

PhD Council Regulations, Faculty of Science

Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

With effect from 1 April 2019

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Artikel 1: Establishment PhD Council

1. The Faculty Board shall establish a PhD Council, who will be representing the PhD candidates of the faculty graduate schools of the VU Faculty of Science.
2. The aim of the PhD Council is to create solidarity between the PhD candidates from the VU Faculty of Science and to provide the Faculty Board with information and advise about issues concerning PhD candidates.

Artikel 2: Composition of the PhD Council

1. The PhD council represents all PhD candidates from the VU Faculty of Science.
2. All faculty graduate schools¹ shall appoint one member for the PhD Council. This member will represent the interests of all PhD candidates from the faculty in general and the faculty graduate school, where he or she is hosted, in particular.
3. The members of the PhD Council are appointed by the Faculty Board for a period of maximum 3 years.
4. The PhD Council shall elect from among its members a chair and a secretary and an alternate for the chair and secretary.
5. The chair of the PhD Council shall:
 - a. Prepare the agenda for the meetings, in consultation with the secretary
 - b. Chair PhD Council meetings
 - c. Represent the PhD Council during official matters
 - d. Propose new members for the PhD Council to the Faculty Board
6. The secretary shall:
 - a. Organize the PhD Council meetings
 - b. Prepare the agenda for the meetings, in consultation with the chair
 - c. Write the meeting minutes
 - d. Archive the meeting minutes on the 'G-drive'

Artikel 3: PhD candidates Faculty of Science²

1. PhD candidates are the individuals who have been admitted to the Doctoral programme at the VU Faculty of Science.
2. There are two types of PhD candidates:
 - a. Internal PhD candidates, who are paid employees of the VU Amsterdam and enter into labor agreement with the VU Amsterdam (usually AIO (scale 85) or junior researcher/lecturer (scale 10)).
 - b. External PhD candidates, who do not have a labor agreement with VU Faculty of Science, and undertake a PhD at VU Faculty of Science, with a foreign funding or scholarship scheme, or who are self-funded professionals or students
3. After completing the PhD programme, a member must exit the PhD Council membership within 1 year.

¹ The Faculty of Science as 10 graduate schools (December 2018)

² The Faculty of Science hosts 557 registered PhD candidates, of which 305 are internal.

Artikel 4: Duties of the PhD Council

1. The tasks of the PhD Council include:
 - a. To advise the Faculty Board, either on its own initiative or on request, on all matters relevant to PhD candidates.
 - b. To inform PhD candidates and supervisors about the existence of the PhD Council.
 - c. To ensure that PhD candidates are involved in matters that concern them and inform the Faculty Board about issues that concern PhD candidates.
 - d. To communicate new or adjusted regulations, directives, policy issues or institute management policies, in case these concern PhD candidates from the Faculty of Science.
 - e. To facilitate the implementation and evaluation of PhD policies.
 - f. To ensure efficient communication between the Faculty Board and PhD candidates from the VU Faculty of Science.
 - g. To create solidarity among PhD candidates, for example by organizing events for PhD candidates.
 - h. To take care of the faculty's PhD Council webpage on www.beta.vu.nl
 - i. To draw up an annual report on its own activities.
 - j. To explain to PhD candidates how relevant information can be found on VUnet.
2. To this end, the PhD Council can make use of the information provided by:
 - a. The PhD candidate committees of the faculty graduate schools of the VU Faculty of Science
 - b. PhD candidates of the VU Faculty of Science to the PhD Council secretary
 - c. The PhD Coordinators from the VU Faculty of Science
 - d. The Faculty Board
 - e. The faculty graduate schools
3. If the PhD Council gives a recommendation as referred to in this article, paragraph 1, subsection a, to the Faculty Board, the Faculty Board shall respond within 30 working days of receiving the recommendations. If the advice is rejected or only partially adopted, this decision shall be substantiated.
4. When leaving the PhD Council, all members have the responsibility to fully brief their successors about their tasks and responsibilities.
5. The PhD Council has no right of assent. The PhD Council cannot approve regulations and policies imposed by the Faculty Board.
6. The PhD Council meets at least four times a year. More meetings may be scheduled, if deemed necessary by the chair of the PhD Council.
7. At any time, the PhD Council may form committees out of a subset of members that are assigned with a specific task.

Artikel 5: Order of meetings

1. The chair represents the PhD Council, both inside and outside the VU Faculty of Science.
2. The PhD Council chair may request for a meeting with the Faculty Board's vice-dean research.
3. The PhD Council members are entitled to the use of a meeting room.
4. The PhD Council meetings will take approximately one and a half hours.

5. The PhD Council may invite PhD Coordinators from the VU Faculty of Science for their meetings.
6. The chair of the PhD Council may invite the Faculty Board's vice-dean research for the meetings of the PhD Council.
7. The PhD Council may invite experts to speak at its meetings.
8. Preferably, PhD Coordinators, vice-dean research or speakers will be invited for the first part of the meeting.
9. If the members of the PhD Council have no objection, the chair may invite any person as observer.
10. The chair is responsible to check whether any PhD Council members has objections against the invention of a speaker or an observer.
11. The PhD Council shall establish a meeting schedule during its first meeting of the year. This schedule shall be submitted to the Faculty Board. If possible, an indication will be given of the topics to be discussed in the various meetings, and in which meeting the consultation with the Faculty Board will take place.
12. Any member of the PhD Council may submit a subject for inclusion on the agenda.
13. Except in urgent cases, the secretary will send the agenda and underlying documents to the council members at least one week before the meeting. Complex information should ideally be sent two weeks prior to the meeting.
14. The Faculty Board shall provide the PhD Council with the information it needs in a timely fashion, either upon request or upon its own initiative, so that the PhD Council may carry out its duties.
15. The meetings of the PhD Council are not open to the public.

Artikel 6: Decision-making

1. Recommendations may only be formulated if a majority of members is present at the meeting. If a majority is not present, then the subject shall be discussed in a subsequent meeting. At that meeting, no majority is required in order to issue a recommendation.
2. If so requested, the PhD Council members shall vote on a recommendation. These shall then be determined by majority vote. In the event of a tie, no recommendation will be formulated.
3. Before voting, the chair shall formulate the decision to be voted on.
4. Votes will be cast orally. If the PhD Council decides to do so, voting may also take place in writing.
5. In case of a vote for a request of admentment on the regulations, the vote must be determined by a two-third majority of the PhD Council. After the two-third majority is determined, the Faculty Board must approve the proposed amentments on these regulations.

Artikel 7: Reporting and Documentation

1. The secretary shall ensure that a report is written on all meetings, in consultation with the chair.
2. Such a report shall include at least the names of the members present and a description of each decision made by the PhD Council during the meeting.
3. Reports shall be approved by the PhD Council at their subsequent meeting.

4. The PhD Council recommendations shall be issued in writing and submitted to the Faculty Board. If the recommendation is rejected or only partially adopted by the Faculty Board, then this decision must be substantiated by the board.

Artikel 8: Evaluation and planning

1. During the final meeting of the year, the PhD Council shall assess its performance and activities of the past year and shall draw up a list of points for consideration for the following year.
2. Before 31 December, the PhD Council shall issue an annual report on the previous year, which shall include an evaluation, to be submitted to the Faculty Board.
3. Before 31 December, the PhD Council shall draft an annual plan which includes a schedule of the PhD Council meetings, events and budget for the coming year and submit it to the Faculty Board for approval.

Artikel 9: Amendment and approval

1. The chair of the PhD Council may submit amendments on these regulations to the Faculty Board, after the vote for amendments is determined by a two-third majority.
2. All amendments on these regulations must be approved by the Faculty Board.

Artikel 10: Adoption

1. These regulations will enter into force on 1 April 2019.
2. The PhD Council Regulations were adopted by the Faculty Board on 1 February 2019.