriculum that have been successfully completed
Training and Supervision Plan	Document detailing the agreements on the training and supervision that the PhD candidate is to receive during the PhD programme.
Dissertation	The academic discourse in the form of a monograph or a collection of papers which meets the requirements set in these regulations.
PhD ceremony	The public defence of the dissertation and the conferral of the degree of Doctor.
Doctorate Board	The board referred to in Article 14.
Supervisor	The professor appointed in this capacity by the College of Deans.
PhD programme	The training and supervision that will enable the PhD candidate to meet the final attainment levels, leading to the conferral of the doctorate.
PhD candidate	The individual who has been admitted to the PhD programme.
Regulations	The Doctorate Regulations as referred to in the Management Regulations.
University	VU University Amsterdam
Act	The Higher Education and Research Act (WHW; <i>Wet op Hoger Onderwijs en Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek</i> )

## **ARTICLE 2**

1. The degree of Doctor may be obtained from the University after the candidate's successful public defence of his dissertation.
2. The degree of Doctor is conferred by or on behalf of the College of Deans.
3. The PhD ceremony takes place in the presence of a Doctorate Board.

## **ARTICLE 3**

Where these Regulations make reference to the supervisor and/or co-supervisor, these terms should be read as supervisors and/or co-supervisors in cases where more than one person has been appointed in these capacities.

## **ARTICLE 4**

The masculine form of the personal pronoun is used throughout these Regulations and should be read as feminine in cases where the individuals concerned are women.

## **ARTICLE 5**

All participants in the closed sessions referred to in these Regulations are required to treat all matters discussed in such sessions as strictly confidential.

## **ARTICLE 6**

The PhD candidate, supervisor and co-supervisor must at all times observe the norms for scientific integrity as formulated in the Netherlands Code of Conduct for Scientific Practice.

## **ARTICLE 7**

1. The partner or spouse of the PhD candidate, a relative of the PhD candidate in the first or second degree or any other person who is in any way connected to the PhD candidate and who cannot reasonably be expected to be unbiased, may not be appointed as a supervisor, co-supervisor or as a member of a Thesis Committee and/or additional member of the Doctorate Board.
2. The supervisor's or co-supervisor's partner or spouse may not be appointed as a member of the Thesis Committee or as an additional member of the Doctorate Board.

**ARTICLE 8 CONDITIONS**

1. Individuals who meet conditions a, b, c and d below will be admitted to the PhD programme:
  - a. In accordance with Article 7.10a, paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of the Act, the candidate must be in possession of a Master's degree or have successfully obtained an equivalent qualification at a foreign institute of higher education.
  - b. The candidate must meet any additional conditions for eligibility as set by the faculty.
  - c. The candidate must submit an approved Training and Supervision Plan.
  - d. The candidate must sign the Netherlands Code of Conduct for Scientific Practice.
2. In exceptional cases, the College of Deans may admit individuals to the PhD programme who meet conditions 1b, 1c and 1d, but not 1a.
3. In exceptional cases, the College of Deans may admit individuals to the PhD programme who meet condition 1a, but not conditions 1b and 1c.
4. An individual who is already in possession of the degree of Doctor or equivalent may not be admitted to the PhD programme unless he intends to pursue a PhD based on a dissertation devoted to research in an academic domain that is different from the domain involved in his initial PhD.

**ARTICLE 9 PROCEDURE**

1. The prospective PhD candidate must submit the admission form, the Training and Supervision Plan and the signed Code of Conduct for Scientific Practice to the Chair of the Doctorate Board of the appointed supervisor's faculty.
2. The admission form shall list the prospective PhD candidate's name and address, the nature of the degree or qualification as referred to in Article 8, paragraph 1a, the subject of the dissertation, as well as the name, address and field of specialization of the intended supervisor.
3. The admission form shall list any proposed co-supervisor and the responsible Doctorate Board.
4. In cases where a Doctoral Board is proposed other than that of the faculty in which the supervisor is appointed, the Chair of the faculty's Doctorate Board shall consult with the Chair of the proposed Doctoral Board.
5. The Training and Supervision Plan will be assessed in the manner required by the faculty. If the Plan is approved, the admission form will be signed by the Dean of the faculty where the proposed supervisor is appointed. The Dean sends the admission form to the College of Deans.
6. The faculty may authorize the Graduate School to assume responsibility for the provisions of paragraph 5.
7. The College of Deans decides on admitting the prospective PhD candidate to the PhD programme. The following will be informed of the decision: the prospective PhD candidate, the supervisor, any co-supervisor and the Chair of the faculty's Doctorate Board.

**ARTICLE 10 APPOINTMENT  
OF THE SUPERVISOR**

1. The College of Deans, having heard the advice of the Doctorate Board that submitted the application, shall appoint a professor at the University as the PhD candidate's individual supervisor.
2. The College of Deans, on the recommendation of the Doctorate Board, always appoints a second supervisor to each PhD candidate, either promotor or copromotor.
3. In cases where two supervisors are appointed, the conditions pertaining to the supervisor in these Regulations shall apply to both supervisors.
4. Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph 1, the College of Deans may, at the initiative of the Doctorate Board, appoint a professor from another Dutch university or a foreign institution for academic higher education as the supervisor. In this case, the College of Deans, at the initiative of the Doctorate Board, shall appoint a professor at the University as the second supervisor.
5. In cases where the Doctorate Board proposes the appointment of a professor at a foreign institute for academic higher education as the supervisor, this professor must occupy a position equivalent to that of a professor at a Dutch university.
6. No more than two supervisors may be appointed per PhD candidate. In cases where more than one supervisor is appointed, the supervisors shall consult one another to determine their respective tasks and responsibilities, having heard the wishes of the PhD candidate.
7. If a professor appointed as a supervisor is given an honourable discharge subsequent to his appointment, the decision to allow the PhD candidate in question to proceed to the public defence of his dissertation shall be taken within five years of the date of said discharge.
8. If this decision is not made within the period specified, the appointment expires. Having heard the candidate and the Doctorate Board, the College of Deans shall appoint another supervisor, except in cases where the College does not deem a new appointment necessary.



#### **ARTICLE 11 THE SUPERVISOR'S DUTIES**

1. The supervisor shall be responsible for the supervision of the PhD candidate and shall ensure that the PhD candidate conducts his research independently.
2. During this period of supervision and while the PhD candidate is preparing his dissertation, the supervisor and PhD candidate shall consult periodically as agreed in the Training and Supervision Plan. The supervisor shall consult with the PhD candidate and the co-supervisor on any changes that he feels should be made to the dissertation.
3. The supervision referred to in the second paragraph is partly aimed at ensuring that the dissertation is finalized within the deadline as stipulated in the Training and Supervision Plan.
4. The supervisor shall ensure that the dissertation meets the requirements in accordance with these Regulations.

#### **ARTICLE 12 APPOINTMENT OF THE CO-SUPERVISOR; THE CO-SUPERVISOR'S DUTIES**

1. Having heard the Doctorate Board, the College of Deans may appoint one or, if necessary, two co-supervisors upon the recommendation of the supervisor. The supervisor shall ascertain the willingness of the individual(s) in question to accept the appointment as a co-supervisor.
2. The co-supervisor shall assist the supervisor in the supervision of the PhD candidate and shall make his assessment of the quality of the dissertation known to the supervisor.
3. The supervisor and co-supervisor shall consult with the PhD candidate on the co-supervisor's involvement in the periodic consultation between the supervisor and the PhD candidate as referred to in Article 11, paragraph 2.

# SECTION 04 THE THESIS COMMITTEE

## ARTICLE 13 MEMBERS, DUTIES AND PROCEDURE

1. The Chair of the Doctorate Board shall appoint the members of the Thesis Committee for each PhD programme based on nominations from the supervisor and upon the supervisor's approval of the dissertation. The Chair of the Doctorate Board is also authorized to dismiss the members of the Thesis Committee from their duties.
2. The supervisor shall convene the Thesis Committee and shall ascertain in advance the willingness of the individuals in question to accept their appointment to the Thesis Committee.
3. The Thesis Committee shall be composed of at least five members, including at least one member and at most two members affiliated with the faculty in question, of whom at most one member shall be affiliated with the supervisor's department. At least two members of the Thesis Committee shall be affiliated with a university other than the university that confers the degree (including double degrees). The external members may not be co-author of articles included in the PhD candidate's dissertation.
4. The Thesis Committee shall be chaired by a professor who is affiliated with the University. The Chair of the Doctorate Board shall appoint one of the members of the Thesis Committee to the post of Chair of the committee.
5. The Chair of the Doctorate Board, the supervisor and any co-supervisor may not be appointed as members of the Thesis Committee.
6. The committee members are required to hold the degree of doctor and/or have *ius promovendi* (i.e. the authority to supervise a doctoral candidate). The majority of the committee members shall be professors.
7. The supervisor shall provide the committee members with a reasoned proposal in which he sets out the grounds on which he feels that the PhD candidate has achieved the final attainment levels as referred to in Article 19 of these Regulations.
8. The Thesis Committee is responsible for assessing the quality of the PhD candidate's dissertation as a whole, based on the principle hypothesis in the dissertation as agreed between the supervisor and the PhD candidate. The Thesis Committee shall assess the manuscript based on the final attainment levels as referred to in Article 19 of these Regulations.
9. The Chair of the Thesis Committee shall write a reasoned recommendation based on the assessments of the individual members of the Thesis Committee, and shall submit this written recommendation to the Chair of the Doctorate Board. This recommendation shall be accompanied by a reasoned assessment from each individual committee member.
10. The Thesis Committee shall not attach conditions to its recommendation. However, the individual members of the committee are free to add suggestions and/or proposals to their assessment.
11. If a member of the Thesis Committee should submit a negative assessment, the Chair of the Doctorate Board shall decide whether to inform the other members of the Thesis Committee, and whether to convene the committee for further deliberations.

**ARTICLE 14 MEMBERS, DUTIES  
AND PROCEDURE**

1. Each faculty has a Doctorate Board, composed of the professors of the faculty in question.
2. The Doctorate Board shall be chaired by the Dean of the faculty in question.
3. Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph 1, in cases where there are fewer than eight professors in a faculty, the College of Deans shall decide upon the composition of the Doctorate Board.
4. On the proposal of the Doctorate Board, the College of Deans may install one or more subcommittees within a faculty, to which the authority of the Doctorate Board can be transferred. Such a subcommittee shall consist of at least eight members.
5. The supervisor may not serve as the chair of the Doctorate Board. If the Dean of the faculty in question is also the intended supervisor, then the Dean's deputy at the faculty in question shall appoint another professor as Chair.
6. The Doctorate Board, or the Chair of the Board as authorized by the Board, shall decide whether the PhD candidate shall be admitted to the PhD ceremony upon the recommendation of the Thesis Committee and with due regard for the provisions of Article 16, paragraph 2.
7. The Doctorate Board shall decide whether to confer the degree of Doctor.
8. For each PhD programme, the supervisor, the co-supervisor (where applicable) and those members of the Thesis Committee who are not already members of the Doctorate Board shall be added as members to the Doctorate Board. The Chair of the Doctorate Board is responsible for this process.
9. For each PhD programme, the relevant Doctorate Board may recommend that the College of Deans appoint additional members to the Board. These shall be individuals who, in the opinion of the College, possess sufficient expertise to serve on the Doctorate Board. These members are not entitled to vote as referred to in Article 29, paragraph 5, and Article 33, paragraph 1.
10. For each PhD programme, a maximum of five additional members may be appointed to the Doctorate Board as referred to in Article 9.

# SECTION 06 > THE TRAINING PROGRAMME

## ARTICLE 15 SCOPE AND CONTENT

1. The PhD candidate shall devote at least 30 EC (840 hours) to training.
2. The faculty is responsible for providing a training programme of sufficient quality and for ensuring that the candidate has sufficient time and resources to take this programme.
3. The details of the training shall be recorded in the Training and Supervision Plan, and shall be specified by the faculty in advance in consultation with the PhD candidate and the supervisor.
4. The faculty shall rule on the interpretation of the provisions of paragraph 1, in accordance with Article 38, paragraph 2.
5. The faculty may grant an exemption covering all or parts of the provisions of paragraph 1.

## ARTICLE 16 ASSESSMENT

1. Once the supervisor has approved the dissertation, the PhD candidate shall submit a request to the faculty to determine whether all training requirements have been met as agreed in the Training and Supervision Plan.
2. The PhD candidate's training shall be assessed in a manner as established by the faculty. The faculty shall inform the supervisor about the results of the assessment; the supervisor shall inform the PhD candidate.
3. The faculty is responsible for drawing up the training certificate and awarding it to the PhD candidate.
4. The faculty may authorize the Graduate School to assume responsibility for the provisions of paragraphs 1, 2 and 3.

**ARTICLE 17 CONDITIONS**

1. The dissertation shall bear witness to the PhD candidate's ability to carry out independent academic research.
2. The dissertation shall consist of either a single academic discourse on a given subject or a collection of separate academic articles, all or part of which have been published, on condition that these separate articles demonstrate sufficient cohesion in relation to a specific subject.
3. The faculty shall draw up a guideline for the dissertation, with due regard for the provisions of Article 38, paragraph 2. The dissertation must be consistent with this guideline.
4. In accordance with Article 27, paragraph 2 of the VU University Amsterdam Management Regulations, the dissertation may not contain anything that is *contra Deum aut bonos mores*, against God or good morals.
5. If the dissertation consists of a collection of articles as referred to in the second paragraph, then the required coherence between the articles is to be made explicit in an introductory and/or concluding chapter.
6. If the dissertation consists of a collection of articles as referred to in the second paragraph, then the PhD candidate's contribution to each article should be adequately demonstrated.

**ARTICLE 18 JOINT DISSERTATION**

1. In the case of joint research conducted by two or three PhD candidates, the results of the research may be expressed in a joint dissertation, provided that the following conditions have been met:
  - a. Each of the authors must have made an independent, clearly identifiable contribution which merits the award of a doctorate.
  - b. Each of the authors shall bear personal responsibility both for a clearly identifiable part of the dissertation and for the coherence of the dissertation as a whole.
  - c. The dissertation shall clearly state the part played by each of the authors in the production of the dissertation.
2. In the case of a joint dissertation, the supervisor shall submit to the Chair of the Doctorate Board a written declaration regarding the contribution of each of the authors. The Chair shall forward this declaration to the College of Deans. This declaration must be signed by both the supervisor as well as all the authors.
3. In the case of a joint dissertation, the procedures and rules laid down in these Regulations shall apply to each PhD candidate individually.

## **ARTICLE 19 FINAL ATTAINMENT LEVELS**

1. The PhD candidate has contributed to extending the frontiers of knowledge by conducting substantial and independent research that withstands the rigours of peer review.
  2. The PhD candidate has demonstrated a systematic understanding of a substantial knowledge domain and is competent in the skills and methodology needed for conducting research in this particular knowledge domain.
  3. The PhD candidate has demonstrated the ability to design, develop, implement and modify a substantial research project.
  4. The PhD candidate is capable of critically analysing, evaluating and synthesizing new and complex ideas.
  5. The PhD candidate communicates with colleagues and the wider scientific community about his specific knowledge domain.
5. In the event that the supervisor does not approve the dissertation, the College of Deans, at the request of the PhD candidate and having heard the supervisor, the co-supervisor (where applicable) and the Doctorate Board, may appoint another supervisor, except in cases where more than one supervisor had been appointed, and the College of Deans therefore does not deem a new appointment necessary.

## **ARTICLE 20 ASSESSMENT BY THE SUPERVISOR AND THE CO-SUPERVISOR**

1. The dissertation shall be subject to the assessment of the supervisor and co-supervisor (where applicable).
  2. The supervisor shall assess the dissertation based on the requirements set by the faculty and the requirements put forth in these Regulations. The supervisor shall take the assessment of the co-supervisor into account when assessing the dissertation (where applicable).
  3. The supervisor and co-supervisor (where applicable) shall approve the dissertation when they are satisfied that the dissertation meets all requirements .
  4. The supervisor shall immediately notify the Chair of the Doctorate Board and the PhD candidate in writing of the outcome of the assessment of the dissertation as provided for in the preceding paragraph.
3. The Doctorate Board may extend the period referred to in the preceding paragraph by a single additional period of 30 days.
  4. In cases where the Thesis Committee's recommendation regarding the dissertation is not in agreement with the supervisor's assessment, the Doctorate Board shall take the final decision on whether to permit the PhD candidate to proceed to the PhD ceremony, having consulted the supervisor and the Thesis Committee. The Doctorate Board shall make its decision known to the College of Deans, the supervisor, the co-supervisor (where applicable), the Thesis Committee and the PhD candidate.

## **ARTICLE 21 ASSESSMENT BY THE THESIS COMMITTEE**

## **ARTICLE 22 LANGUAGE**

1. The dissertation shall be written in Dutch, English, French or German, or in another language subject to the approval of the College of Deans.
2. If the dissertation is written in Dutch, a summary in Dutch and an English translation of the title and summary of the contents shall be added to the dissertation.
3. If the dissertation is written in English, an English summary of the contents shall be added to the dissertation.
4. If the dissertation is written in French or German, an English translation of the title and summary of the contents shall be added to the dissertation.
5. If the dissertation is written in a language other than Dutch, English, French or German, an English translation of the title and summary of the contents shall be added to the dissertation.

## **ARTICLE 23 TITLE PAGE**

1. The dissertation shall include a title page in accordance with the model stipulated by the College of Deans. The title page requires the approval of the Rector Magnificus before the dissertation may be copied for distribution. This provision applies equally to PhD programmes under Articles 34 and 35 of these Regulations.
2. The name of the supervisor and the co-supervisor (where applicable) shall be stated on the page following the title page of the dissertation.
3. In cases where the doctoral research was partly made possible by support from outside the University, this may be mentioned on the page referred to in paragraph 2, subject to the approval of the Chair of the Doctorate Board.

## **ARTICLE 24 COPIES**

1. Responsibility for copying and distributing the dissertation rests with the PhD candidate.
2. The dissertation may be printed or copied at the discretion of the PhD candidate, as long as the requirements of reasonable legibility are met.
3. The dissertation shall be published in a conveniently sized format and in glue-bound or spiral-bound form, or with a stitched binding.
4. At least four weeks prior to the PhD ceremony, the dissertation shall be sent to the Rector Magnificus, to the Doctorate Board, to the Executive Board and to the University Library. The number of copies to be supplied shall be determined by the College of Deans.
5. At least four weeks prior to the PhD ceremony, an electronic version of the thesis shall be published by the University Library. In cases where the dissertation or part of the dissertation is subject to a publishing embargo, the electronic publication of the dissertation shall be restricted to those parts of the dissertation that are not subject to a publishing embargo and to the cover, the title page, the table of contents and the summary of the dissertation in Dutch and in English. The parts of the dissertation that are subject to a publishing embargo shall only be made public upon expiration of the embargo.
6. The following stipulations apply with regard to the provision of copies of the dissertation:
  - a. For the purposes stipulated in paragraph 4 and for other purposes of the University, apart from the electronic archive of the University Library, the PhD candidate shall submit a number of copies of the dissertation to the beadle of the University at least five weeks prior to the PhD ceremony. The College of Deans shall determine the number of copies to be submitted.

- b. For the purposes of the electronic publication of the dissertation as stated in paragraph 5, the PhD candidate shall submit an electronic version of the dissertation, in its final form and layout, according to a procedure to be determined by the University librarian.  
This version of the dissertation shall be submitted at least six weeks prior to the PhD ceremony.
7. With a view to arranging the electronic version of the dissertation as stated in paragraph 6 subsection b, the following conditions apply:
- a. At least eight weeks prior to the PhD ceremony, the PhD candidate shall provide the University with a licence for non-exclusive publication of the dissertation in electronic form, if necessary with a temporary publication embargo.
  - b. With regard to the provision of this licence, the PhD candidate is obliged to sign the standard licensing agreement drawn up by the Executive Board.
  - c. The licensing agreement specifies a reimbursement for the PhD candidate in exchange for the provision of the dissertation in accordance with the stipulations of paragraphs 4 and 5.



# SECTION 08 > THE PHD CEREMONY

## ARTICLE 25 CONDITIONS FOR ADMISSION

PhD candidates will be admitted to the PhD ceremony once they have met the following conditions:

- a. The PhD candidate must have written a dissertation as proof of his ability to carry out independent academic research.
  - b. The PhD candidate must have received a positive assessment from the Doctorate Board as referred to in Article 14, paragraph 6 of these Regulations.
  - c. The PhD candidate must have met the training requirements as referred to in Article 15 of these Regulations.
  - d. The PhD candidate must meet all other requirements as set out in these Regulations.
3. The time and place of the PhD ceremony shall be set by or on behalf of the Rector Magnificus in consultation with the supervisor, the Chair of the Doctorate Board and the PhD candidate.
  4. The College of Deans shall determine the protocol for the PhD ceremony, as well as the official pronouncements prior to and after the public defence of the dissertation, and the official pronouncement of the conferral of the doctorate.

## ARTICLE 26 PROCEDURE FOR ADMISSION

1. The Doctorate Board, or the Chair of the Board if authorized by the Doctorate Board, shall make its decision after receiving the Thesis Committee's assessment of the dissertation and the faculty's assessment of the PhD candidate's training programme.
  2. The Chair of the Doctorate Board shall ensure that the College of Deans, the PhD candidate, the supervisor and co-supervisor (where applicable) are informed immediately of the decision to admit the PhD candidate to the PhD ceremony or to deny admittance to the PhD ceremony.
1. The candidate shall defend the dissertation for one hour against the objections raised by the Doctorate Board, and in particular by the members of the Thesis Committee as referred to in Article 14, paragraph 9 of these Regulations, as well as by any other person present who has been given permission to do so by the Rector Magnificus.
  2. The Doctorate Board, or the supervisor acting at the behest of the Board, shall be responsible for ensuring that a sufficient number of opponents is present.
  3. The raising of objections and the defence of the thesis shall be conducted in Dutch, English, French or German. The use of another language is subject to the approval of the Rector Magnificus.

## ARTICLE 27 FORM

1. The PhD ceremony shall take place in public in the presence of the relevant Doctorate Board and shall be chaired by the Rector Magnificus.
2. He may be replaced in this capacity by a current or former member of the College of Deans, the deputy of the Dean of the faculty concerned, a professor who is the chair of a department of the faculty, or a professor or emeritus professor of the faculty concerned upon prior approval of the College of Deans.

## ARTICLE 28 THE DEFENCE

## ARTICLE 29 MEETING OF THE DOCTORATE BOARD

1. The decision regarding the conferral of the doctorate shall be made in a closed meeting of the Doctorate Board immediately following the defence of the dissertation.
2. The supervisor shall act as the secretary to the Doctorate Board in this meeting. In exceptional circumstances the Chair may appoint another member of the Doctorate Board as secretary to the Board.

3. The Chair of the Doctorate Board, in consultation with the supervisor, shall ensure that at least five members and/or additional members (as referred to in Article 14, paragraph 9 of these Regulations) of the Doctorate Board shall be present at the meeting. Other professors at the University are also entitled to attend the meeting.
4. The following persons may participate in the deliberations at the meeting: the regular members and additional members appointed to the Doctorate Board, the professors referred to in the last sentence of paragraph 3, and individuals who have been granted permission by the Rector Magnificus to participate in the Doctorate Board's opposition.
5. The decision regarding the conferral of the doctorate shall be made by simple majority vote by the Doctorate Board's regular and additional members, taking into account the PhD candidate's defence of his dissertation.
6. The supervisor and co-supervisor (where applicable) have an advisory role regarding the decision referred to in the preceding paragraph.

#### **ARTICLE 30 CONFERRAL OF THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR**

1. Following the closed meeting, the Chair shall reopen the public session and shall announce the results of the deliberations.
2. The supervisor shall then confer the doctorate, using the official pronouncement for conferral of the degree, and shall present the degree certificate to the PhD candidate.
3. The supervisor or, subject to the permission of the Chair, the co-supervisor shall then address the newly invested Doctor.

#### **ARTICLE 31 DEGREE CERTIFICATE**

1. The PhD candidate upon whom the doctorate is conferred shall receive a certificate in Latin as proof thereof, signed by the Rector Magnificus and the supervisor, and bearing the seal of the University.
2. In addition to the supervisor, the certificate may also be signed by the co-supervisor (where applicable).
3. In the event that the doctorate is conferred with the distinction of *cum laude*, this shall be stated on the certificate.

**ARTICLE 32 PROCEDURE FOR AWARDING THE DISTINCTION**

1. In cases where the supervisor or the co-supervisor (where applicable) is of the opinion that the PhD candidate has demonstrated outstanding ability in his dissertation, he shall submit a written and reasoned request to the Chair of the Doctorate Board for the conferral of a doctorate with the distinction *cum laude*. This request must be submitted at least 60 days prior to the PhD ceremony. A member of the Thesis Committee may also submit such a request within the same deadline.
2. Once a request for the conferral of the *cum laude* distinction has been submitted, the Chair of the Doctorate Board shall, without delay, submit this request to the Thesis Committee.
3. The Thesis Committee shall respond in writing within 14 days, informing the Chair of the Doctorate Board of its recommendation regarding the distinction *cum laude*. If more than one member of the Thesis Committee does not agree with the proposal to confer the distinction of *cum laude*, then the Thesis Committee will recommend not to confer the distinction.
4. If the Thesis Committee is in favour of conferring the distinction *cum laude*, the Chair of the Doctorate Board shall immediately appoint two referees. To this end, the supervisor shall nominate four individuals. The Chair of the Doctorate Board shall then choose two of these individuals.
5. The referees are to be professors or associate professors, and experts in the field of the dissertation. The referees may not be members of the Thesis Committee nor members of the Doctorate Board.
6. The referees shall be asked to provide their recommendation to the Chair of the Doctorate Board.

7. The proposal to confer the distinction of *cum laude* shall be introduced by the Chair of the Doctorate Board in the closed meeting of the Doctorate Board prior to the PhD ceremony. The members and additional members of the Doctorate Board as referred to in Article 14, paragraph 9 shall receive a copy of the proposal in the meeting.

**ARTICLE 33 DECISION ON CONFERRAL**

1. The decision on conferring the distinction *cum laude* shall be taken following the defence of the dissertation by the members and additional members of the Doctorate Board as referred to in Article 14, paragraph 9 in the closed meeting as referred to in Article 29, paragraph 1.
2. The manner in which the candidate defends his dissertation shall be taken into account when deciding whether to confer the distinction *cum laude*.
3. This distinction *cum laude* shall not be conferred if more than one of the members or additional members of the Doctorate Board present at the PhD ceremony as referred to in paragraph 1 objects to the conferral.
4. The supervisor and co-supervisor (if applicable) have an advisory role regarding the decision referred to in paragraph 1.

**ARTICLE 34 THE DOUBLE DOCTORATE PROGRAMME AND DOUBLE PHD CEREMONY**

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. A request for a double doctorate programme must be submitted in writing to the Rector Magnificus as part of the PhD candidate's Training and Supervision Plan. The request shall be submitted by the supervisor and the Chair of the Doctorate Board of the faculty that has appointed the supervisor. The request must demonstrate that the dissertation was prepared within the context of a formal collaboration between the two universities concerned and as part of a joint research programme.
3. The request for double doctorate programme must be drawn up in accordance with a model developed for this purpose.
4. The requirements which apply to the conferral of a doctorate at the University are fully applicable, in addition to the following stipulations:
  - a. A professor at the University and a professor at the university participating in the formal collaboration referred to in paragraph 2 shall be appointed as supervisors.
  - b. The dissertation must be approved by the Doctorate Board of the University and by the Doctorate Board or equivalent body at the foreign institution for academic higher education in question.
  - c. The dissertation shall be defended at both the University and the foreign institution for academic higher education within 120 days.

**ARTICLE 35 THE JOINT DOCTORATE PROGRAMME AND JOINT PHD CEREMONY**

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. A request for a joint doctorate programme must be submitted in writing to the Rector Magnificus as part of the PhD candidate's Training and Supervision Plan. The request shall be submitted by the supervisor and the Chair of the Doctorate Board of the faculty that has appointed the supervisor. The request must demonstrate that the dissertation is to be prepared within the context of a formal collaboration between the two universities concerned and as part of a joint research programme.
3. The request for joint doctorate programme must be drawn up in accordance with a model developed for this purpose.
4. In the case of a joint doctorate programme, the College of Deans shall appoint a professor at the University and a professor at the partner university as supervisors.
5. The joint doctorate programme is subject to the rules and regulations of the institution where the dissertation is to be defended.
6. The degree of doctor shall be conferred by the College of Deans, together with the equivalent body at the partner institution.

# SECTION 11

## DISPUTES

### ARTICLE 36 PROCEDURE

1. In the event of a dispute during the PhD programme or with regard to the approval of the dissertation, the Chair of the Doctorate Board shall act as mediator.
2. If the 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.
3. The College of Deans shall then appoint a committee, made up of three professors not involved in the PhD programme, who shall make a recommendation regarding the dispute.
4. Having heard all parties involved and after consulting experts as required, this committee shall submit a reasoned, written recommendation in the form of a draft decision to the College of Deans within 60 days of receipt of the request referred to in paragraph 2.
5. The College of Deans shall settle the dispute and make its decision known to the parties involved within 30 days of receipt of the recommendation.
6. If required, the College of Deans may extend the period referred to in paragraphs 4 and 5 by a single additional period of 30 days.

**ARTICLE 37**

1. Having heard the University's Executive Board, the College of Deans shall make its decision concerning the conferral of an honorary doctorate (*doctor honoris causa*) in accordance with Article 27, paragraph 5 of VU University Amsterdam's Management Regulations, on the basis of a nomination by a Dean.
2. The nomination for the award of the degree of *doctor honoris causa* must meet one or more of the criteria listed below:
  - a. Specialist academic performance without formal academic recognition, which should be reflected in publications that are generally regarded as being of high quality.
  - b. Multidisciplinary scientific research, which should be 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. Activities with clear social and/or cultural significance appropriate to the special character of VU University Amsterdam or persons whose activities express the particular character of the university, which can be assessed and confirmed by their words and deeds or in some other verifiable way.
3. Nominations of persons to whom an honorary doctorate has previously been granted shall not be taken into consideration, except in exceptional circumstances and at the discretion of the College of Deans.
4. The College of Deans shall determine the time at which and the manner in which the doctorate referred to in paragraph 1 shall be conferred.

**ARTICLE 38**

1. In cases not covered by these regulations or in cases where a given Article is open to various interpretations, the final decision shall rest with the College of Deans.
2. The Doctorate Board has the authority to impose additional regulations with regard to the process of obtaining a doctorate. These regulations shall be subject to the approval of the College of Deans.

**ARTICLE 39**

Decisions regarding changes to these regulations shall be taken by a simple majority vote of the College of Deans.

**ARTICLE 40**

Applications for admission to a PhD programme that are dated prior to 1 January 2015 will be processed in accordance with the Doctoral Regulations last amended on 1 April 2010.

**ARTICLE 41**

These Regulations enter into force on 1 September 2002 and were last amended on 12 February 2015, valid from 1 April 2015.





# PROCEDURAL REGULATIONS

1. An application for admission to the PhD programme is made using Form I once a PhD candidate has been employed, but no later than one month after the date of commencement of employment. If a professor is approached by an aspiring PhD candidate, who will not enter into employment at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, with the request to act as supervisor, Form I should be completed as soon as the professor has concluded that the project and candidate is of sufficient quality to bring the project to a good end.
2. An application for admission to the PhD programme under Article 8, paragraph 1 must be accompanied by form I, which is the request for admission to the PhD programme and nomination of the supervisor and co-supervisor (where applicable). The following must be submitted along with form I:
  - a. A copy of an identity document that is legally valid in the Netherlands;
  - b. A certified copy of the diploma as referred to in Article 8, paragraph 1a;
  - c. A certified diploma supplement.

If the documents referred to in 1a and 1b are not in the Dutch, English, French or German language, they must be accompanied by a certified translation in one of these languages.
3. By signing Form I, the Dean confirms that the application for admission complies with the conditions for admission as stated in Article 8 of the VU Doctorate Regulations, i.e. that an approved training and supervision plan has been submitted and that the PhD candidate has signed the Netherlands Code of Conduct for Scientific Practice.
4. The full work address of the parties involved must be listed on form I. The address of the University shall take precedence over any other (work)address.
5. In the case of an application for admission to the PhD programme under Article 8, paragraph 2, the following are to be submitted along with form I:
  - a. Certified copies of relevant diplomas;
  - b. Certified summaries of the curriculum components taken, or a certified diploma supplement;
  - c. A copy of an identity document that is legally valid in the Netherlands;
  - d. Curriculum vitae including results of scientific work carried out;
  - e. The proposed supervisor's reasoned opinion in which the applicant is deemed capable of conducting independent scientific research;
  - f. An assessment of the Dean as Chair of the Doctorate Board.

If these documents are not in the Dutch, English, French or German language, they must be accompanied by a certified translation in one of these languages.
6. The College of Deans shall inform the candidate in writing of the decision regarding admission to the PhD programme and send copies to the Doctorate Board, the supervisor and the co-supervisor (where applicable). The addresses of the supervisor and the co-supervisor (where applicable) shall also be stated on form I, insofar as these addresses are outside of the University.
7. Subject to the provisions of Article 10, individuals who have the right to confer doctorates at a foreign university due to their appointment there and in accordance with applicable legislation in the relevant country may be nominated by the Doctorate Board as a PhD supervisor as referred to in Articles 34 and 35 of these Regulations as long as a professor from the University is appointed as a co-supervisor.

8. The equivalent status of the foreign professorship to the professorship at a Dutch university as stipulated in Article 10, paragraph 5, is intended to ensure that both the academic level of the persons in question and the nature of their academic work are comparable with those of a Dutch supervisor. Accordingly, posts such as visiting professor and honorary professor shall not be considered sufficient in this respect.
9. Notwithstanding the provisions of Article 10, paragraph 6 and Article 12, paragraph 1, in exceptional circumstances and on the reasoned proposal by the Chair of the Doctorate Board, the College of Deans may decide to appoint a third supervisor or co-supervisor. Under no circumstances may there be more than four supervisors or co-supervisors per PhD programme.
10. The Committee of Rector Magnificus and Vice Rectors (Rectorium) is responsible for the implementation of the provision of Article 14, paragraph 9 on behalf of the College of Deans. For this purpose, the Chair of the Doctorate Board shall state the name of the person or persons nominated to serve on the Doctorate Board for a given PhD programme on the form as referred to in Article 25, paragraph 2.
11. With regard to the provisions of Article 15, the training components may vary from specialist courses to participation in seminars and congresses, and activities and/or courses to enhance the PhD candidate's transferable skills. The faculty shall draw up further conditions that the training programme must meet.
12. PhD candidates who signed an employment contract with Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam before 1 April 2015 but who have not been able to apply for admission to the PhD training programme by submitting Form I, will not be bound to follow the programme. However, they are still entitled to follow this programme (or parts of it).
13. Agreements with the beadle on the date and time for the PhD ceremony can only be made once the College of Deans has received form II as referred to in Article 25, paragraph 2. As a rule, the public session of the Doctorate Board or the College of Deans shall begin at 11:45, 13:45 or 15:45. If necessary, a starting time of 09:45 may also be arranged.
14. In accordance with the provisions of Article 27, paragraph 1, the PhD candidate will devote one hour to the defence of his dissertation. In consultation with the PhD candidate, the Doctorate Board may give the PhD candidate a maximum of 10 minutes at the beginning of this hour to present a general explanation of the research at the basis of the dissertation.
15. Professors at the University, professors from other universities and those who take part in the closed session may walk in the procession. The professors shall wear the ceremonial cap and gown. Non-professors are required to wear dark clothing in keeping with the occasion.
16. During the PhD ceremony, a male candidate is required to wear evening dress (white tie). A female candidate is required to wear clothing in keeping with the occasion. In special cases, the Rector Magnificus may honour a written request from the candidate and grant permission to wear a dark suit instead of a dress suit. A PhD candidate from abroad may be allowed to wear the traditional clothing of his native land during the PhD ceremony. The candidate may only make such a request after obtaining permission from the supervisor and the Chair of the Doctorate Board.
17. The PhD candidate may be assisted by two ceremonial assistants (*paranimfen*). The ceremonial assistants are required to observe the same dress code as the PhD candidate. If the PhD ceremony is held in the auditorium or the STOA room, the candidate may dispense with the support of ceremonial assistants if he so wishes.

18. The PhD ceremony, and in particular the defence of the dissertation, is open to individuals of eight years of age and older. The PhD candidate must mention this age limit on any invitations he sends.
19. PhD ceremonies will be listed on the University's website and in the weekly press newsletter. The professors at the University receive a monthly schedule from the College of Deans in which all PhD ceremonies are listed.
20. If the PhD candidate intends to acknowledge support for his doctoral research from outside the University, this may only be done in writing, after consulting the supervisor and with the permission of the Doctorate Board. Statements of a commercial nature are not allowed in the dissertation.
21. In the case of the conferral of a double doctorate as referred to in Article 34, a reference to the partner institution that is party to the double doctorate shall be included on the front of the degree certificate.
22. In the case of a joint doctorate programme as referred to in Article 35, a statement shall be added to the degree certificate indicating the joint nature of the degree.

