



PhD regulations in the Netherlands

PhD Candidates Network Netherlands

www.hetpnn.nl

November 2022

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Aanbevelingen

Het Promovendi Netwerk Nederland (PNN) heeft het promotiereglement van 15 Nederlandse universiteiten geëvalueerd. PNN constateert dat promotietrajecten in Nederland aan veel heterogeniteit onderhevig zijn, vaak met decentrale en moeilijk vindbare regelingen. Bovendien zijn de criteria voor de verlening van het doctoraat niet altijd gespecificeerd, waardoor de kans bestaat dat een promovendus zakt op de verdediging zonder duidelijke vervolgstappen of mogelijkheden tot beroep.

Naar aanleiding van de in dit rapport nader uitgewerkte analyse heeft PNN een set van aanbevelingen geformuleerd ter verbetering van promotiereglementen van instellingen in Nederland:

- Essentiële informatie dient te worden opgenomen en gemakkelijk toegankelijk te zijn via het centrale promotiereglement (en eventuele bijlagen), aangezien het voor promovendi cruciaal is om evaluatiecriteria te kennen. Minimale vereisten zouden moeten zijn:
 - Expliciete stappen, tijdspannes en criteria in het proces van het afronden van een promotietraject om onduidelijkheden met betrekking tot beslissingen en eventuele hoger beroepen weg te nemen.
 - Verwijzing naar wetenschappelijke codes en praktijken (waaronder een opleidings- en begeleidingsplan, gedragscodes, wetenschappelijke integriteit en intellectueel eigendom).
 - Verwijzing naar Graduate School- en/of faculteitsspecifieke aanvullingen op of afwijkingen van het centraal promotiereglement. Deze dienen op een toegankelijke manier beschikbaar te worden gesteld, bijvoorbeeld als bijlagen bij de centrale regeling. Bovendien moet de redenering achter de noodzaak van deze bijlagen worden gespecificeerd.
- De fundamentele criteria, op basis waarvan wordt besloten tot het al dan niet toekennen van het doctoraat aan een promovendus, zouden meer geharmoniseerd moeten worden tussen reglementen. Momenteel gaan instellingen uit van verschillende combinaties van drie criteria: de kwaliteit van het proefschrift, de kwaliteit van de verdediging en/of het oordeel van de promotor. Aangezien instellingen een identieke doctoraatstitel toekennen, zien we het risico dat de beschermde, gecentraliseerde status van de doctoraatstitel wordt ondermijnd.
- Academische instellingen dienen het ceremoniële karakter van de verdediging expliciet vast te leggen in hun doctoraatsreglement. Indien instellingen besluiten dat afwijzing mogelijk is, dienen instellingen in ieder geval duidelijke informatie te verstrekken over de vervolgstappen (inclusief mogelijkheden tot beroep) bij afwijzing.
- Academische instellingen dienen elementen uit de Erkennen en Waarderen-beweging op te nemen in hun promotiereglement of eventuele bijlagen. Ambities voor een meer toekomstbestendig onderzoeksklimaat moeten worden gerealiseerd door diversificatie van het promotietraject, inclusief mogelijkheden zoals het opnemen van hoofdstukken over neveninspanningen van een kandidaat.

Recommendations

The PhD Candidates Network Netherlands (PNN) has evaluated the doctoral rules and regulations of 15 Dutch universities. PNN has found that doctoral programs in the Netherlands are subject to much heterogeneity, while regulations are often decentralized and difficult to find. Moreover, criteria for the awarding of the doctoral degree are not always specified, which allows for the possibility of a PhD candidate to fail their defense without a clear course of action or means of appeal.

Following the analysis further elaborated on in this report, PNN has formed a set of recommendations for improving the doctoral regulations of institutions in the Netherlands:

- Essential information should be included and easily accessible through the central doctorate regulations (and possible appendices), since it is crucial for PhD candidates to know the evaluation criteria. Minimal requirements should include:
 - Explicit checkpoints, time spans, and checks and balances in the process of finishing a PhD program to remove unclarities regarding decisions and appeals.
 - Referral to scientific codes and practices (including Training and Supervision Plans, codes of conduct, scientific integrity, and intellectual property).
 - Referral to Graduate School and/or faculty-specific supplementations on or deviations from the central doctoral regulations. These should be made centrally available, as appendices of the central regulations. Additionally, the reasoning behind the necessity of these appendices should be specified.
- The fundamental criteria on which the decision is made to award (or not to award) the doctoral degree to a candidate should be more harmonized between regulations. Currently, institutions maintain different combinations of three, overarching criteria: the quality of the dissertation, the quality of the defense, and/or the judgment of the promotor. As institutions award an identical doctoral degree, we see a risk of potentially undermining the protected, centralized status of the doctoral degree.
- Academic institutions need to explicitly define the ceremonial character of the defense in their doctoral regulations, or, if institutions nevertheless decide that rejection is possible, institutions should at the very least provide clear information on possible next steps (including possibilities of appeal) in the event of a rejection.
- Academic institutions should implement elements from the Recognition and Rewards movement in their doctoral regulations. Ambitions for a more futureproof research climate should be met through diversification of the PhD program, including opportunities such as allowing the potential inclusion of chapters on ancillary efforts of a candidate.

Abbreviations

EUR = Erasmus University of Rotterdam
KNAW = Dutch Royal Academy of Science
MU = Maastricht University
NFU = Dutch Federation of UMC's
NWO = Dutch Organization for Scientific Research
OU = Open University
PNN = PhD candidate Network Netherlands
PhD = Doctorate of Philosophy
RU = Radboud University
RUG = University of Groningen
TiU = Tilburg University
TUD = Delft University of Technology
TU/e = Eindhoven University of Technology
TSP = Training and Supervision Plan
UMC = University Medical Center
UNL = Universities of Netherlands
UL = University of Leiden
UT = University of Twente
UU = University of Utrecht
UvA = University of Amsterdam
UvH = University of Humanistic Studies
VU = Vrije University of Amsterdam
WUR = Wageningen University and Research
ZonMw = Healthcare Research Netherlands - Medical Sciences

Introduction

The *doctorate of philosophy* (PhD) is the highest degree in the field of academia. In the international academic system, this doctorate is pursued by many young scientists known as PhD candidates. PhD candidates enter a training program of three to four years. The goal of this program is to develop into an independent and competent researcher, under the supervision of an accomplished researcher (*promotor*). During this period, the candidate produces an academic thesis (also known as a dissertation), with which they prove to be capable of contributing to their scientific field and to be worthy of carrying the title of *doctor*. The contents of the thesis are then defended in a public defense, where the PhD candidate is challenged to enter in a debate with academic peers (*opponents*).

This modern PhD trajectory is largely adhered to by Dutch academic institutions like universities and academic medical centers (UMCs), harboring the far majority of PhD candidates (>95%), and was co-constructed in 2003 with the introduction of the University Job Regulation (*Universitaire Functieordening*) by multiple actors in Dutch academia. These include the universities and UMCs, but also the Dutch Ministry of Science (*Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap*), the Dutch association of universities (*Universiteiten van Nederland*; UNL) and the Dutch national interest group for PhD candidates (*Promovendi Netwerk Nederland*; PNN). All these actors continuously attempt to critically (re-)evaluate and improve the structures in academia, illustrated by publications like frameworks on PhD regulations proposed by UNL in position papers in 2004 and 2018 (*Hora Est: Vernieuwing in het Nederlandse promotiestelsel, 2004; Een gezonde praktijk in het Nederlandse promotiestelsel, 2018*), but also by multiple publications of PNN on the well-being and labor conditions of PhD candidates (*PNN PhD Survey, 2020*).

Despite these collaborations, there are many differences between universities in the rules and regulations that describe the design, conditions and proceedings of PhD trajectories. This is exemplified by minor differences, e.g. the requirements surrounding the composition of the committees judging the quality of the thesis (reading committee) and/or the committees judging the quality of a public defense (defense committee), as well as major differences, e.g. differing opinions on the necessity of fixed amounts of scientifically published articles as criteria for obtaining the doctoral degree. Some universities have extensive regulations, describing many steps in the PhD program in detail, whereas the regulations of others are very concise.

This large degree of variation raises questions, since all the PhD trajectories in the same discipline result in a doctoral degree of the same value, potentially causing heterogeneity in a common title. Moreover, the existing differences in content and level of detail in PhD rules and regulations between universities can create problems, for instance when PhD candidates switch promotors or universities, or when unofficial or semi-official practices are common, but not put down in writing. This is illustrated by the number of published or

publishable articles in a thesis, or by the practices surrounding the defense ceremony at the conclusion of a PhD trajectory.

These examples pose the question how PhD regulations, and the frameworks they provide to obtain the doctoral degree, differ between universities in the Netherlands. To answer this, PNN evaluated the scope of the differences in PhD regulations in the Netherlands. In this publication, PNN critically assesses and compares PhD regulations (and appendices) of 15 bigger and smaller Dutch universities. Both the results of the analysis as well as a set of recommendations aimed at realizing improvements to the quality and harmonization of regulations are presented in this report.

Methods

In this report, PNN compared the most recently published rules and regulations for distribution of a doctoral degree of the major classical (10), technical (4) and humanistic universities (1) in the Netherlands. The English versions of currently valid doctoral regulations of all universities were acquired through their websites. After data collection, a primary screening was performed of the doctoral regulations of three universities chosen at random (University of Groningen, Eindhoven University of Technology and Utrecht University). From this screening, a set of variables was distilled and constructed, categorized according to four themes for use in comparisons between regulations: general proceedings concerning PhD trajectories (*PhD (general)*), proceedings describing (how to review) obligatory or conditional elements of dissertations (*Dissertation*), and proceedings describing the public defense of a dissertation and the critical assessment of it (*Defense*), and other mentionable elements (*Other*). All variables included were:

1. *PhD (general)*: An indication of the breadth of the regulations provided to PhD candidates in the number of pages of the active doctoral regulations. Additionally, provisions on the minimum/maximum number of PhD supervisors (promotors and co-promotors) per PhD candidate, mentioning of a Training and Supervision Plan (TSP) and regulations on the presence of scientific confidential advisors, a scientific code of conduct and/or intellectual property provisions.
2. *Dissertation*: An obligatory minimum number of (published) scientific articles per dissertation, how many copies of the dissertation are to be provided and potential financial support for the printing/publishing of these copies, language requirements of the dissertation, requirements on the general buildup of the dissertation (title page, table of contents, introduction etc.), rules and terms on the procedure surrounding the rating and approval of the dissertation (both for the supervisors as well as the reading committee), rules on the composition of the reading committee and the number of propositions a PhD candidate could/should include in their dissertation (both scientific and trivial).
3. *Defense*: Rules regarding the composition of the defense committee and possible/desired overlap with the composition of the reading committee, how many opponents may directly participate in the defense, the language in which the defense is being held and the time it can take with or without general introduction. Criteria for the quality of the defense, whether there is a mention of the possibility of failing the defense and what happens if someone does not successfully complete the defense, the criteria which must be met for receiving the *judicium cum laude*.
4. *Other*: Attention for the new Recognition & Rewards movement in the Netherlands, the transparency regarding decisions that are made in the context of the PhD trajectory, especially regarding the rating of the manuscript and defense, and what the options are whenever conflict arises prior to, during, or after the general PhD trajectory, the rating of the manuscript, or the defense of the dissertation.

These themes and their variables were subsequently combined in a compact, standardized evaluation form for doctoral regulations of Dutch universities, covering whether the topic is mentioned, how it is described and in which article and subsection the provision can be found (Appendix 1). All collected doctoral regulations were then analyzed according to the evaluation form and results of this analysis were compared with each other. In additional analyses of results, findings were coded in a coding matrix (Appendix 2). In this matrix, regulations were scored on whether the aforementioned variables were covered in a specific set of regulations. This allowed for an easy and practical comparison of the regulations. Prior to publication, all universities have been provided with a concept report to check for factual mistakes.

Results

We analyzed all 15 doctoral regulations using a predetermined, self-constructed format assessing the terms regarding the PhD in general, requirements on the thesis of a doctoral candidate, and the criteria of the defense ceremony. An overview of all doctoral rules and regulations and the version that was analyzed is shown in Table 1.

General

The number of pages of the examined sets of doctoral regulations varied greatly; from 12 (OU, UU, UvH) to 59 (TUD). The median number of pages per set of regulations was found to be 28 pages.

The number of supervisors is relatively constant between all sets of regulations. Most regulations (13/15) specify a composition of a minimum of 2 (with at least one promotor) and a maximum of 4 supervisors (2 promotors and 2 co-promotors). Regulations of 2 institutions specify a number of supervisors between 1 and 3. This formulation appears to be in contrast to what is recommended in the document *Een gezonde praktijk in het Nederlandse promotiestelsel*, adopted by all Dutch universities, that every PhD candidate should be supervised by a minimum of 2 (co-)promotors. However, to our knowledge, there have not been any indications to assume that universities deviate from this rule in practice.

The existence and importance of a TSP is specified in 9 of 15 regulations (60%), whereas information on possible confidential advisors within the organization is mentioned in 5 of 15 regulations (33%). Mentions of the (scientific) code of conduct of any university were present in 12/15 regulations (80%), and specifications on intellectual property policies within the institution were present in 4/15 (27%) of all cases.

Dissertation

Despite it being a major point of focus in discussions on variations between practices of research institutions, merely in a single set of regulations a specification was given on a minimum number of scientific articles that are to be published (>4; UvH).

The number of propositions, on the other hand, varies; 10/15 regulations specify a minimum/maximum number of propositions. 5 institutions do not provide any information on a required number of propositions in their central regulations (33%).

Additionally, information on any kind of funding and/or compensation for the costs related to either the dissertation or the defense of a PhD candidate, is present in 8/15 (53%) of the regulations. In the other cases, references are often made to faculty or Graduate School specific compensation rulings.

Language specifications are given in all regulations. In 11/15 sets of regulations, Dutch and English are mentioned. At the WUR the thesis is in principle written in English, but

permission can be obtained to write in Dutch. At 3 institutions (EUR, UU, VU) Dutch, English, German and French are all explicitly mentioned as languages that may be used. In most cases use of a language different than those specified in the doctoral regulations is dependent on the approval of either the Dean or the College of Deans.

The number of physical and digital copies mandated for submission prior to any PhD defense differs between sets of regulations, and is not always mentioned. Only in two cases, a singular physical copy is required (UU, TU/e). The outliers require a minimum total of 15 (OU) to 16 (WUR) physical copies of the dissertation. In 4/15 (27%) of all cases, no specification on a desired number of physical or digital copies was found.

Defense

In all institutions, the committee which is responsible for the evaluation of the thesis (the reading committee) is at least in part responsible for evaluation of the defense as well.

The composition of the defense committee is often extensively described and somewhat varies between institutions: most institutions (13/15; 87%) require a doctoral defense committee of a minimum of 5 members (with the exception of the MU/TiU).

The doctoral defense is carried out in either Dutch or English in 4/15 (27%) institutions, whereas in 8/15 (53%) institutions other languages are optional, if approved by either the Rector, the College of Deans, or the chairperson of the defense. In 3/15 cases (20%), there are no specifications on the language in which the defense is conducted.

The duration of the defense is different between institutions as well. Whereas the duration of the defense never exceeds 60 minutes, the ratio between an optional layman's introduction of the research covered in the thesis and the actual defense of the thesis varies: some sets of regulations (8/15) specify a duration of 10 or 15 minutes for such an introduction, whereas other institutions do not provide such specification.

In 7/15 institutions (47%), specific criteria are given on which the PhD candidate is evaluated regarding passing or failing the defense and obtaining the doctoral degree. This is remarkable, especially considering the fact that in almost all institutions, the possibility of failing the defense, and by extension not being awarded the doctoral degree, is possible (14/15; 93%). Nonetheless, in not a single one of the examined sets of regulations, the follow-up steps after failing a doctoral defense and the way to proceed in case of denial of the doctoral degree is specified.

In case of excellent performance by the candidate, the distinction *cum laude* can be awarded. All universities describe the possibility of awarding this distinction, and almost every set of regulations, albeit oftentimes vaguely, describes the criteria the candidate has to adhere to (14/15; 93%).

Other

In none of the examined doctoral regulations Recognition & Rewards are explicitly mentioned. In all sets of regulations, measures of confidentiality and transparency are described regarding consultations of the graduation/thesis/defense committee. Lastly, all sets of regulations in some way describe the possibility of a form of general conflict resolution, which in most cases includes the involvement of either the (College of) Dean(s) or the installment of an external arbitration committee.

Table 1. Overview of all doctoral regulations included in this study, their respective universities and their approval (by university council) or publication date (if approval date is unknown). Last updated October 2022.

University	Latest revision on
Classic universities	
Erasmus University (EUR)	1st October 2020
Maastricht University (MU)	1st October 2020
Open University (OU)	1st May 2018
Radboud University (RU)	1st September 2021
Tilburg University (TiU)	1st December 2019
University of Amsterdam (UvA)	1st September 2020
University of Groningen (RUG)	26th of January 2022
University of Leiden (UL)	8th February 2021
Utrecht University (UU)	28th January 2020
Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam(VU)	1st September 2022
Technical universities	
Delft University of Technology (TUD)	21st October 2019
Eindhoven University of Technology (TU/e)	1st September 2021
University of Twente (UT)	29th June 2022
Wageningen University & Research (WUR)	1st January 2022
Humanistic university	
University of Humanistic Studies (UvH)	26th March 2019

[^]Exact approval date unknown (not published).

Discussion

In this report, PNN provides an overview of certain aspects of the PhD trajectory rules and regulations from 15 Dutch universities. Foremost, it shows that a large degree of variation exists between doctoral regulations of Dutch research institutions. Large differences between regulations of institutions can be found in relatively minor points, like the language the defense is conducted in, but also in major, influential points, like specifications on the evaluation criteria for successfully completing the doctoral defense and obtaining the degree.

As the premise of this report was aimed at evaluating differences in doctoral regulations on a central, university-wide level, it is difficult to conclude anything about variation between Graduate Schools or faculties, nor its extent. However, from experience PNN can confirm that the extent of variation within universities can also be considered high. Moreover, these faculty specific requirements have proven difficult to find for both PhD candidates as well as for PNN, as these are often not publicly available.

Additional regulations at a decentral level

Merely one set of PhD regulations (OU) states a specific required amount of scientific treatises or articles that a candidate's dissertation must contain. From experience however, it is known that these (in)formal requirements often do exist, albeit on a decentralized (e.g. Graduate School or faculty) level. Such heterogeneity in requirements of programs could result in the notion that one can more easily obtain a doctoral degree at a specific faculty or Graduate School of a given university, or at a specific university in the Netherlands, than at a comparable faculty, Graduate School, or university. Though a potential supplementation of the central doctoral regulations on a faculty or Graduate School level is not worrisome per se, institutions should strive towards open communication and utmost transparency regarding the (potential) differences on faculty or Graduate School levels within an institution, ensuring the additional regulations are written and easy to find. Preferably, they are attached to the central doctoral regulations as appendices.

Awarding the doctoral degree

One of the findings is the observation that almost all institutions leave room in their regulations for deciding not to award the doctoral degree following the doctoral defense. Contextually, in practice a PhD defense in the Netherlands has become almost exclusively ceremonial: if a dissertation is considered qualitatively up to standard and the candidate is accepted to the defense, the candidate is in principle certain of receiving the doctoral degree. A recent case, in which a PhD candidate was refused the doctoral degree following a (considered) subpar defense, has been met with severe criticism, the major argument against this decision being the widely accepted purely ceremonial character of the doctoral defense. This case has elucidated the worrisome feature that in most Dutch doctoral regulations there exists the possibility to refuse awarding the

doctoral degree based on the quality of the defense, without a further specification on which grounds or criteria this could be decided.

Moreover, of critical note, none of the institutions describe any course of action upon the refusal of a doctoral degree following the defense. This exemplifies the need for updated regulations: either these institutions fully embrace the ceremonial character of the defense and abandon the possibility of refusing the doctoral degree to a candidate who has previously been permitted to the doctoral defense, or they should design and implement a course of action in case of denial of the doctoral degree. PNN before all is convinced of the necessity of the ceremonial character of the defense; if admitted to the defense, the PhD candidate has shown excellent work through their trajectory. Also, the dissertation—the direct result of this work—has already been critically evaluated and accepted by both the supervisor(s) and a reading committee. Only in exceptional circumstances involving e.g. transgressions from the research code of integrity like plagiarism or fraud, or socially unacceptable actions like public intoxication, should the doctoral degree not be awarded.

Another interesting finding is the fact that the quality criteria a dissertation and/or defense has to meet, are subject to large variation between institutions or are not described in detail. All institutions base their ruling on whether or not to award a doctoral degree on different combinations of three overarching criteria: the quality of the dissertation, the quality of the defense, and the judgment of the promotor. As institutions award an identical doctoral degree, it is essential to agree which criteria (thesis, defense, judgment promotor) are fundamental for the awarding of a PhD degree in the Netherlands.

Checks and balances

It is furthermore remarkable that the time spans involved with certain decision moments at the end of a PhD trajectory (e.g. decision of (co-)promotor(s), decision reading committee) are not always mentioned. Regrettably, means or provisions on the possibility of appealing the result of decisions, or potential delay of these decisions, are often not mentioned either. This is problematic, because doctoral regulations should provide information on terms to adhere to and on possibilities to appeal (the terms of) decisions.

Major developments in Dutch PhD programs in recent years have been to improve supervision within programs, through use of a so-called *Training and Supervision Plan* (TSP), in which candidate and supervisor agree on plans and goals in the PhD program. The TSP is of particular importance to the candidate, as in the dependent and hierarchical relationship between candidate and promotor, in case of any conflict, it strengthens the position of the candidate if written agreements have been made in the past. However, only in 60 percent (9/15) of the regulations a mention is made of the TSP.

Recognition and Rewards

Additionally, almost all regulations have been published after the establishment of the new Recognition and Rewards movement in 2019 by many actors involved in the academic field (UNL, NFU, KNAW, but also research institutes and allocators of public funding ZonMw and NWO). This movement focuses on achieving balance in the different domains within academia, leaving room for everyone's talent: not only research itself, but also education, societal impact, leadership and healthcare in UMCs are important pillars of academia. Currently only research, generally in the form of scientific articles or treatises, is recognized and rewarded in the PhD trajectory; all other things, although important for self-development and being able to continue in the (academic) workfield, are seen as ancillary efforts and thus not taken into account in the evaluation of the PhD trajectory itself. Adopting viewpoints from the Recognition and Rewards movement is essential for a futureproof research climate in the Netherlands.

In conclusion, doctoral programs in the Netherlands are subject to much heterogeneity, even on major points, and often the rules in practice are decentralized and intransparent. Also, criteria for the awarding of the doctoral degree are not always specified clearly, allowing for the possibility of a PhD candidate to fail their defense, without a clear course of action or a means of appeal.

References

General

- Higher Education Law: [Wet op het hoger onderwijs en wetenschappelijk onderzoek](#)
- Survey: [PNN PhD Survey 2020](#)
- Position Paper: [Recognition & Rewards position paper](#)
- NRC article: [De promovendus mocht haar proefschrift gaan verdedigen, maar tot ieders verbijstering zakte ze](#)
- [Een gezonde praktijk in het Nederlandse promotiestelsel](#)

Doctoral rules and regulations

- [Erasmus University - Doctoral Regulations 2020](#)
- [Maastricht University - Doctoral Regulations 2018](#)
- [Open University - Doctoral Regulations 2018](#)
- [Radboud University - Doctoral Regulations 2021](#)
- [Tilburg University - Doctoral Regulations 2021](#)
- [University of Amsterdam - Doctoral Regulations 2020](#)
- [University of Groningen - Doctoral Regulations 2022](#) (only in Dutch)
- [University of Leiden - Doctoral Regulations 2021](#)
- [Utrecht University - Doctoral Regulations 2020](#)
- [VU Amsterdam - Doctoral Regulations 2022](#)
- [Technical University of Delft - Doctoral Regulations 2020](#)
- [Eindhoven University of Technology - Doctoral Regulations 2021](#)
- [University of Twente - Doctoral Regulations 2022](#) (including the [Charter for Doctoral Candidates](#))
- [Wageningen University and Research - Doctoral Regulations 2022](#)
- [University of Humanistic Studies - Doctoral Regulations 2018](#)

Appendix 1

Format

XX University	Details	Section
PhD (general)		
Amount of pages regulations		
PhD supervisors (promotors / co-promotors)		
Training and Supervision Plan		
Confidential advisors		
Code of Conduct		
Intellectual property		
Dissertation		
No. articles		
No. Scientific propositions (# trivia)		
Sponsoring of thesis		
Language		
No. copies thesis (paper/electronic)		
Technical requirements (optional)		
Term assessment (co-)promotors		
Members reading committee		
Term assessment reading committee		
Reading committee		

verdict		
Miscellaneous		
Defense		
Reading committee = defense committee?		
Members defense committee		
Opposition		
Language defense		
Duration defense		
Criteria		
Rejection possible		
Cum laude		
Dispute defense (in case of rejection)		
Other		
Recognition & Rewards		
Transparency		
Conflict (general)		

Appendix 2

Classical Universities

Erasmus University Rotterdam

EUR	Details	Section
PhD (general)		
Amount of pages regulations	32 (excl. appendices, total of 52)	N/A
PhD supervisors (promoters / co-promoters)	Two; promotor and/or second promotor/co-promotor. Three is possible, four exceptional. First promotor must be from EUR	Article 3.1
Training and Supervision Plan	Yes, should be finished three months after starting	Article 2.3.1
Confidential advisors	<i>Not mentioned</i>	
Code of Conduct	Yes, PhD candidate should be aware of code of conduct	Article 2.3.2 and 2.4.1
Intellectual property	Only mentioned in appendix on joint/double doctorates	Appendix 6
Dissertation		
No. articles	<i>Not defined (Article 4.5)</i>	
No. Scientific propositions (no. trivia)	11, 5 based on the contents of the thesis, 5 not based on the thesis. These 10 should be scientifically defensible. The 11th is not scientific. Promotor checks and agrees	Article 4.2
Sponsoring of thesis	<i>Not mentioned</i>	
Language	Dutch, English, French or German. If in Dutch: English, French or German title and summary. In other languages, Dutch summary and title	Article 4.3.1

No. copies thesis (paper/electronic)	Printed or digital format. But it is unclear if a printed version needs to go to beadle's office	Article 4.6.1 Article 4.7.2
Technical requirements (optional)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Title page;- Table of contents;- Introduction outlining at least the problem definition of the thesis and contribution of authors;- Scientific evaluation;- Conclusion;- Summary and its translation;- If possible, a name and subject index and/or source index;- CV of the PhD candidate;- Portfolio of the PhD candidate	Article 4.4
Term assessment (co-)promotors	9 weeks	Article 5.3
Members reading committee	The committee will be formed by the dean on the recommendation of the supervisor. Three people, majority with ius promovendi. At least one member not affiliated with the supervisor, at least one not affiliated with EUR	Article 6.2
Term assessment reading committee	1 month	Article 6.3
Reading committee verdict	Each Assessment Committee member gives a substantive written response to the manuscript and an unconditional decision regarding the PhD candidate's admission. Majority of votes decides whether Candidate can do defense. If not granted, supervisor can ask Doctoral Board to form new assessment committee	Article 6.3
Miscellaneous	N/A	
Defense		
Reading committee = defense committee?	Yes, but with two additional members	Article 7.1

Members defense committee	Members are professors or associate professors affiliated with a university with ius promovendi. At least one member not affiliated with a supervisor, at least one not affiliated with EUR. At least two male and two female members. The Chair (rector magnificus or substitute) has an advisory vote. However, if the votes are equally divided, he/she has a deciding vote	Article 7.1
Opposition	Between 6 and 8 people. This includes experts who may be added (and have an advisory vote) at the supervisors request	Article 7.3/7.4
Language defense	Dutch or English (or other language if approved by rector magnificus)	Article 8.3
Duration defense	1 hour, chair closes ceremony (15+45)	Article 8.3.5
Criteria	"The PhD candidate is expected to dispel any reservations of the Doctoral Committee during his/her defense of his/her thesis and propositions "	Article 8.3.4
Rejection possible	Yes, if requested, the matter is voted on by roll call. If the votes are equally divided, the Chair has the deciding vote	Article 8.4
Cum laude	Yes, if the thesis ranks among the top 5% of thesis in the subject area concerned. Criteria described, only given if all votes in favor	Article 9.1/9.2
Dispute defense (in case of rejection)	Not mentioned	
Other		
Recognition & Rewards	Not mentioned	
Transparency	Meetings are all behind closed doors	
Conflict (general)	Rather vague: " The Doctorate Board makes a decision - on the recommendation of the Rector Magnificus - regarding the manner and the period within which the dispute will be tried to be resolved."	

MU	Details	Section
PhD (general)		
Amount of pages regulations	38 (excl. appendices, total of 60)	N/A
PhD supervisors (promotors / co-promotors)	At least two, of which at least one supervisor. Supervisor is a professor or employee with ius promovendi	Article 4.1 Article 8.2
Training and Supervision Plan	Yes, mentioned	Article 10.2
Confidential advisors	Mentioned they are there, minutely	Article 39.4
Code of Conduct	Yes, mentioned	Article 4
Intellectual property	<i>Not mentioned</i>	N/A
Dissertation		
No. articles	<i>Not mentioned</i>	N/A
No. Scientific propositions (no. trivia)	Min. 8, max. 11. 4 must be related to dissertation, 3 to the scientific field. 1 to valorisation purposes, remaining for trivia	Article 22.6
Sponsoring of thesis	Compensation for printing thesis, €0.36 per printed page	Article 27.3
Language	Dutch, English, or other (with approval)	Article 23.1
No. copies thesis (paper/electronic)	6/1	Article 27.3
Technical requirements (optional)	Title page, table of contents, required indices, introduction, dissertation, general discussion, CV	Article 24.1 Article 25
Term assessment (co-)promotors	Supervisor decides within two months	Article 12.1
Members reading committee	At least 2 up to 5 professors, 1-2 with PhD. Total number: at least 4, max. 5. >= 50% internal, but at least 2 external	Article 19.1-3
Term assessment reading committee	Within 4 weeks of receipt	Article 20.1

Reading committee verdict	Candidate has demonstrated his ability to carry out independent scholarly work. Dissertation can be accepted as doctoral dissertation	Article 20.1
Miscellaneous	<i>Not mentioned</i>	N/A
Defense		
Reading committee = defense committee?	Yes, partly	Article 28.1.b
Members defense committee	Reading committee, (co-)supervisor(s), additional professors and/or experts with doctoral degrees	Article 28.2
Opposition	All members of the defense committee (Min. 5)	Article 29
Language defense	Dutch or English (opposition/defense can be other with permission of rector)	Article 30
Duration defense	60 minutes (10-15 minutes)	Article 31
Criteria	Research underlying the degree, dissertation, and defense	Article 32.1
Rejection possible	Yes. Vote when required by a member of the defense committee	Article 32.2
Cum laude	Yes, covered. Including criteria	Article 21
Dispute defense (in case of rejection)	<i>Not mentioned</i>	N/A
Other		
Recognition & Rewards	<i>Not mentioned</i>	N/A
Transparency	All meetings of the assessment and defense committee are confidential	Article 3.3
Conflict (general)	An interested party may lodge an objection against decisions taken by or on behalf of the Board of Deans with the Board of Deans within six weeks of notification of the decision, in accordance with the General Administrative Law Act	Article 42

OU	Details	Section
PhD (general)		
Amount of pages regulations	12	N/A
PhD supervisors (promotors / co-promotors)	Max. 2/2 (co-promotor can be U(H)D with PhD title, or other if approved)	Article 6
Training and Supervision Plan	Not mentioned	
Confidential advisors	Not mentioned	
Code of Conduct	When title is granted, the promotor asks PhD candidate to keep Code of Conduct in research	Article 13.2
Intellectual property	Not mentioned	
Dissertation		
No. articles	Not mentioned	
No. Scientific propositions (no. trivia)	No number mentioned, but need approval by promotor	Article 7.1
Sponsoring of thesis	Not mentioned	
Language	Dutch or English (Doctorate Board can approve other)	Article 5.1
No. copies thesis (paper/electronic)	15/1	Article 11.2
Technical requirements (optional)	Dissertation can be one or more scientific treatises If in Dutch, English title and summary is added, and vice versa (other language both) Title page protocol with names, approval by Doctorate Board	Article 3 Article 5.2 Article 11.1
Term assessment (co-)promotors	Not mentioned	
Members reading	Max 6 members in principle, min 4: 3	Article 9.2

committee	professor, min 2 from a different university, all need a PhD title, max 1 involved with max 1 article of dissertation	
Term assessment reading committee	Not mentioned	
Reading committee verdict	Max 1 vote against, this is then mentioned ASAP to the rest of the committee	Article 9.3 and 9.4
Miscellaneous	- A dissertation printed as trade edition is obligatory printed before publication of the trade edition	
Defense		
Reading committee = defense committee?	Yes, with more members	Article 10.1 and 10.2
Members defense committee	Max. 10; Chair (= chair of Doctorate Board), (co-)promotors, and members of reading committee, more if approved by Doctorate Board	Article 10.2
Opposition	Not by (co-)promotors	Article 12.3
Language defense	Dutch, only English if Dutch is not spoken (well enough)	Article 12.7
Duration defense	10-15 min summary and after that 45 min defense	Article 12.6
Criteria	Not mentioned	
Rejection possible	No	Article 13
Cum laude	Protocol and criteria mentioned	Article 14
Dispute defense (in case of rejection)	Not mentioned	
Other		
Recognition & Rewards	Not mentioned	
Transparency	- All that is discussed in a closed setting is held in secrecy - Defense is public	
Conflict (general)	In the event that, in the implementation of the provisions of these regulations, there is a dispute on a decision of the	Article 19.2

	<p>Doctorate Board, an interested party can submit a substantiated notice of objection to the Doctorate Board within six weeks of being informed of the decision</p>	
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Radboud University	Details	Section
PhD (general)		
Amount of pages regulations	28 (excl. appendices, total of 43)	N/A
PhD supervisors (promotors / co-promotors)	Min. 2, max. 4 Two need PhD, at least one affiliated with RU	Article 3.9
Training and Supervision Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Duration of the phase of the academic research and preparation of manuscript- Composition of the supervision team- Obligations for continued enrolment	Article 3.10
Confidential advisors	Not mentioned	
Code of Conduct	Radboud University's Regulations for Academic Integrity	Article 3.7.3
Intellectual property	Not mentioned	
Dissertation		
No. articles	Not mentioned	
No. Scientific propositions (no. trivia)	6 to 12 (2)	Article 4.6
Sponsoring of thesis	Max. €2200,-	Appendix II
Language	Dutch, English	Article 4.2.1
No. copies thesis (paper/electronic)	At least 10/1	Article 3.26
Technical requirements (optional)	Summary, data management plan, introduction and critical reflection on the articles as a whole	Article 3.6 Article 4.5 Article 4.3.2
Term assessment (co-)promotors	Not mentioned	
Members reading committee	3 or 5 (including chair), >50% professors (with doctorate), chair is RU professor, at least one external member	Article 3.14.2

Term assessment reading committee	Max. 5 weeks	Article 3.16.1
Reading committee verdict	Majority voting, detailed lists of criteria	Article 3.16, 2-3
Miscellaneous	<i>Not mentioned</i>	
Defense		
Reading committee = defense committee?	Yes, in large part	Article 3.25.3
Members defense committee	Min. 7, max. 11	Article 3.25.2
Opposition	<i>Not mentioned</i>	
Language defense	<i>Not mentioned</i>	
Duration defense	60 minutes (10 minutes introduction)	Appendix VII
Criteria	Manuscript verdict Quality of defense Information of PhD supervisor	Article 3.33.1 Appendix IV
Rejection possible	Yes, if <50% vote. In case of a tie, chair will break the tie	Article 3.33.3
Cum laude	Detailed set of criteria	Article 3.33.2 Appendix V & VI
Dispute defense (in case of rejection)	<i>Not mentioned</i>	
Other		
Recognition & Rewards	<i>Not mentioned</i>	
Transparency	Meetings of the reading committee, Cum Laude committee and defense committee are confidential	
Conflict (general)	Objection and appeal possibilities, all prior to defense	Article 5.2

TiU	Details	Section
PhD (general)		
Amount of pages regulations	26	N/A
PhD supervisors (promotors / co-promotors)	Proposed by the candidate PhD candidate Min. 2 (1/1), max. 3: (1/2 or 2/1); no ranking	Article 4.1
Training and Supervision Plan	Should be presented together with the proposal of the trajectory by the PhD candidate and a concept of the proposed full PhD trajectory	Article 6.2
Confidential advisors	Not mentioned	
Code of Conduct	Mentioned	Article 1.4 and 4.3.3 and 7.1.3
Intellectual property	Not mentioned	
Dissertation		
No. articles	Not specified: ‘a scientific treatise in book form or a collection of a number of scientific articles with introduction and conclusion’	Article 7.1.2
No. Scientific propositions (no. trivia)	Not mentioned	
Sponsoring of thesis	Costs are in principle for PhD candidate, but compensation by Graduate School can be requested	Article 7.6.5
Language	Dutch or English (or with approval Doctoral Board other); if not in English, translation title in English is added	Article 7.3
No. copies thesis (paper/electronic)	Not specified: ‘PhD Candidate submits a number of copies of the Thesis as prescribed by the Doctorate Board, free of charge, to the secretaries’ office of the Doctorate Board’	Article 7.6.4
Technical	Model: title page, other side names	Article 7.4

requirements (optional)	(co-)promotors and members reading committee (this first approved), table of contents, acknowledgement funding, no ads	
Term assessment (co-)promotors	Not defined	
Members reading committee	Min. 4: at least half professor, 1 other university, 1 professor TiU, 1 male and 1 female, all obtained PhD, all enough expertise and diverse, all independent from research. Dean Graduate School is chair reading committee, rector during the defense	Article 5.3
Term assessment reading committee	Within 4 weeks of receipt dissertation from Graduate School	Article 8.2.2
Reading committee verdict	If there is a negative vote, a meeting with the committee, the (co-)promotors and the PhD candidate is planned to discuss the content of the thesis. Definitive negative verdict possible with early termination trajectory.	Article 8.2.3 and 8.2.4
Miscellaneous	Dissertation is in principle open access and data is where possible according to the FAIR-principles (article 7.7)	
Defense		
Reading committee = defense committee?	Yes	Article 9.1
Members defense committee	Chair is rector, rest is previous committee or others appointed by Doctoral Board	Article 9.1
Opposition	Aforementioned; others can oppose if approved at least 3 weeks before defense	Article 9.4.5
Language defense	Dutch or English (or with approval rector other)	Article 9.4.7
Duration defense	An academic hour	Article 9.1
Criteria	- Protocol is determined by Doctoral Board - Short public introduction on the research (max 12, can be in mother	Article 9.5.4

	language if accompanied with English sheets), this is not evaluated in the defense	
Rejection possible	Advice committee is confirmed with a normal majority of votes	Article 9.5.2
Cum laude	Members committee can advise the dean of the Graduate School (at least 2 votes), best 5% dissertations	Article 10.1 and 10.2
Dispute defense (in case of rejection)	<i>Not mentioned</i>	
Other		
Recognition & Rewards	<i>Not mentioned</i>	
Transparency	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Defense and dissertation are open- Official voting on defense is closed- A number of meetings are confidential	Article 9.5 Article 1.3
Conflict (general)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Early termination of the PhD trajectory described in article 3.4- General conflicts are mentioned in chapter 14, advice committee can be installed	

UvA	Details	Section
PhD (general)		
Amount of pages regulations	35 (excl. appendices, total of 40)	N/A
PhD supervisors (promotors / co-promotors)	Min. 2 (1/1 or 2/0), max. 4 (2/2)	Article 10 and 11
Training and Supervision Plan	<i>Not mentioned</i>	
Confidential advisors	<i>Not mentioned</i>	
Code of Conduct	<i>Not mentioned</i>	
Intellectual property	The intellectual property of the work belongs to the PhD candidate self, university can use the work	Article 31
Dissertation		
No. articles	Not specified: 'a scientific treatise on a certain subject or a number of separate scientific treatises'	Article 15.1
No. Scientific propositions (no. trivia)	Are optional, not part of the dissertation and on a separate form. Min. 6 and max. 11, of which 6 are on the scientific field of the faculty. Promotor should approve	Article 29.8
Sponsoring of thesis	Should be mentioned in the case of financial support (no ads allowed)	Article 29.6
Language	Dutch or English (or other if approved)	Article 15.3
No. copies thesis (paper/electronic)	Paper should be handy format and in stitched form At least 4 weeks before the defense 3 paper versions are handed in at the beadle, and paper or digital version to dean, (co-)promotors and committees	Article 29.3 Article 30.2 and 30.5
Technical requirements (optional)	- Maximum of 70.000 words - At least: title page, table of contents, overview used literature, when articles; page with full reference list and authors	Article 15

	with relative contribution per author, sponsoring if applicable, summary with title of dissertation in same language dissertation, as well as in Dutch and English	
Term assessment (co-)promotors	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Promotor(s) approve dissertation (separately)- Approval should be timely given; if not, a PhD candidate can request a verdict (<6 weeks answer)- At least 14 weeks before date defense promotor should hand in digital version to Dean, Dean at least 4 weeks to committee- Co-promotor can abstain from approval and then be relieved from co-promotorship	Article 16.1 and 16.2 Article 16.6 and 16.10 Article 17.4 Article 17.6 Article 14
Members reading committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Min. 5, max. 7 members entitled to vote- Majority professors/ius promovendi entitled, others PhD title, expert (sub) specialism of research, as diverse as possible (dean), at least half of UvA, at least 1 professor of PhD trajectory at faculty, 1 professor other organization, coauthors not allowed to form a majority	Article 20
Term assessment reading committee	At least 6 weeks after receipt dissertation whether defense is possible and at least 8 weeks before defense their verdict of dissertation	Article 22.2 and 23.1
Reading committee verdict	If 1 negative vote, committee will vote; majority of entitled votes, no abstaining possible. If defense is declined, adjusted dissertation should be handed in <1 year	Article 23.2, 23.4 and 23.6
Miscellaneous	PhD candidate is responsible for dissertation and not obligated to accept changes from promotor (article 12)	
Defense		
Reading committee = defense committee?	Yes in principle	Article 35.5
Members defense committee	As mentioned in article 20	Article 20

Opposition	At least 5 entitled to vote of the committee, otherwise the promotor invites guest opponents	Article 35.6
Language defense	Dutch or English (or another language if approved)	Article 36.3
Duration defense	- An exposé is allowed of a maximum of 10 minutes; - The exposé, opposition and defense together have a maximum duration of one hour	Article 34.3 and 36.4
Criteria	Not mentioned	
Rejection possible	Normal majority of the votes verdict, yes (or if ‘new information’ comes to light)	Article 37.3 and 37.4
Cum laude	Members of the reading committee can advise cum laude at least 8 weeks before the defense; at least 4 external references should evaluate; then the defense committee can officially grant it (when 1 vote against then it is declined)	Article 27 and 28
Dispute defense (in case of rejection)	Not mentioned	
Other		
Recognition & Rewards	Not mentioned	
Transparency	The defense is public	
Conflict (general)	- If ‘new information’ comes to light after approval dissertation that could have influenced this, delay or cancellation is allowed through the Doctoral Board (article 26) - A separate chapter is dedicated to conflicts: an advice committee can be appointed	

RUG	Details	Section
PhD (general)		
Amount of pages regulations	28 (excl. appendices, total of 52)	N/A
PhD supervisors (promotors / co-promotors)	Min: 2 (2/0 or 1/1; one primary thesis advisor) Max: 3 (exceptional 4) (No co-promotorship possible with ius promovendi)	Article 2.2.2 (Article 3.2)
Training and Supervision Plan	Yes	Article 2.3
Confidential advisors	Yes: for Code of Conduct	Article 1.7
Code of Conduct	Yes	Article 1.7
Intellectual property	Employees: CAO-NU/ Non-employees: not mentioned	Article 4.1.3
Dissertation		
No. articles	<i>Not mentioned</i>	
No. Scientific propositions (no. trivia)	Min. 6 (0) Approved by (co-)promotors	Article 4.2
Sponsoring of thesis	<i>Not mentioned</i>	
Language	Dutch or English Other language if approved by Doctorate Board	Article 4.3
No. copies thesis (paper/electronic)	2/1	Article 4.7
Technical requirements (optional)	Title page, table of contents, introduction (including research question, academic analysis, conclusion, abstract, bibliography, CV, propositions, summary in Dutch (Foreword))	Article 4.4
Manuscript assessment (co-)promotors	- First by (co-)promotors; if not approved, others chosen by dean - Decision within 4 weeks (NL)	Article 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3

Members reading committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- 3 or 4(joint/double doctorate)- Min. 1 professor RUG, 1 other university- Dean is chair, but not part of committee- (co-) promotor not part committee	Article 6.1.2
Term reading committee	Within 4 weeks	Article 6.3.1
Reading committee verdict	If 1 negative advice, then dean decides; if rejected, then new committee can be assembled	Article 6.3
Miscellaneous	Possibility of a shared thesis	Article 2.5
Defense		
Reading committee = defense committee?	Yes, with additional members added	Article 7.1
Members defense committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Dean appoints committee- Min. 5 (max. 2 without ius promovendi, min. half RUG)- Chair is rector magnificus and is part of the committee, but not of the opposition	Article 7.1.2
Opposition	Max. 9 (exceptions possible)	Article 7.4
Language defense	Dutch/English (or other, if approved by rector)	Article 8.3.2
Duration defense	45 minutes (public)	Article 8.3.3
Criteria	Verdict of reading committee + quality of defense	Article 8.4.2
Rejection possible	Yes. Rejection doctorate must be unanimous	Article 8.4.3
Cum laude	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Primary supervisor/chair reading committee request (min. 8 weeks before ceremony)- Evaluation criteria mentioned	Article 9.1.2 Article 9.1.6
Dispute defense (in case of rejection)	Not mentioned	
Other		
Recognition & Rewards	Not mentioned	
Transparency	Defense is public, verdict is made in private closed setting	

Conflict (general)	A conflict advice committee is available, preparing the verdict of the Doctorate Board
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UL	Details	Section
PhD (general)		
Amount of pages regulations	28	N/A
PhD supervisors (promotors / co-promotors)	2 or 3 (2/1 or 1/2)	Article 10.1
Training and Supervision Plan	Yes. Content of the training plan needs to be agreed on with the PhD candidate, needs the opportunity to follow training and to be monitored in yearly progress meetings. At beginning of final year, PhD candidate and (co-)supervisors determine whether everything is completed	Article 3.1.d
Confidential advisors	Yes, in case of dispute	Article 38.5
Code of Conduct	<i>Not mentioned</i>	
Intellectual property	PhD candidate licenses University for publication of thesis	Article 20.3
Dissertation		
No. articles	Not specified, the dean can set further guidelines	Article 15.2
No. Scientific propositions (no. trivia)	At least 4 relating to the subject of the dissertation, at least 4 scientific relating to the field of the subject of the dissertation and at least one and at most 4 on one or more societal subjects of the candidate's choice. Maximum of 12 in total	Article 14.1
Sponsoring of thesis	No mention, but advertisement not allowed	N/A
Language	Dutch, English or other language with permission of the Dean on behalf of the Doctorate Board. Titles and summaries in both Dutch and English	Article 17.1
No. copies thesis	At least four paper copies to the library,	Article 20.1

(paper/electronic)	unclear amount to the beadle, unclear amount to the dean	
Technical requirements (optional)	No more than 100,000 words. Table of content, names of all (co-)supervisors and members of doctoral committee, CV, institute that provided finances	Article 15.8 Article 18
Term assessment (co-)promotors	6 weeks, or differently if PhD Candidate agrees	Article 12.3
Members reading committee	The Dean is the chair and a member of the Doctorate Committee, except when Dean is supervisor. In addition, 4 or 5 other members. Secretary is Leiden professor or UHD with ius promovendi. At least two from different faculty, at least one male and one female; (co-)supervisors not member of committee	Article 22
Term assessment reading committee	6 weeks	Article 23.2
Reading committee verdict	Majority of votes	Article 23.7
Miscellaneous	In case of refusal, the supervisor has to write a modification proposal. If accepted, revised manuscript to be submitted within a year	
Defense		
Reading committee = defense committee?	Yes, with additions	Article 26
Members defense committee	Chair: rector magnificus (or substitute), Secretary: Dean. In addition to the chair at least four members. Majority should be professors and should be appointed at Leiden University. At least one male and one female member. (Co-)supervisors are not part	Article 26
Opposition	Examining committee, some exceptions with approval of rector magnificus	Article 27.1
Language defense	Preferably English or Dutch	Article 27.5
Duration defense	One academic hour (15+45 minutes)	Article 27.7

Criteria	Not clearly defined	Article 28
Rejection possible	Yes, in case of tie or majority of votes. The decision then goes to the doctorate board. No clear proceedings defined.	Article 28.3, 29.7
Cum laude	Possible, proposal by supervisor or member of the doctorate committee. Unanimously doctorate committee + 2 internationally renowned experts agree + faculty professors do not disagree. Final decision at defense	Article 31
Dispute defense (in case of rejection)	<i>Not clear what next steps are</i>	
Other		
Recognition & Rewards	<i>Not mentioned</i>	
Transparency	Meetings of doctorate committee and examining committee are confidential	
Conflict (general)	Mediation by the dean when dispute arises between supervisors and/or co-supervisors and/or PhD Candidate. See article 38	

UU	Details	Section
PhD (general)		
Amount of pages regulations	12	N/A
PhD supervisors (promotors / co-promotors)	Min. 2 (prof/UHD), max. 4 (exceptional cases 5 with 3 promotors)	Article 5, 6 and 7
Training and Supervision Plan	Not mentioned	
Confidential advisors	Not mentioned	
Code of Conduct	Yes	Article 9.2 and 11.2.a
Intellectual property	Not mentioned	
Dissertation		
No. articles	Not mentioned	
No. Scientific propositions (no. trivia)	Not mentioned	
Sponsoring of thesis	Not mentioned	
Language	English, Dutch, German, French (or other, if approved)	Article 19.1
No. copies thesis (paper/electronic)	Min. 1/1	Article 19.4
Technical requirements (optional)	Dutch/English titles + summary, CV, description composition assessment committee	Article 19
Term assessment (co-)promotors	3 months (longer if approved by candidate)	Article 13.3
Members reading committee	5 (4 with ius, 3 professors, 1 outside UU, all PhD); rector is chair	Article 15
Term assessment reading committee	1 month	Article 16
Reading committee verdict	Unanimously in principle; if negative vote is suspected, dean is consulted	Article 16

Miscellaneous	In the case of a revision of the manuscript, the revision must be submitted within one year (or to the new reading committee)	
Defense		
Reading committee = defense committee?	Partly (some members)	Article 22.3
Members defense committee	Min. 5, of which 3 prof UU (min 3. reading committee), Min 5. prof UU needed when cum laude	Article 22.3
Opposition	All members of the defense committee	Article 23
Language defense	Not mentioned	
Duration defense	45 minutes (unless chair decides otherwise)	Article 24
Criteria	Defense of thesis	Article 25.2
Rejection possible	Yes, if <= 50% in defense committee	Article 25.2
Cum laude	Soft criteria: ‘excellent’ on criteria for thesis	Article 17 (criteria thesis article 12)
Dispute defense (in case of rejection)	Not mentioned	
Other		
Recognition & Rewards	The thesis may include additions that, strictly speaking, fall outside the scope of an academic treatise (article 19.6)	
Transparency	The Doctoral Examination Committee retires for closed-door deliberations (article 24.2)	
Conflict (general)	Dean is mediator in conflicts preceding the ceremony	

VU	Details	Section
PhD (general)		
Amount of pages regulations	28 (incl. executive orders)	N/A
PhD supervisors (promotors / co-promotors)	Always 2 supervisors, max 2 promotors. Two co-promotors is possible	Article 10.1 and 10.2 Article 12.1
Training and Supervision Plan	Should be turned in Evaluated by dean Education (30EC)	Article 8.3a Article 8.5 Article 14.1
Confidential advisors	Not mentioned	
Code of Conduct	Mentioned	Article 5 and 8.3d
Intellectual property	Not mentioned	
Dissertation		
No. articles	Not mentioned	
No. Scientific propositions (no. trivia)	Not mentioned	
Sponsoring of thesis	License agreement: a compensation for distribution of dissertation is a right	Article 20.7.c
Language	Dutch, English, French or German; dean can approve other languages (than Dutch summary	Article 18
No. copies thesis (paper/electronic)	Unclear: at least electronic (PhD candidate can choose to print dissertation)	Article 20
Technical requirements (optional)	Title page (model) with names Soft criteria	Article 19 Article 21.1
Term assessment (co-)promotors	Not mentioned	
Members reading committee	Min. 5: 1 male and 1 female, 1-2 members from the faculty, max 1 working unit of the promotor. At least 2 from a different university (no coauthors), all have PhD or are	Article 13

	professors (min 2). An external advisor is permitted	
Term assessment reading committee	Within 30 days after receipt, the chair reports to the dean the findings of the committee. Dean can extend term once another 30 days	Article 23.4
Reading committee verdict	When 1 or more cast a negative vote, a meeting is organized; if after this, the negative vote remains, then the chair decides whether PhD can adjust dissertation short term, otherwise the chair reports to the dean. The dean can decide to approve despite 2 negative votes, after discussion with the Doctorate Board. More than 2 is not approved, and PhD gets a year time to adjust or trajectory is terminated	Article 23.8 Article 24.2
Miscellaneous	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- The dean can relieve members of the committee from their position- The dissertation is not allowed to contain anything “contra Deum aut bonos mores”- Faculty can add more requirements to dissertation	
Defense		
Reading committee = defense committee?	Yes	Article 26.1
Members defense committee	PhD committee, and (co-)promotors or others if approved	Article 28.2
Opposition	Only PhD committee is allowed to vote	Article 28.3
Language defense	Dutch, English, French or German (other is possible after approval rector)	Article 27.2
Duration defense	1 hour; 10 min summary at the start is possible	Article 27.1
Criteria	Defense is taken account in decision; normal majority of votes	Article 28.7
Rejection possible	Unclear: ‘In the case of a positive vote..’ and ‘if decided to grant the title to the PhD candidate’	Article 28.7 and 29.2
Cum laude	Protocol explained	Article 31 and 32

Dispute defense (in case of rejection)	<i>Not mentioned</i>
Other	
Recognition & Rewards	<i>Not mentioned</i>
Transparency	Public defense, closed vote (article 4 and 26)
Conflict (general)	Mentioned in article 35

Technical Universities

Delft University of Technology

TUD	Details	Section
PhD (general)		
Amount of pages regulations	59 (incl. executive orders, total 70)	N/A
PhD supervisors (promotors / co-promotors)	Min 2. One or more professors or employees with ius promovendi, at request of the promotor a copromotor can be added.	Article 8.2 Article 8.6
Training and Supervision Plan	Within 3 months of the start of the doctoral programme, a PhD Agreement needs to be submitted.	Article 4.3
Confidential advisors	Not mentioned	
Code of Conduct	Only mentioned	Article 5.2 a
Intellectual property	Not mentioned	
Dissertation		
No. articles	Not specified	
No. scientific propositions (no. trivia)	Max. 10. Min. 6 about matters other than dissertation. 2 may be trivial in nature.	Implementation Decree E, article 1, 2 and 3 Appendix I
Sponsoring of thesis	The dean of the promotor's faculty can provide information about any (partial) reimbursement for costs resulting from printing of the thesis	Implementation decree D, article 5a
Language	Dutch or English (preferred). Exceptions possible at request	Implementation decree D, article 3
No. copies thesis (paper/electronic)	At least 8-10 copies, but exact number depends on faculty policy.	Implementation decree D, article 5b, 5c and 5d.
Technical requirements (optional)	Title page, table of contents, summary (Dutch + English), foreword (optional), introductory chapter, research chapters,	Implementation decree D, article 2

	valorisation, epilogue (optional), acknowledgements (optional), CV, list of publications	
Term assessment (co-)promotors	Within 2 months	Article 10.4
Members reading committee	Min. 6/ max. 8 (rector, promotor, 4 independent members, additional (co-)-promotors). At least three independent members have ius, at least one is professor and employee of TUD, at least one is external. All members have a doctorate.	Article 12.1 Article 12.5 Article 12.6
Term assessment reading committee	Within 6 weeks of appointment (At least 5 weeks before draft date of defense)	Article 14.2
Reading committee verdict	3 types of votes: approval with/without reservation, no approval. Postponed if 1) 3 members vote approval without reservation 2) 2 members vote approval with reservation + 1 no approval, or 3) 2 members vote no approval	Article 14.3 & 14.4
Miscellaneous	N/A	
Defense		
Reading committee = defense committee?	Yes	Article 12.2
Members defense committee	See members reading committee above	Article 12.1 Article 12.5 Article 12.6
Opposition	Doctoral committee + others given permission	Article 15.3 Article 16.2 Implementation degree F, article 1.10
Language defense	Dutch or English (other languages allowed after permission at request)	Implementation Decree F, article 1.3
Duration defense	1 hour	Article 16.2
Criteria	Quality of defense, dissertation and propositions	Article 17.1
Rejection possible	Yes, extensively elaborated upon	Article 17.3

		Implementation Decree F, article 4.2
Cum laude	Abstract qualitative criteria for cum laude, transparent criteria for voting process	Article 18 Implementation Decree F, article 4.3 and 4.4
Dispute defense (in case of rejection)	Each decision of the Board for Doctorates (which award the PhD degree) can be disputed.	Article 19 Article 2.1 Implementation Decree G
Other		
Recognition & Rewards	<i>Not mentioned</i>	
Transparency	Closed meetings of the doctoral committee	
Conflict (general)	TU Delft Doctoral Arbitration Committee	

TU/e	Details	Section
PhD (general)		
Amount of pages regulations	23	N/A
PhD supervisors (promotors / co-promotors)	Min. 1, max. 3 (2/1 or 1/2)	Articles 7 and 8
Training and Supervision Plan	Not mentioned	
Confidential advisors	Not mentioned	
Code of Conduct	Yes. Should be signed prior to defense	Article 13.1
Intellectual property	Not mentioned	
Dissertation		
No. articles	Not mentioned	
No. Scientific propositions (no. trivia)	Optional, if added at least 6 not about the dissertation, of which 4 scientific and 2 more general social nature	Article 16.1
Sponsoring of thesis	Not mentioned	
Language	Dutch/English	Article 17
No. copies thesis (paper/electronic)	Min. 1	Article 18
Technical requirements (optional)	CV, summary in English, title page	Article 15.4
Manuscript assessment (co-)promotors	Not mentioned	
Members reading committee	Chair, (co-)promotors, three independent members (One or two of these independent members are not affiliated with the TU/e)	Article 10.1
Term reading committee	Six weeks	Article 13.4

Reading committee verdict	Doctorate committee must vote in favor in (n-1) majority	Article 13.6
Miscellaneous	Not mentioned	
Defense		
Reading committee = defense committee?	The doctorate committee is both	
Members defense committee	Min. 5 (least 4 voting members, and at least half professors, 3 independent members)	Articles 6 and 10
Opposition	Not specified	
Language defense	Dutch/English	Article 17
Duration ceremony (duration defense)	60 minutes (10+50 minutes)	Article 24
Criteria	Verdict reading committee, quality of defense, quality of propositions	Article 15.4
Rejection possible	Yes, if ≤50% vote in defense committee	Article 25.2
Cum laude	Cum laude committee at the TU/e	Article 27
Dispute defense (in case of rejection)	Not mentioned	
Other		
Recognition & Rewards	Not mentioned	
Transparency	Not mentioned	
Conflict (general)	Dean is mediator in conflicts preceding the ceremony	

UvT	Details	Section
PhD (general)		
Amount of pages regulations	20 excl. appendices (total 39)	N/A
PhD supervisors (promotors / co-promotors)	One or two promotors and co-promotors, max. 4 in total	Article 4
Training and Supervision Plan	Yes	Charter for Doctoral Candidates Chapter 4
Confidential advisors	Access to student counselors	Charter for Doctoral Candidates Article 20
Code of Conduct	Yes	Charter for Doctoral Candidates Article 24
Intellectual property	Yes	Charter for Doctoral Candidates Article 25
Dissertation		
No. articles	<i>Not mentioned</i>	
No. Scientific propositions (no. trivia)	4 dissertation, 4 academic/scientific nature, 2 trivial	Article 12
Sponsoring of thesis	No funding from university. Faculties may provide allowance	Annex 3
Language	Dutch, English, or other (with approval of Doctorate Board)	Article 13
No. copies thesis (paper/electronic)	At least 13/1	Article 16 Annex 3
Technical requirements (optional)	Title page, contents list, references list (CV, index)	Article 14
Term assessment (co-)promotors	Within 2 months after receiving the manuscript	Article 26.2
Members reading committee	Chair (rector), secretary (dean), PhD supervisor, two UT professors (one can be UHD), two external professors (one can be UHD). Max. 10 members. Chair and secretary role may be combined.	Article 34.1

Term assessment reading committee	ASAP, but not longer than 6 weeks	Article 35.1
Reading committee verdict	N-1 of members of the Graduation Committee must be in favor in written voting. (Co-)supervisors do not vote.	Article 35.3
Miscellaneous	N/A	
Defense		
Reading committee = defense committee?	Yes, there is only one committee: the Graduation Committee	
Members defense committee	See ‘Members reading committee’	Article 34.1
Opposition	Entire graduation committee, but also members of the audience (with doctorate, and only with permission, to be obtained at least 1 week in advance.)	Article 37.3
Language defense	Dutch, English or other (with approval)	Article 37.5
Duration defense	45 minutes	Article 37
Criteria	Quality of defense and dissertation	Article 2.2 and 35.3
Rejection possible	At most one member of the Graduation Committee may give a negative judgment	Article 35.3
Cum laude	No details on criteria	Articles 18-22
Dispute defense (in case of rejection)	Doctorate Board acts in unforeseen cases	Article 49.1
Other		
Recognition & Rewards	Not mentioned	
Transparency	Meetings of the graduation committee prior to, and during defense are confidential	
Conflict (general)	Objection and appeal possibilities, all prior to defense. The Dean of faculty is available to mediate in case of dispute. The Doctorate Board can act in unforeseen circumstances.	Articles 43-38 and 49

Wageningen University and Research

WUR	Details	Section
PhD (general)		
Amount of pages regulations	22 (excl. appendices, total 60)	N/A
PhD supervisors (promotors / co-promotors)	Min 1, max 3 promotors. At least one promotor employed at WUR. Min 2, max 3 promotor/co-promotor team	Article 4;5
Training and Supervision Plan	No plan mentioned. Learning targets in Appendix 1, very general	Appendix 1
Confidential advisors	Not mentioned	
Code of Conduct	Not mentioned	
Intellectual property	Not mentioned	
Dissertation		
No. articles	Not mentioned	
No. Scientific propositions (no. trivia)	At least 6 and no more than 8. Two of the propositions concern the topic of the thesis or the technological design, two to four propositions concern a different scientific field or science in general and two propositions concern a socially relevant topic	Article 3.1.c Article 12.3
Sponsoring of thesis	Not specified, but if support is granted for the PhD research this needs to be mentioned in the thesis. No advertising allowed.	Article 13
Language	English, upon request Dutch. In the latter case, a translated summary in English and title page. Propositions in same language as thesis	Article 14
No. copies thesis (paper/electronic)	15 copies to the PhD office, and one copy to the library. Unknown amount to Academic Board	Article 15.2
Technical requirements (optional)	Elaborate description in appendix 4 on: the cover, title pages (4 in total), acknowledgment of financial support,	Appendix 4

	propositions	
Term assessment (co-)promotors	Not specified (Article 9)	
Members reading committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chair (Rector magnificus or deputy)• Appointed (co-)promotors• 4 opponents, at least one employed at Wageningen University. Opponents not affiliated with or employed by the chair group of the PhD candidate or the chair group of one of the promotors or co-promotors	Article 6.2
Term assessment reading committee	Six weeks	Article 11.2
Reading committee verdict	A positive decision requires a positive evaluation of all opponents	Article 11.2
Miscellaneous	If not approved, the PhD candidate has the right to improve the thesis and/or to write a response only once. If the thesis committee maintains its judgment that the thesis is not defensible, the PhD candidate can restart the application procedure six months after the final decision	
Defense		
Reading committee = defense committee?	Yes, the defense of the thesis takes place in public in the presence of the thesis committee	Article 16
Members defense committee	See section above defining members reading committee	N/A
Opposition	Thesis committee. For others: request for permission to oppose the PhD candidate during the defense must be submitted to the Academic Board at least one week before the date of the public defense	Article 16.5
Language defense	English, unless a PhD candidate has submitted a written request to conduct the defense in Dutch and all members of the thesis committee are able to discuss in Dutch	Article 16.6
Duration defense	45 minutes	Article 16.5

Criteria	Not mentioned	
Rejection possible	Yes, majority of votes required promotor have together 1 vote, all others have one vote per person	Article 17.1
Cum laude	Yes. Two individual experts consulted. Decided during a private meeting after defense. The proposal will be approved if no member of the committee votes against it or if no more than one member of the committee abstains from voting. If one of the two consulted experts has made a negative recommendation, the proposal can be accepted only if there is a unanimous decision of the committee	Article 18
Dispute defense (in case of rejection)	Not mentioned	
Other		
Recognition & Rewards	Not mentioned	
Transparency	Thesis committee meetings are private	
Conflict (general)	Complaints go to the Academic Board in case of a dispute that concerns the behaviors or decisions of (co-)promotors, the Academic Board itself, or individuals who are acting on behalf of the Academic Board. Objection to decisions made by or on behalf of the Academic Board within six weeks, goes to the objection advisory committee (Article 20;21)	

Humanistic University

University of Humanistic Studies Utrecht

UvH	Details	Section
PhD (general)		
Amount of pages regulations	12	N/A
PhD supervisors (promotors / co-promotors)	At least 2, max 2 promotors, max 2 co-promotors. At least 1 promotor from the UvH	Article 5.2 and 7.1
Training and Supervision Plan	Not mentioned	
Confidential advisors	Only of Code of Conduct	Article 26.1
Code of Conduct	Research should be up to the code	Article 8.c
Intellectual property	Not mentioned	
Dissertation		
No. articles	Min. 4 articles of which the PhD candidate is first author; min. 3 articles that are (being) published in international scientific journals and 4th should fulfill those criteria or should be published in a scientific bundle, and 2 articles should be published already, 1 submitted at least	Article 13.3
No. Scientific propositions (no. trivia)	Not mentioned	
Sponsoring of thesis	Not mentioned	
Language	English or Dutch (or other after approval Doctorate Board); when it is a no. of scientific treatises in English (except with approval, then a translation is necessary). In Dutch, English title and summary or vice versa (or other language both) added	Article 14.1-3
No. copies thesis (paper/electronic)	No number mentioned (digital and paper both available)	Article 14.5 and 14.6

Technical requirements (optional)	No. of articles and introduction and conclusion, in which the coherence is explained; CV of the PhD candidate	Article 13.3e Article 14.4
Term assessment (co-)promotors	Soft criteria; Verdict within 3 months	Article 11.2 Article 12.3
Members reading committee	5 members: at least 4 professor/UHD with ius promovendi or emeriti, 3 members from a different university, Rector is chair	Article 16
Term assessment reading committee	Within 1 month after receipt	Article 17.2
Reading committee verdict	In case of a negative vote, a meeting is called and (co-)promotors are heard; with max 1 abstaining/negative vote continuation to the defense is approved	Article 17.4 and 17.5
Miscellaneous	If the PhD candidate doesn't deliver the dissertation in time to the committee, the Doctorate Board can postpone the defense	
Defense		
Reading committee = defense committee?	Yes, but not only	Article 21.3
Members defense committee	Those entitled to vote from the reading committee, the (co-)promotors, other professors appointed to the committee. Rector is chair with advisory vote	Article 21.3 and 21.4
Opposition	Is the defense committee, but with approval also others	Article 22
Language defense	Not mentioned	
Duration defense	An academic hour	Article 23.2
Criteria	Verdict, keeping in mind the defense, is given, also with minority stances	Article 24.1 and 24.2
Rejection possible	Yes; if voting is desirable by a member and voting is 'halted', title is not granted	Article 24.2
Cum laude	Mentioned	Article 18 and 24.3
Dispute defense (in case of rejection)	Not mentioned	
Other		

Recognition & Rewards	<i>Not mentioned</i>
Transparency	After public defense, the defense committee has a closed deliberation
Conflict (general)	Article 26 mentions a couple of examples; mostly the rector appoints a mediator. If code of conduct is involved, the university's confidential advisor is involved. Article 27 describes the protocol of the decision of the Doctorate Board

Appendix 3

Coding results doctoral regulations

General	EUR	MU	OU	RU	TiU	UvA	RUG	LU	UU	VU	TUD	TU/e	UT	WUR	UvH
No. pages	32	38	12	28	26	35	28	28	12	28	59	23	20	22	12
No. PhD supervisors	2-4	>=2	2-4	2-4	2-3	2-4	2-3	2-3	2-4	2-4	>=2	1-3	2-4	1-3	2-4
Training and Supervision Plan (y/n)	y	y	n	y	y	n	y	y	n	y	y	n	y	n	n
Confidential advisors (y/n)	n	y	n	n	n	n	y	y	n	n	n	n	y	n	y
Code of Conduct (y/n)	y	y	y	y	y	n	y	n	y	y	y	y	y	n	y
Intellectual property (y/n)	n	n	n	n	n	y	y	y	n	n	n	n	y	n	n
Dissertation															
No. articles	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	>=4
No. propositions	11	8-11	n	6-12	n	6-11	>=6	9-12	n	n	6-10	>=6	8-10	6-8	n
Sponsoring of thesis (y/n)	n	y	n	y	y	y	n	n	n	y	y	n	y	y	n
Language	4	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	4	4	2	2	2	1	2
No. copies of thesis (paper/electronic)	-	6/1	15/1	10/1	-	3/1	2/1	>=4	1/1	-	8/	>=1	13/1	>16	-
Technical requirements (y/n)	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y
Term assessment (co-)promotors (weeks)	9	8	-	-	-	6	4	6	12	-	8	-	8	-	12
Members reading committee	3	4-5	4-6	3 or 5	>=4	5-7	3-4	5-6	5	>=5	6-8	5-6	6-10	>=6	5
Term assessment reading committee (weeks)	4	4	-	5	4	6	4	6	4	4	6	6	6	6	4
Reading committee verdict	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y
Defense															
Reading committee = (at least partly) defense committee? (y/n)	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y
Members defense committee	>=5	>=4	<=10	7-11	>=4	5-7	>=5	>=5	>=5	>=5	6-8	>=5	6-10	>=6	5
Opposition specified in regulations (y/n)	y	y	y	n	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	n	y	y	y

Language defense*	2	2	1	-	2	2	2	2	-	4	2	1	2	1	-
Duration defense (minutes)	15+45	15+45	15+45	10+50	60	10+50	45	15+45	45	10+50	60	10+50	45	45	60
Criteria defense (y/n)	n	y	n	y	y	n	y	n	n	n	y	y	y	n	n
Rejection possible	y	y	n	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y
Cum laude criteria (y/n)	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	n	y	y
Dispute defense (in case of rejection)	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n
Other															
Recognition & Rewards (y/n)	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n
Clarity on transparency	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y
Conflict (general)	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	y