



Faculty of Spatial Sciences

Model Teaching and Examination Regulations (OER) for the PhD programme of PhD Scholarship students

Academic year 2021-2022

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The Teaching and Examination Regulations set out the specific rights and obligations that apply to each PhD programme taught at the University of Groningen, for both the PhD scholarship students and the PhD programme. The University-wide section of the Student Charter sets out the rights and obligations that apply to all PhD scholarship students.

These Regulations were decreed by the Board of the Faculty of Spatial Sciences on ... and approved by the Faculty Council where required.

Section 1 – General provisions

Article 1.1 – Applicability of the OER

1. These Regulations for academic year 2021-2022 apply to the PhD programme offered by the Faculty of Spatial Sciences, hereinafter referred to as **the PhD programme**, and to all PhD scholarship students enrolled in this programme.
2. The PhD programme is provided by the Faculty of Spatial Sciences of the University of Groningen, hereinafter referred to as **the Faculty**.
3. The University of Groningen PhD Regulations also apply to these Regulations.

Article 1.2 – Definitions

The following definitions apply to these Regulations:

- a) The Act: the Higher Education and Research Act (WHW: Wet op het Hoger Onderwijs en Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek)
- b) PhD scholarship student: a student registered as such at the University to follow a PhD programme
- c) University, UG: the University of Groningen
- d) Graduate School: the school offering the PhD programme on behalf of the Faculty
- e) Primary supervisor: a professor appointed as such by the PhD Board
- f) PhD Regulations: the regulations applied by the University of Groningen in respect of PhD programmes
- g) Special circumstances: special family circumstances, illness, pregnancy, a physical, sensory or other performance disability of the PhD scholarship student or a circumstance related to the organization of the PhD programme that is beyond the control of the student, which has led to delay in the PhD programme
- h) Admissions Board: board that assesses whether a student may be admitted to the PhD programme on behalf of the Faculty Board. The director of the Graduate School is a member of the Admissions Board
- i) TSP: Training and Supervision Plan for the PhD scholarship student
- j) Board of Examiners: an independent body with the duties and powers as stated in Articles 7.11, 7.12, 7.12b and 7.12c of the Act
- k) Examiner: a person appointed by the Board of Examiners to set examinations and determine their results
- l) Programme Committee: the advisory body set up to fulfil the duties referred

to in Article 9.18 of the Act

- m) Certificate: the written proof that the student has passed the teaching component of the PhD programme.

All other definitions will have the meaning that the Act ascribes to them.

Section 2 – Admission and selection procedure

Article 2.1 – Admission

Admission to the PhD programme will be granted to anyone who:

1. satisfies the conditions of Articles 2.3 and 2.4 of the PhD Regulations of the University of Groningen, with regard to the admissions procedure and requirements,
2. successfully defends a proposal for PhD research, written under the supervision or with the approval of the intended primary supervisor, in the presence of the Admissions Board, and
3. satisfies the conditions set out in Articles 2.2. and 2.3 of these Regulations.

Article 2.2 – Admissions procedure for the PhD programme

1. The Faculty Board will make the final decision on admission to the programme. The Faculty Board of the intended primary supervisor mandates the decision on admissions to the Admissions Board, of which the Director of the Graduate School is a member.
2. Bearing in mind the admissions procedures for the PhD programme, the intended primary supervisor assesses the knowledge and skills of the candidate.
3. The Director of the Graduate School is responsible for providing prompt notification of available places on the PhD programme, and for the application procedure that PhD candidates must follow.
4. Prospective PhD scholarship students can register for the admissions procedure by submitting the following documents before the closing date:
 - a curriculum vitae
 - a copy of the students' Master degree; and an overview of academic results achieved within the framework of a higher education degree
 - a letter outlining the prospective PhD scholarship student's motivation for selecting this particular programme, including his/her expectations and interests

- a proposal for PhD research (according to the URSI PhD proposal format), discussed and agreed with the intended primary supervisor
 - (if required) other documents that, in the opinion of the prospective PhD scholarship student, highlight his/her eligibility for the programme
 - for international students: proof of proficiency in English (e.g. IELTS test score).
5. The Admissions Board decides on behalf of the Faculty Board, possibly on the basis of the written documentation submitted, whether the prospective PhD scholarship student will be admitted to the PhD programme.
 - a. If the prospective PhD scholarship student receives a positive assessment on the basis of the stipulations of Article 2, they will be invited to attend an interview. This interview can be conducted in the physical presence of the candidate, but this is not compulsory. The interview will be based on the submitted written documentation and may comprise a presentation on an academic subject related to the chosen programme.
 - b. If, on the basis of the submitted documentation, the Admissions Board is of the opinion that the prospective PhD scholarship student does not qualify for admission and that there is therefore no need for an interview, the Admissions Board will notify the Director of the Graduate School, who will subsequently inform the prospective student of this decision in writing on behalf of the Faculty Board.
 6. All prospective PhD scholarship students whose applications are assessed on the basis of the procedure set out in Article 5 a will be informed whether they have qualified for admission at least one month before the starting date of the programme. Students who have qualified will also receive proof of admission at this time.
 7. Reasons will be provided if an application is refused. The prospective PhD scholarship student in question will be informed about the possibility of lodging an appeal to the Board of Appeal for Examinations.

Article 2.3 – Time of admission

1. Students can be admitted to the programme throughout the year.
2. Prospective PhD scholarship students must register as PhD scholarship students at the University of Groningen and pay the tuition fees due before being allowed to start the programme. In certain cases, the Board of the University can decide to reduce or waive the tuition fees.
3. The Admissions Board will decide on behalf of the Faculty Board on the application at least six weeks after the date of the assessment, and at least four weeks before the start of the programme.
4. Admission is granted on condition that on the start date concerned, the candidate satisfies the requirements of Article 2.1 regarding knowledge and skills, as evident from documentary proof of the programmes he/she has

followed.

Prospective PhD scholarship students who have not yet obtained their Master's or a comparable degree at the time of the selection procedure, but who would normally be expected to do so before the PhD programme begins, may be granted provisional admission. These students must then pass their final assessment before the starting date of the PhD programme.

Section 3 – Organization and content of the programme

Article 3.1 – Aim of the degree programme

1. The aim of the PhD programme is to prepare PhD scholarship students as well as possible for the writing and defence of a thesis, with due regard for the relevant provisions of the PhD Regulations. PhD scholarship students will also be prepared to fill both academic positions and positions in society for which experience with academic research is required.
2. The programme provides a framework for learning to conduct academic research and for training general and research-specific skills, so that students can fill academic positions or positions in society for which experience in conducting and publishing academic research is essential. The programme focuses on developing verbal and written skills for reporting research results, with a view to writing and defending a thesis.
3. The thesis is the end product of the programme. The PhD scholarship student must submit his/her thesis to the UG PhD Board in order to be allowed to proceed to the UG defence ceremony in accordance with the provisions of the PhD Regulations.
4. In addition to the stipulations of Article 3.1.3, the PhD scholarship student must also successfully complete the teaching component of the Faculty of Spatial Sciences PhD programme as agreed in the TSP, including the Career Perspectives learning pathway (or part thereof).

Article 3.2 – Language of instruction

1. The PhD programme is taught in English.

Article 3.3 – Student workload

1. The student workload is 120, 180 or 240 ECTS for a two, three or four-year PhD programme respectively. In certain cases, the Board of Examiners may agree to deviate from this rule.
2. The PhD programme referred to in Article 3.3.1 includes the teaching programme described in the TSP, The training programme for PhD

scholarship students has a workload of 30 ECTS (4 year program) or 15 ECTS (2 year program in a sandwich construction).

3. The student workload is expressed in whole ECTS credits.

Section 4 – Final assessment of the degree programme, general provisions

Article 4.1 – Board of Examiners and examiners

1. The Board of Examiners is the independent body that determines whether individual PhD scholarship students have the knowledge, understanding and skills required to be awarded a degree.
2. Notwithstanding the provisions of Article 4.1, the authority to award a PhD degree in line with the PhD Regulations of the University of Groningen lies with the PhD Examining Committee.
3. The Faculty Board appoints the members of the Board of Examiners on the basis of their expertise in the field of the programme.
4. The Board of Examiners must comprise at least:
 - a. one member who is a professor attached to the programme
 - b. one member from outside the degree programme.
5. Members of the Faculty Board, the Director of the Graduate School or other people who have financial responsibilities within the institution may not be appointed as members of the Board of Examiners.

Article 4.2 – Teaching programme and certificate

PhD scholarship students who successfully complete the teaching programme taught by the Graduate School of Spatial Sciences as agreed in the TSP, including the Career Perspectives learning pathway (or part thereof), will be awarded a certificate signed by the Board of Examiners and the Director of the Graduate School in accordance with the provisions of Article 7.11 of the Act.

Article 4.3 – Thesis

To be awarded the degree of ‘Doctor’, PhD scholarship students must write a thesis in line with the provisions of Chapter 4 of the PhD Regulations of the University of Groningen.

Article 4.4 – Degree

1. PhD scholarship students who have successfully defended their thesis will be awarded the degree of ‘Doctor’ in accordance with the provisions of Article 7.18 of the Act.
2. The degree awarded will be stated on the PhD certificate.

Article 4.5 – Honours (‘judicium’)

A PhD can be awarded with honours (‘cum laude’) if the student satisfies the requirements laid down in Chapter 9 of the University of Groningen PhD Regulations.

Article 4.6 – Academic integrity

1. Students must comply with the integrity codes for academic research, as stipulated in the Netherlands Code of Conduct for Academic Practice and the University’s own Regulations for the Protection of Academic Integrity.
2. If a student cheats, the Board of Examiners can declare the teaching component concerned invalid or take other measures.
3. In the event of serious cheating, the Board of Examiners may advise the Board of the University to terminate the PhD scholarship student’s registration definitively and withdraw his/her right to a PhD from the University of Groningen.

Section 5 – Study progress supervision

Article 5.1 – Study progress administration

The Graduate School, mandated in this by the Faculty Board, registers the individual study results of PhD scholarship students in Hora Finita.

Article 5.2 – Study progress supervision

The Graduate School, mandated in this by the Faculty Board, is responsible for organizing the introduction and study progress supervision of PhD scholarship students registered for the degree programme, also with a view to potential study options within and outside the degree programme.

Section 6 – Dispute settlement procedure

Article 6 – Disputes

The current complaints and disputes regulations of the University of Groningen will apply to all complaints and disputes concerning admission and other decisions. See <http://www.rug.nl/education/laws-regulations-complaints/>.

Section 7 – Transitional and final provisions

Article 7.1 – Amendments

1. Any amendments to these Regulations will, in consultation with – and where necessary upon the approval of – the Programme Committee and the Faculty Council, be confirmed by the Faculty Board in a separate decree.
2. Any amendments to these Regulations will not apply to the current academic year, unless it may be reasonably assumed that the amendment in question will not harm the interests of PhD scholarship students.
3. In addition, an amendment may not disadvantage PhD scholarship students with regard to approval granted within the meaning of Articles 2.1 and 2.2 any other decision taken within the meaning of these Regulations concerning a PhD scholarship student.

Article 7.2 – Publication

The Faculty Board will duly publish these Regulations, any rules and guidelines concerning admission to the PhD programme, and any amendments to these documents.

Article 7.3 – Date of commencement

These Regulations will take effect on 1-9-2021.