



PhD Regulations

Tilburg University

Inhoud

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Chapter 1

General

Article 1.1 Definitions

Assessment Criteria	Description of the knowledge and skills of the PhD Candidate that emerge from the Thesis and testify to his or her ability to practice science independently.
Certificate	The written evidence that the Doctoral degree or Doctor of Philosophy degree has been awarded to the PhD Candidate.
Co-supervisor	The person who, as an expert in (part of) the field of the subject described in the PhD Thesis, assists the Supervisor in the supervision of the PhD Candidate.
<i>Cum laude</i>	Qualification for a PhD Candidate who has defended a Thesis which, in the opinion of the PhD Committee, demonstrates excellent scientific quality.
Dean	The Dean of the School within which the PhD defense application is submitted.
Department	The School's organizational unit within which the PhD defense application is submitted.
Director of the Graduate School	The Director of the School's Graduate School within which the PhD defense application is submitted.
Doctorate Board	The Doctorate Board as referred to in Article 7.18 of the Law and Article 2.8 of the University's Administration and Management Regulations.
Executive Board	The Tilburg University Executive Board
Graduate School	Every School has a Graduate School. The Graduate School is responsible for the support of PhD Candidates and also has the tasks as stipulated in Article 6.1 of these Regulations.
<i>Ius promovendi</i>	The power to act as a Thesis supervisor.
Joint Doctorate	A PhD defense, as referred to in Article 7.18, paragraph 6 of the Act, which takes place as a result of a joint venture between the University and one or more (foreign) universities, whereby a degree is awarded jointly.
Law	The Netherlands Higher Education and Research Act (<i>Wet op het hoger onderwijs en wetenschappelijk onderzoek</i>).
Manuscript	A draft version of the Thesis.
Master's degree	The degree obtained on the basis of the final examination of a Master's program as referred to in Article 7.10a, paragraph 1 or 2 of the Act.
PhD Candidate	The person who has been granted access to the PhD program.
PhD Committee	The Committee established by the Doctorate Board pursuant to Article 7.18, paragraph 4 of the Act, which decides whether the PhD Candidate can be admitted to the defense of his or her Thesis and before which the PhD defense is held.
PhD Defense Session	The ceremony in which the Thesis is publicly defended in front of the PhD Committee.

PhD Program	The period from the start of the PhD research until and including the PhD Defense Session, or early termination in accordance with Article 3.4.
PhD Research	The scientific research on which the Thesis is based.
School	The School in which the PhD defense application is submitted.
Thesis	The PhD thesis, the scientific treatise in monograph or article form on the basis of which the degree of Doctor or Doctor of Philosophy is awarded.
Training and Supervision Plan	The plan drawn up jointly by the supervisor and the PhD Candidate in which agreements are made about the Educational program to be followed by the PhD Candidate, the composition of the supervision team, the form and frequency of the supervision, and the planning of the PhD program.
Supervisor	The person who supervises the PhD Candidate during the realization of the Thesis.
University	Tilburg University. Tilburg University is run under the auspices of the Catholic University of Brabant Foundation (<i>Stichting Katholieke Universiteit Brabant</i>).

Article 1.2 Application of these Regulations

1. In those cases where in these Regulations reference is made to Supervisor and/or Co-supervisor and more than one person has been designated as such, this should be read as Supervisors and/or Co-Supervisors.
2. These Regulations apply to all PhD Candidates at the University and, with due observance of the provisions of [Article 11.1](#) on Joint Doctorates, to PhD defenses that take place elsewhere as a result of partnerships between the University and other institutions of scientific education.
3. At the University, the doctoral degree or—at the request of the PhD Candidate or Supervisor—the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) can be obtained on the basis of the PhD defense. These Regulations govern the way in which these degrees are awarded.

Article 1.3 Confidentiality

Those present at the deliberations as referred to in Articles [10.1](#), [13.1](#), [14.1](#), and [14.2](#) and the non-public meetings of the PhD Committee are obliged to maintain confidentiality with regard to the subjects discussed.

Article 1.4 Research integrity

The PhD Candidate, the Supervisor, the Co-supervisor, the Director of the Graduate School, the members of the PhD Committee, and the Doctorate Board observe the standards of good research practice and research integrity as expressed in the current Netherlands Code of Conduct for Research Integrity and are accountable for this.

Chapter 2

The Doctorate Board

Article 2.1 The Doctorate Board

The Doctorate Board consists of the Rector Magnificus (chair), the Vice-Rector Magnificus, and the Deans of the Schools of the University.

Article 2.2 Duties and powers

1. In accordance with Article 2.9 of the University's Administration and Management Regulations and Article 7.18 of the Act, the Doctorate Board has the authority to confer the Doctoral degree or Doctor of Philosophy degree on the basis of the PhD defense and, with a view to fulfilling this statutory task, is responsible for the other duties and responsibilities mentioned in these Regulations.
2. In principle, the Doctorate Board meets on a monthly basis.
3. The Doctorate Board decides by a majority of votes.

Article 2.3 Report and evaluation

1. The Doctorate Board reports annually on its activities and sends this report to the Executive Board.
2. Every two years, the Doctorate Board evaluates the provisions in these Regulations.

Article 2.4 Power of attorney Rector and secretaries' office of the Doctorate Board

1. The Rector is authorized to decide on behalf of the Doctorate Board on admission to the PhD program, appointment of the (Co-)Supervisor(s) and approval of the composition of the PhD Committee, to the extent that the proposal is in accordance with the PhD Regulations.
2. The Rector informs the Doctorate Board of the decisions taken by him or her on behalf of the Doctorate Board at the next meeting of the Doctorate Board.
3. The secretaries' office of the Doctorate Board is authorized to decide, on behalf of the Doctorate Board:
 - a. to admit a PhD Candidate to the public defense of the Thesis based on the PhD Committee's opinion and the Graduate School's advice that all formal requirements for admission to the public defense have been met;
 - b. to admit an opponent to the PhD Defense Session at the request of the Director of the Graduate School.
4. The Official Secretary of the Doctorate Board is authorized to designate a full professor on behalf of the Rector Magnificus, on the recommendation of the School, to preside over PhD Defense Sessions.

Chapter 3

Admission to, progress of, and termination of the PhD program

Article 3.1 Conditions for admission

1. The Doctorate Board decides on the admission of the prospective PhD Candidate to the PhD program and on the appointment of the (Co-)Supervisor(s).
2. Persons can be admitted to the PhD program if:
 - a. they have been awarded a Master's degree as referred to in Article 7.10a, paragraphs 1 or 2 of the Act or if they have passed a corresponding examination at an international institution of higher education;
 - b. they have complied with any additional admission rules laid down by the Graduate School; and
 - c. they have declared that they will act in accordance with the Netherlands Code of Conduct for Research Integrity.
3. The Doctorate Board, in accordance with Article 7.18, paragraph 3 of the Law, may, in special cases, in derogation of the preceding paragraph under a, grant persons access to the PhD program. To this end, a written reasoned request for admission by a professor, via the Graduate School including the Director of the Graduate School's advice, must be submitted to the secretaries' office of the Doctorate Board, together with the request for the appointment of the (Co-)Supervisor(s). The following documents must be submitted with the application:
 - a. the Curriculum Vitae of the prospective PhD Candidate;
 - b. a research proposal in a format customary within the discipline;
 - c. a motivation based on the Curriculum Vitae from which it is evident that the prospective PhD Candidate has academic competences that are comparable to those of a Master's graduate.
4. Persons will not be admitted to the PhD program if they have already obtained a PhD from the University or another university.

Article 3.2 Admission to the PhD program

1. As soon as he or she has found a Supervisor, the prospective PhD Candidate applies as a PhD Candidate to one of the Graduate Schools and submits a request for the appointment of the (Co-)Supervisor(s). The following must be submitted with the application:
 - a. an extract from the birth or population register or a photocopy of the passport or identity card on which the photo and the Citizen Service Number or other personal number have been crossed out;
 - b. a certified copy or a digital DUO¹-certified extract of the diploma as referred to in [Article 3.1](#), paragraph 2a of these Regulations;
 - c. a design for the structure of the PhD research and the proposed methodology, including a description of the problem definition, a description of the importance of the problem, and an overall table of contents of the Manuscript;
 - d. a Training and Supervision Plan, as described in [Article 6.2](#);
 - e. a Joint Doctorate agreement, if applicable;
 - f. the name of the second Supervisor or Co-supervisor.

If the documents under b, c, d, e, and/or f are not available at the time of application, the prospective PhD Candidate must submit the application without these documents and/or information. The following time limit applies to the submission of missing documents and/or information, to be checked by the Graduate School.

- a. If the prospective PhD Candidate is employed by the university: within six months of the commencement of the employment contract.

¹ Netherlands Education Executive Agency.

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- b. If the prospective PhD Candidate is not employed by the University: within one year after admission to the PhD program.
 2. A prospective PhD Candidate who does not have an employment contract with the University must be enrolled at the Graduate School and must have been admitted to the PhD program as soon as possible but at least two years before the intended or scheduled PhD defense date.
 3. The Director of the Graduate School checks and assesses the request as described in the first paragraph and promptly forwards it to the Doctorate Board.
 4. In the case of a Joint Doctorate project, as referred to in [Article 11.1](#), the Director of the Graduate School requests the Doctorate Board to agree with the Joint Doctorate, in accordance with the guidelines included in the Joint Doctorate Procedure.

Article 3.3 Interim evaluation of the progress

The Supervisor and the PhD Candidate are responsible for periodic, interim evaluations of the progress of the PhD program and the performance and development of the PhD Candidate, and they discuss the expectations regarding the remaining duration of the PhD program. The Graduate School ensures that the evaluation takes place. The Graduate School may lay down more detailed regulations regarding the planning, content, and methodology of the evaluation.

Article 3.4 Early termination of the PhD program

1. The PhD program ends prematurely
 - a. by the death of the PhD Candidate during the PhD program;
 - b. by termination by the PhD Candidate;
 - c. by termination by the Doctorate Board.
2. If a PhD Candidate wishes to terminate the PhD program, the PhD Candidate notifies the Graduate School and the Doctorate Board in writing, stating the reasons. In this case, the Doctorate Board may ask the PhD Candidate, the Director of the Graduate School, and/or the (Co-)Supervisor for further information.
3. The Doctorate Board may decide to terminate the PhD program prematurely if:
 - a. the PhD Candidate, after having been repeatedly reminded to do so in writing, does not comply with the interim agreements with the PhD Supervisor;
 - b. the interim progress evaluations repeatedly show that the progress of the PhD Candidate is not such that the PhD Candidate will be able to submit a Manuscript that, according to the Supervisor's expectations, meets the Assessment Criteria applicable to a Thesis;
 - c. the PhD Candidate has not responded to repeated requests from the Supervisor regarding the content and progress of the Manuscript over a period of at least six months;
 - d. the (Co-)Supervisor(s) or the PhD Committee has given a final negative assessment of the Manuscript as described in [Article 8.1](#), paragraph 5 and [Article 8.2](#), paragraph 4c respectively;
 - e. the Doctorate Board, whether or not on the recommendation of the Supervisor or the Graduate School, decides that Tilburg University cannot reasonably be expected to allow the PhD program to continue;
 - f. the PhD candidate does not submit the documents and/or information as described in [Article 3.2](#), paragraph 1(b), (c), (d), (e), and/or (f), after having been reminded repeatedly by the Graduate School and/or the Doctorate Board.Termination by the Doctorate Board is effected in writing stating the reasons for the termination.

Chapter 4

PhD Thesis Supervisor and Co-supervisor

Article 4.1 Appointment of the (Co-)Supervisor(s)

1. For each PhD Candidate, the Doctorate Board appoints a Supervisor, on the recommendation of the Director of the Graduate School. The Doctorate Board appoints a second supervisor for each PhD Candidate: a PhD Supervisor or a Co-Supervisor. The Doctorate Board appoints a minimum of two and a maximum of three (Co-)Supervisors, with a maximum of two Supervisors.
2. When several Supervisors are appointed, no hierarchy is indicated.
3. The Supervisor and/or the PhD Candidate (preferably in joint agreement) may request the Doctorate Board to make a motivated change to the appointment of the (Co-)Supervisor(s).
4. In special circumstances, a change may be made regarding the appointment of the (Co-)Supervisor(s). Such a change is only possible with the approval of the Doctorate Board.

Article 4.2 Conditions for appointing the (Co-)Supervisor(s)

1. The (Co-)Supervisor is an expert in (part of) the field of the subject described in the Thesis.
2. Among the Supervisors, there is always a full or an associate professor who has the *ius promovendi* from the University pursuant to [Article 4.5](#).
3. A full professor who has the *ius promovendi* can only be appointed as Supervisor, not as Co-supervisor.
4. A person entitled to use the title Doctor or PhD in the Netherlands may be designated as Co-Supervisor.
5. A Co-Supervisor who is promoted to full professor during the PhD program shall be Supervisor from the date of appointment as full professor.
6. A (married) couple cannot supervise a PhD candidate.
7. Persons with a family or other personal or business relationship with the PhD Candidate, or other persons who are in such a relationship with the PhD Candidate that no assessment should reasonably be required of them will not be eligible for appointment as (Co-)Supervisor.
8. If the Director of the Graduate School acts as a (Co-)Supervisor or as a member of the PhD Committee, the School's Dean or Vice-Dean (if the role of the Director of the Graduate School is not fulfilled by the Vice-Dean for Research) will take over the duties of the Director of the Graduate School in that PhD program.

Article 4.3 Duties of the (Co-)Supervisor(s)

1. The Supervisor bears responsibility for the supervision of the PhD Candidate during the PhD program and sees to it that the PhD Candidate performs the research independently.
2. The Supervisor is acquainted with the PhD Regulations and draws the PhD Candidate's attention to their contents.
3. The Supervisor ensures that the Thesis meets the requirements of these Regulations and that the PhD research is carried out:
 - a. in accordance with the code of conduct and/or professional code of conduct applying to the field of science concerned;
 - b. with due observance of the Netherlands Code of Conduct for Research Integrity;
 - c. in accordance with the applicable laws and regulations on the protection of personal data, the careful handling of research data, and for research involving human subjects;

In particular, the Supervisor guards that no direct or indirect restrictions are imposed by third parties on the PhD research that limit the academic freedom or the freedom to publish the results of the research;

4. The supervision referred to in the first paragraph is partly aimed at promoting the completion of the Thesis within the previously agreed period.
5. Guidance as referred to in the first paragraph also includes preparing the PhD Candidate for the defense of the Thesis. This means in any case that:

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- a. the (Co-)Supervisors encourage and facilitate sufficient substantive feedback moments on the PhD research by the (Co-)Supervisors themselves and by other academic colleagues;
 - b. The (Co-)Supervisors ensure that the PhD Candidate presents the PhD research at least twice in the PhD program during a research meeting of the School and/or Department.
6. The Co-supervisor assists the Supervisor in the supervision of the PhD Candidate. The Supervisor and the Co-supervisor, in consultation with the PhD Candidate, agree on a clear division of tasks between the supervisors and record these agreements in the Training and Supervision Plan.
 7. The (Co-)Supervisor(s) assesses the Manuscript in mutual consultation with due observance of the provisions of Articles [7.1](#) and [7.2](#).

Article 4.4 *Ius promovendi* of professors

1. During their professorship, and, if they have been honorably discharged, for a period of five years after the end of their professorship, full professors hold the power to confer PhD degrees.
2. A full professor who has been granted honorable discharge will no longer be appointed as a Supervisor for new PhD programs.
3. If the Thesis is not accepted by the PhD Committee within a period of five years after the end of the professorship, the appointment as Supervisor expires. As soon as it becomes clear that the Supervisor will probably no longer hold the power to confer a PhD degree by the time the Thesis is approved by the PhD Committee, the Doctorate Board, acting on a proposal from the Director of the Graduate School, after hearing the PhD Candidate, appoints another Supervisor in his or her place. If more than one Supervisor was appointed, the Doctorate Board may decide that a new appointment is not necessary. At the request of the former Supervisor, the Doctorate Board may appoint the former Supervisor as Co-supervisor.
4. The Doctorate Board may, whether or not at the request of the Executive Board, decide not to appoint a professor as Supervisor or as a member of a PhD Committee, or to withdraw such an appointment, if the Doctorate Board deems that the appointment cannot reasonably be required of the University. Such a decision is made in writing stating the reasons.

Article 4.5 *Ius promovendi* of associate professors

1. On the recommendation of the Dean, the Doctorate Board may appoint an associate professor who is employed by the University as Supervisor. The *Ius promovendi* is granted, in principle, for an indefinite period of time.
2. Associate Professors who are employed by another university cannot be appointed at the University as Supervisors, but only as Co-Supervisors.
3. Prior to the nomination the Dean consults the Head of the Department and if applicable, the professor in the discipline concerned. The Dean verifies whether an associate professor meets the requirements for appointment as Supervisor, as described in [Article 4.2](#). In addition, the associate professor must have sufficient recent research experience and sufficient experience in supervising PhD Candidates.
4. Paragraphs 1, 2, 3, and 4 of the previous Article apply *mutatis mutandis*.

Chapter 5

PhD Committee

Article 5.1 Duties and powers of the PhD Committee

The task of the PhD Committee is to assess the quality of the Thesis as a whole, based on the problem definition as agreed between the PhD Candidate and the Supervisor. The PhD Committee assesses whether the Thesis meets the Assessment Criteria as referred to in [Article 7.2](#) of these Regulations.

Article 5.2 Establishing the PhD Committee

1. A PhD Committee is established at least six months prior to the intended date of the PhD defense.
2. Via the Graduate School, the Supervisor submits a proposal to the Director of the Graduate School for the composition of the PhD Committee with due observance of the provisions of [Article 5.3](#). The Supervisor states the reasons on the basis of which the nominated members of the PhD Committee have expertise in (part of) the field of the Thesis, and that they comply with the provisions of [Article 5.3](#). The Supervisor ensures, prior to the proposal, the willingness of those involved to accept membership of the PhD Committee and the availability of those involved on the projected date of the PhD defense.
3. After the Director of the Graduate School has checked that the Manuscript has been approved by the Supervisor and that the Supervisor has declared that the PhD Candidate has complied with the agreements of the Training and Supervision Plan with regard to the Program, the Director of the Graduate School makes the nomination for the establishment of a PhD Committee at the proposal of the Supervisor. The Director of the Graduate School ensures a balanced composition of the PhD Committee and guarantees that the composition of the PhD Committee complies with the provisions of [Article 5.3](#).
4. At the request of the Director of the Graduate School and after approval of the Manuscript by the (Co-)Supervisor(s), the Doctorate Board sets up a PhD Committee and appoints its members.
5. In special circumstances, the composition of the PhD Committee may change. Such a change is only possible with the approval of the Doctorate Board.

Article 5.3 Composition of the PhD Committee

1. The PhD Committee consists of at least four members. The Doctorate Board applies the following conditions to the composition of the four or more PhD Committee members:
 - a. At least half of the members are full professors or emeritus professors with the power to confer a PhD degree (*ius promovendi*);
 - b. At least one member is connected to a university other than the one that confers or jointly confers the degree;
 - c. At least one member is a full professor at the University;
 - d. The PhD Committee consists of at least one man and one woman;
 - e. The members of the PhD Committee hold PhD degrees or a degree comparable to a PhD degree;
 - f. The members must have sufficient expertise/skills in the field of the PhD research (or part of it).
 - g. The composition of the PhD Committee must be sufficiently diverse in terms of expertise;
 - h. Only persons who are in such a relationship with the PhD Candidate or the (Co-) Supervisor that they can be expected to provide an independent assessment are eligible for membership of the PhD Committee. This means that persons with a family or other personal or business relationship with the PhD Candidate and/or the (Co-)Supervisor(s) or other persons who are in such a relationship with the PhD Candidate and/or the (Co-) Supervisor(s) that they cannot reasonably be required to make an assessment are not eligible for appointment as members of the PhD Committee.
 - i. The members of the PhD Committee must be sufficiently independent of the PhD research, in the sense that they have not been involved in the PhD research or have no interests in the PhD research;
 - j. Co-authors of chapters that are part of the Thesis cannot be appointed as members of the PhD Committee.
2. The (Co-)Supervisors cannot be members of the PhD Committee
3. The members of the PhD Committee are deemed not to accept the appointment as a member of the PhD Committee if they (can reasonably suspect that they) do not comply with the provisions of the previous paragraph under g, i, and j.

Article 5.4 Chair of the PhD Committee

The Director of the Graduate School or a replacement appointed by him or her is the technical chairperson of the PhD Committee during the assessment phase of the Thesis. The Rector Magnificus of the University or a replacement appointed by him or her chairs the PhD Committee during the PhD Defense Session.

Article 5.5 Voting rights, assessment Thesis, and deliberation

1. The chair of the PhD Defense Session does not have a vote in the formation of the advice of the PhD Committee referred to in [Article 9.5](#), paragraphs 2 and 3.
2. The members of the PhD Committee have the right to vote on the assessment of the Thesis and in the deliberations after the defense.
3. The (Co-)Supervisor(s) are present at the preliminary and concluding consultations, in which they have an advisory role.
4. An opponent as referred to in [Article 9.4](#), paragraph 5 is present and has an advisory role in the preliminary and concluding consultations.

Chapter 6

Graduate School and the Training Program

Article 6.1 Graduate School

1. Every School has a Graduate School. The Dean is responsible for the work of the Graduate School and can entrust the Director of the Graduate School with the general management of the day-to-day operations of the Graduate School.
2. The Graduate School is responsible for supporting PhD Candidates by providing general quality assurance of the PhD process, appointing one or more PhD coordinator who monitor the progress, quality, and supervision of the PhD program, and provide(s) administrative support in registering and defending the Thesis.
3. The Graduate School annually accounts for its activities in the School's accountability document.

Article 6.2 Training and Supervision Plan

1. The PhD Candidate and the Supervisor jointly draw up a Training and Supervision Plan in accordance with the format established for this purpose and any further regulations of the Graduate School, in order to achieve a basic level making it possible to successfully complete the PhD program. This could include training in critical analysis and selection of research methodologies and the development of personal competencies.
2. The Training and Supervision Plan is prepared as soon as possible after admission to the PhD program by the Doctorate Board, but no later than six months after such admission.
3. The Training and Supervision Plan contains agreements about the educational program to be followed by the PhD Candidate, the composition of the supervisory team, the form and frequency of the supervision, the way in which feedback is obtained from academic peers, the evaluation moments, and the planning of the PhD program.
4. The PhD candidate is required to successfully complete the training offered by the University on good research practices and scientific integrity before being admitted to the PhD Defense Session.
5. The Training and Supervision Plan requires the approval of the Director of the Graduate School within six months of admission to the PhD program.
6. The Training and Supervision Plan is discussed at least once a year and adjusted where necessary on the basis of new insight and/or changed agreements between (Co-)Supervisors and the PhD Candidate. Any changes are documented.

Article 6.3 Educational program

1. The Graduate School ensures an adequate supply of training courses of sufficient quality.
2. The Supervisor checks whether the PhD Candidate has met the agreements made in the Training and Supervision Plan with regard to the educational program and declares, before approving the Manuscript, that the PhD Candidate has met these agreements.

Article 6.4 Support of the PhD candidate

The PhD candidate can contact the (Co-)Supervisors and the Graduate School with questions regarding the PhD program, which includes a special need for support, for example due to disability or functional impairment. If necessary, the (Co-)Supervisors and Graduate School can refer the PhD Candidate to the appropriate body within or outside the University.

Chapter 7

Substantive conditions for the PhD Thesis and defense

Article 7.1 Conditions for the Thesis and defense

1. The Thesis must demonstrate the ability of the PhD Candidate to practice science independently.
2. The Thesis consists of either a scientific treatise in book form on a particular subject or a compilation of a number of separate scientific articles, including an introduction and conclusion, written by the PhD Candidate or created under his or her demonstrable and dominant authorship. The assessment of previously published treatises is based on the state of the art at the time of the assessment of the Thesis.
3. The Thesis must comply with the principles and rules for research integrity as laid down in the Netherlands Code of Conduct for Research Integrity.
4. The Manuscript is tested against the principles referred to in this Article, amongst other things, by means of automated plagiarism detection.

Article 7.2 Assessment Criteria Thesis and defense

1. The Thesis must include a description of the research methodology and the methodological substantiation, including a justification and appreciation thereof and, if applicable, the associated ethical considerations.
2. The Thesis and the defense of the Thesis show that the PhD Candidate has:
 - a. contributed, through original research, to the shifting of the boundaries of knowledge;
 - b. systematic understanding of a substantial knowledge domain and has mastered the skills and methodologies;
 - c. the ability to design, develop, implement, and adapt a substantial research project;
 - d. the ability to critically analyze, evaluate, and synthesize new ideas;
 - e. the ability to communicate with peers and the wider academic community.
3. In assessing the requirements of the previous paragraph, particular attention is paid to the following:
 - a. the importance of the subject;
 - b. the clarity of the problem definition;
 - c. the originality of the approach;
 - d. the scientific level of the structure, analysis, and processing of the material;
 - e. the development of new insights and new ideas;
 - f. the precision of the methodology used;
 - g. the required self-imposed limitation;
 - h. a critical confrontation of the Candidate's own conclusions with existing theories or opinions;
 - i. a creative approach to the field of science addressed;
 - j. balance in the structure and clarity of style.

Article 7.3 Language

1. The Thesis is written in Dutch or English or, with the approval of the Doctorate Board, in a different language.
2. An academic summary of the content in English and in Dutch must be attached to the Thesis. If the Thesis is not written in English, a translation of the title into English is also added to the Thesis

Article 7.4 Other requirements for the Thesis

1. The Thesis must contain a title page in accordance with a model prescribed by the Doctorate Board. On the reverse of the title page, the names of the (Co-)Supervisors are stated as well as the names of the members of the PhD Committee. The title page and the reverse page must be approved by the secretaries' office of the Doctorate Board before the Thesis can be multiplied.
2. If applicable, the reverse of the title page should state by which body the Thesis was made possible, partly or as a whole, financially or otherwise.
3. The Thesis must contain a table of contents.
4. The Thesis must be free of advertising.

Article 7.5 Joint PhD Research

1. In the case of a joint PhD Research by two PhD Candidates, the result of the PhD Research may lead to a joint Thesis, provided that the following conditions are met.
 - a. The (Co-)Supervisor(s) must be satisfied that each of the PhD Candidates has made an independent, delimited, and sufficient contribution for the PhD Defense.
 - b. Each of the PhD Candidates bears personal responsibility both for an identifiable part of the Thesis and for the coherence of the whole.
 - c. The Thesis indicates the share that each of the PhD Candidates had in the writing of the Thesis.
2. In the case of a joint Thesis, the Supervisor submits a written statement of the share of each of the PhD Candidates to the Doctorate Board. The statement must be signed by the Supervisor as well as by both the PhD Candidates.
3. In the case of a joint Thesis, the procedures and rules of these Regulations apply to each PhD Candidate separately.

Article 7.6 Multiplication of the Thesis

1. Upon receipt of the Doctorate Board's positive decision to admit the PhD Candidate to the defense of the Thesis, the PhD Candidate multiplies the Thesis, whether or not via the Graduate School.
2. The Thesis is produced in a convenient size, preferably glue-bound.
3. The PhD Candidate distributes the Thesis to the members of the PhD Committee not later than three weeks before the date of the PhD Defense Session.
4. Not later than three weeks before the date of the PhD Defense Session, the 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. These copies become the property of the University.
5. In principle, the printing of the Thesis is at the expense of the PhD Candidate. For a contribution towards the printing costs of the Thesis, the Candidate can request funding based on the arrangements of the relevant Graduate School.

Article 7.7 Publication of the Thesis and storage of research data

1. The basic principle is that the Thesis is accessible via open access.
2. Notwithstanding the first paragraph and only with the approval of the Doctorate Board, a Thesis may be placed under embargo for up to one year.
3. In view of contributing to the social impact of research through the results of PhD research, the PhD Candidate provides a citizens' summary in English and in Dutch.
4. A digital version of the Thesis is produced; a copy of which is made available by the PhD Candidate three weeks before the date of the defense to the University Library for publication in the Tilburg University Research Portal.
5. The research data for which this is appropriate must be findable, accessible, interoperable, and reusable in conformity with the FAIR principles.

Chapter 8

Assessment of the Manuscript and Thesis

Article 8.1 Assessment of the Manuscript by the (Co-)Supervisor(s)

1. The (Co-)supervisor(s) bear the responsibility for the assessment of the Manuscript and the acceptance of the Manuscript as suitable for assessment by the PhD Committee.
2. The (Co-)Supervisor(s) test the Manuscript against the guidelines set by the Graduate School and against the requirements of these Regulations. If, in the opinion of the (Co-)Supervisor(s), the Manuscript meets the set requirements, they will, in mutual consultation, approve the Manuscript.
3. If the mutual consultation does not lead to agreement, each (Co-)Supervisor issues a report to the Director of the Graduate School, with a copy of these reports to be sent to the PhD Candidate. The Director of the Graduate School then acts as he sees fit.
4. The (Co-)Supervisor(s) inform the Graduate School and the PhD Candidate of the assessment of the Manuscript referred to in the second paragraph, together with a request to the Doctorate Board for the establishment of a PhD Committee.
5. The (Co-)Supervisor(s) may decide not to approve the Manuscript. After a final negative assessment on the Manuscript, the Doctorate Board will proceed to terminate the PhD program prematurely in compliance with [Article 3.4](#), paragraph 3(d).

Article 8.2 Assessment of the Thesis by the PhD Committee

1. The Graduate School is responsible for the distribution of the Manuscript to the members of the PhD Committee.
2. The members assess in the form of a vote in favor or against, provided with written comments. The members submit their assessments to the Director of the Graduate School within four weeks of receiving the Manuscript. The Graduate School informs the PhD Candidate and the PhD Committee of the assessments, after having received all the assessments.
3. If the members of the PhD Committee unanimously believe that the PhD Candidate can be admitted to the public defense, the PhD Committee is not convened.
4. In the event of one or more dissenting votes, the Director of the Graduate School convenes the PhD Committee and (Co-)Supervisor(s) to discuss the Manuscript with the PhD Candidate.
At least half of the members of the PhD Committee take part in this closed meeting virtually or face-to-face, including at least the member or members who voted against, under the chairmanship of the Director of the Graduate School. The PhD Committee decides at the end of the meeting:
 - a. to admit the PhD Candidate to the defense of the Thesis
 - i. If the PhD Committee is of the opinion that minor adjustments to the Manuscript are necessary, the PhD Candidate carries these out within a period to be determined in consultation with the PhD Committee. The Supervisor monitors this.
 - b. not to admit the PhD Candidate to the defense of the Thesis for the time being
 - i. The PhD Committee may give the PhD Candidate the opportunity to make a number of extensive adjustments to the Manuscript. The PhD Candidate must incorporate these changes in the Manuscript within a period of a maximum of one year to be determined in consultation with the PhD Committee. The Supervisor monitors this. The adjustments are submitted to the PhD Committee for approval. The PhD Committee then decides whether or not to admit the PhD Candidate to the public defense.
 - c. not to allow the PhD Candidate to defend the Thesis because the Manuscript does not meet the Assessment Criteria and the PhD Committee does not expect improvement to be possible within a reasonable period of time. After a final negative assessment of the Manuscript, the Doctorate Board proceeds to terminate the PhD program prematurely.

Decisions as referred to under a., b., and c. are only taken with a maximum of one dissenting vote. A report is made of this meeting.

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5. The Director of the Graduate School informs the Doctorate Board, for approval, of the decision of the PhD Committee. The Doctorate Board informs the Supervisor, the PhD Committee, and the PhD Candidate and admits the PhD Candidate to the defense of the Thesis, or not, as the case may be.
 6. After approval of the Thesis by the PhD Committee, the PhD candidate may correct only apparent errors — whether or not identified by the members of the PhD Committee — before the Thesis is printed.

Chapter 9

PhD Defense Session

Article 9.1 PhD defense

After approval of the Thesis, the PhD Candidate publicly defends the Thesis for one academic hour against the comments of the PhD Committee, as well as of any other person who has received permission to do so from the Doctorate Board.

Article 9.2 Conditions for admission to the PhD Defense Session

Any person is admitted to the PhD Defense Session if he/she:

- a. has written a PhD Thesis as proof of competence, of which the PhD Committee has judged that it meets the Assessment Criteria and is of sufficient quality to admit him or her to the PhD defense;
- b. has complied with the agreements made in the Training and Supervision Plan regarding the educational program;
- c. has declared that the research on which the Thesis is based and the Thesis itself comply with the standards for good research practice as included in the current Netherlands Code of Conduct for Research Integrity; and
- d. has complied with the other requirements imposed by or pursuant to these Regulations.

Article 9.3 Procedure for admission to the PhD Defense Session

If the PhD Committee is of the opinion that the PhD Candidate can be admitted to the PhD defense, the Graduate School informs the Doctorate Board accordingly. The Doctorate Board informs the PhD Candidate and the members of the PhD Committee about this by confirming the date for the PhD Defense Session.

Article 9.4 PhD Defense Session

1. The PhD Defense Session is chaired by the Rector Magnificus or full professor or emeritus full professor as a substitute appointed by him or her.
2. The time and place of the PhD Defense Session is determined by or on behalf of the Rector Magnificus after consultation with the Supervisor, the Director of the Graduate School, and the PhD Candidate.
3. The Doctorate Board establishes the protocol for the PhD Defense Session.
4. Prior to the PhD defense, the PhD Candidate provides an explanatory lecture for the audience on the PhD Research in terms that are comprehensible for the invited guests. This explanatory lecture may last up to 12 minutes and may be in the PhD Candidate's native language, provided that the accompanying sheets/slides are presented in English. The explanatory lecture for the audience does not form part of the PhD defense of the Thesis and is not included in the assessment of the Thesis.
5. The PhD Candidate concludes the explanatory lecture with a statement determined by the Doctorate Board to the effect that the PhD Candidate has operated in accordance with the principles of scientific integrity during the PhD program.
6. During the defense, the PhD Candidate demonstrates compliance with the Assessment Criteria as defined in [Article 7.2](#).
7. Persons present at the PhD Defense Session other than the members of the PhD Committee may oppose the PhD candidate. The opponent must meet the following conditions:
 - a. the opponent has expertise/competence in (part of) the field of the PhD Research;
 - b. the opponent's expertise/competence has sufficient added value compared to the expertise within the PhD Committee;
 - c. the opponent has approval from the Director of the Graduate School to participate as an opponent in the PhD Defense Session;
 - d. the opponent has permission from the Doctorate Board's secretaries' office to participate in the PhD Defense Session as an opponent no later than 3 weeks before the PhD Defense Session. The official invitation of these opponents will be sent via Doctorate Board's secretaries' office.
8. If the Thesis is written by two persons, each of them must defend the Thesis separately as set out in this article. In this case, the Doctoral degree or Doctor of Philosophy degree is conferred in one and the same session after the completion of the PhD defense by the second PhD Candidate.
9. The PhD defense of the Thesis and the raising of comments takes place *ex tempore*, in Dutch or English.
10. The PhD Candidate with a disability or functional impairment (special support need) that may affect the smooth running

of the PhD Defense Session is offered the opportunity to conduct the defense of the Thesis in a manner adapted as far as possible to the individual functional impairment. If this requires changes in the protocol of the PhD Defense Session, the Doctorate Board must decide on this, at the request of the PhD Candidate and with the advice of the Director of the Graduate School. The chair, (Co-)Supervisor(s) and members of the PhD Committee will be informed of this decision.

Article 9.5 Deliberation of the PhD Committee and conferral of the Doctoral degree or Doctor of Philosophy degree

1. The chair of the PhD Committee is authorized to decide, on behalf of the Doctorate Board and with due observance of the advice of the PhD Committee after deliberation, to grant the Doctoral degree or Doctor of Philosophy degree.
2. The PhD Committee deliberates on the question of whether the PhD Candidate, as appears from the Thesis and its defense, has indeed fulfilled the Assessment Criteria as defined in [Article 7.2](#). This deliberation leads to an advice to the chair of the PhD Defense Session regarding the conferral of the Doctoral degree or Doctor of Philosophy degree and takes place in a closed meeting of the PhD Committee immediately after the public PhD defense of the Thesis.
3. A negative advice of the PhD Committee is adopted by unanimous vote of all members of the PhD Committee present (physical or online). This entails that casting a blank vote or abstaining is not possible. The chair of the PhD Committee may, whether or not at the request of one or more of the members of the PhD Committee, decide to proceed with a secret vote. In the event that the PhD Committee issues a negative advice, the chair suspends the PhD Defense Session and refers the matter to the Doctorate Board. The PhD Committee submits a written report of the negative advice to the Doctorate Board by return of post. If it is not decided to award the PhD immediately after the defense, the Doctorate Board decides on the follow-up within five working days.
4. The result of the deliberation is recorded in writing.

Article 9.6 Ceremonial Formula

1. After the closed deliberations, the chair reopens the public PhD defense in the manner prescribed by the protocol. The chair announces the result of the deliberations and the subsequent decision on behalf of the Doctorate Board.
2. If it has been decided to award the Doctoral degree or Doctor of Philosophy degree to the PhD Candidate, the Supervisor will then confer the doctorate by pronouncing the Ceremonial Formula, after which the PhD Candidate promises to conduct future scientific research according to the principles of scientific integrity. Subsequently, the Supervisor hands over the certificate.
3. The Supervisor or Co-supervisor pronounces the *laudatio*.

Chapter 10

Cum Laude

Article 10.1 *Cum Laude* procedure

1. Members of the PhD Committee may, during the assessment phase of the Thesis, submit a proposal to the Director of the Graduate School to award a PhD degree with the designation of *Cum Laude* if the Thesis demonstrates the PhD Candidate's exceptional ability to practice science independently.
2. If at least two members of the PhD Committee make a proposal to award the designation of *Cum Laude*, the Director of the Graduate School asks the Supervisor for his or her opinion with regard to that proposal.
3. If the Supervisor is in favor of a proposal, the Director of the Graduate School requests the Supervisor, together with one of the members of the PhD Committee assigned by the Director of the Graduate School, to write a substantiated proposal with regard to awarding the designation of *Cum Laude*, together with four names of professors who are external experts in the field of study (of whom at least two names of external experts from outside the University and all of whom are not members of the PhD Committee).
4. The Director of the Graduate School will present the substantiated proposal to the Rector at least six weeks before the PhD Defense Session via the secretaries' office of the Doctorate Board, together with the names of two external experts of whom at least one external expert from outside the University. The Rector sends the external expert the substantiated proposal, the Thesis, the Assessment Criteria, and the criteria with regard to *Cum Laude*, with a request to indicate whether he or she is in favor of or against awarding the designation of *Cum Laude*. The Director of the Graduate School informs the members of the PhD Committee of the substantiated proposal.
5. Only if the external experts are in favor of awarding the *Cum Laude* designation will the procedure be continued.
6. During the deliberations prior to the PhD defense of the Thesis, the members of the PhD Committee are informed of the opinion of the external experts and views can be exchanged on this.
7. Immediately after the PhD defense of the Thesis, a vote will be taken in writing and in secret ballot on awarding the *Cum Laude* predicate, without prior further deliberation. The proposal in writing and in secret ballot. The members of the PhD Committee must vote for or against the proposal. The quality of the PhD defense will be taken into account in the assessment. If there is a maximum of one dissenting vote, the designation of *Cum Laude* is awarded.
8. If a member is unable to attend the PhD Defense Session, the vote will not be counted.
9. The designation of *Cum Laude* is noted on the Certificate.
10. The PhD Candidate will not be informed of any proposals or votes regarding a possible *Cum Laude* designation.

Article 10.2 *Cum Laude* criteria

In order to be eligible for the designation of *Cum Laude*, a Thesis must be of exceptional quality and, indicatively, belong to the 5% best Theses within the field of study, whereby the following criteria may play a role:

- a. the PhD Candidate has achieved the result independently;
- b. the analysis is excellent;
- c. the Thesis places this analysis (and therefore the problem) in a broader theoretical framework;
- d. the Thesis shows that the PhD Candidate is able to cross the regular boundaries of his or her own field of science and go beyond the self-evident aspects thereof;
- e. The Thesis was completed within a reasonable period of time.

In addition, the PhD Committee may take publications or other evidence of high scientific quality into consideration.

Chapter 11

Joint Doctorate

Article 11.1 Joint Doctorate

1. A PhD as referred to in Article 7.18, paragraph 6 of the Act may be awarded at the University as a result of a joint venture between the University and one or more (foreign) universities for which a degree is awarded jointly. The degree is awarded by the Doctorate Board together with the Doctorate Board or a similar body of the partner university or universities. A degree is awarded by the universities involved at the same time. Both universities hand out a Certificate on which it is noted that the Certificates are inextricably linked.
2. The joint PhD program can only start after the Doctorate Board has given its approval and an agreement has been signed between the universities involved in which the agreements and responsibilities of all parties involved have been laid down. When reviewing a request to enter into a Joint PhD program, the Doctorate Board will at least consider the following aspects:
 - a. it is clear from the beginning of the PhD program that it is a Joint Doctorate, with a supervisor from each university involved;
 - b. the PhD candidate spends substantial time at both universities;
 - c. both universities make a clear effort;
 - d. the degree of structural cooperation;
 - e. added value of the cooperation for the PhD program through, for example, access to specific expertise, resources, facilities and/or subjects;
 - f. the draft version of the agreement to be concluded between the universities involved.
3. In the agreement, the universities involved may, subject to statutory provisions and the provisions of this article, make arrangements that deviate from the provisions of these Regulations. The model agreement established by the Doctorate Board will be followed to the extent possible; deviations from the model should be justified.
4. In the context of a Joint Doctorate, the provisions of these Regulations may be deviated from, provided that:
 - a. at least one Supervisor must be appointed from each of the universities involved. This must be a professor or someone who has *ius Promovendi* at the relevant university;
 - b. the Thesis must comply with the requirements referred to in Articles [7.1](#) and [7.2](#) of these Regulations; and
 - c. the Thesis requires the approval of a PhD Committee, which is established in consultation between the universities concerned and with the approval of the Doctorate Board. The PhD Committee includes at least one full professor from the university who has the power to confer PhD degrees—not being the Supervisor.
5. The University does not award double doctorates or dual doctorates.

Chapter 12

Degree of Doctor of Sacred Theology (canonical degree)

Article 12.1 Degree of Doctor of Sacred Theology (canonical degree)

1. The School of Catholic Theology has the authority, by virtue of its ecclesiastical recognition under the authority of the Holy See, to award the degree of Doctor of Sacred Theology.
2. A PhD candidate can obtain the degree of Doctor of Sacred Theology if the PhD Candidate holds a Licentiate of Sacred Theology and has written a theological Thesis in accordance with the requirements of these PhD Regulations and the requirements of the apostolic constitution *Veritatis gaudium*. The degree of Doctor of Sacred Theology can only be obtained at the same time as the Doctorate degree.
3. A committee of at least three persons, consisting of faculty members of the Tilburg School of Catholic Theology, of which at least the Dean and the Supervisor are members, assesses on the basis of the apostolic constitution *Veritatis gaudium* whether the degree of Doctor of Sacred Theology can be awarded.
4. The Rector Magnificus, the Supervisor, and the secretary of the Canonical Degrees Examination Board sign the Certificate. The Supervisor issues the Certificate.

Chapter 13

Degree of doctor honoris causa

Article 13.1 Degree of doctor honoris causa

1. Pursuant to Article 7.19, paragraph 2 of the Act and Article 11 and Article 16, paragraph 2 of the Structure Regulations, the Doctorate Board is authorized, on the recommendation of a Dean after having consulted the Executive Board and the Board of Governors, to award the degree of doctor *honoris causa* to natural persons on account of their excellent academic achievements or special services to the community.
2. In principle, the honorary doctorate is awarded on the occasion of the celebration of the University's *dies natalis*.
3. The nomination and the preparation of the award are strictly confidential.
4. The honorary doctor receives a Certificate from the Supervisor, signed by the Rector Magnificus and the honorary Supervisor.

Chapter 14

Legal position

Article 14.1 Dispute resolution procedure

1. If, during the writing of the Thesis, a dispute arises between the Supervisors or the Supervisor and the Co-supervisor, or between the Supervisor and/or the Co-supervisor and the PhD Candidate, which cannot be resolved by mutual agreement, the Director of the Graduate School, or the Dean of the School involved in the event that the Director of the Graduate School is party to the dispute, arbitrates at the request of either party.
2. The Director of the Graduate School will refer to the applicable procedure in the event of a dispute for which a specific procedure has been provided, for example, in the event of a suspected violation of research integrity, a suspected non-compliance with Tilburg University's Code of Conduct, or in the event of an industrial dispute, including not extending the employment contract.
3. If the arbitration does not lead to agreement within six weeks, either party may turn to the Doctorate Board in writing.
4. The Doctorate Board sets up an advisory committee, consisting of a functionally independent chairperson and two members of the University's academic staff in possession of a PhD, not involved in the PhD program, to advise on the dispute.
5. After having heard the parties involved and after any consultation of experts, the advisory committee issues a reasoned recommendation in writing to the Doctorate Board not later than ten weeks after receipt of the request as referred to in paragraph 3.
6. The Doctorate Board takes a decision within six weeks of receipt of the recommendation and inform the parties involved. If the Doctorate Board deviates from the recommendation, the Doctorate Board will motivate this decision.

Article 14.2 Notice of objection

1. With regard to the decisions taken
 - a. concerning the appointment of the (Co-)Supervisor;
 - b. the composition of the PhD Committee;
 - c. deregistration from the PhD program, with the exception of deregistration because the PhD Candidate's employment contract is not extended,
 - d. not conferring the degree of Doctor or Doctor of Philosophy, following decisions referred to in Article 9.5, paragraphs 3 and 4;the PhD Candidate and (Co-)Supervisor may submit a notice of objection within six weeks of publication of that decision, to the Doctorate Board's secretaries' office.
2. The Doctorate Board submits the objection to an advisory committee, consisting of a functionally independent chairperson and two members of the University's academic staff in possession of a PhD, not involved in the PhD program, to advise the Doctorate Board on the objection.
3. The committee referred to in paragraph 2 deals with the matter in accordance with general principles of dispute settlement. It hears all parties involved and can consult experts.
4. Within ten weeks of the appointment referred to in the second paragraph, the Committee issues a recommendation to the Doctorate Board in the form of a reasoned recommendation.
5. The Doctorate Board makes its final decision not later than four weeks after receipt of the recommendation.

Chapter 15

Final and transitional provisions

Article 15.1 Further rules

1. For the purpose of further elaboration of these Regulations, the Doctorate Board may lay down rules in which matters relating to the Doctoral Examination are further regulated.
2. Each Graduate School may lay down rules and guidelines on admission and other subjects to supplement the provisions of these Regulations. These rules and guidelines require the approval of the Doctorate Board.

Article 15.2 Final and transitional provisions

1. In cases where these Regulations do not provide for or in the event of any article being open to different interpretations, the Doctorate Board decides.
2. The Doctorate Board may, in special cases and by a majority of votes, decide to deviate from these Regulations.
3. Decisions to amend these Regulations will be taken by the Doctorate Board by a majority of votes.
4. These Regulations are translated into English. In case of contrariety, the Dutch text prevails.
5. These Regulations, adopted at the meeting of the Doctorate Board of April 13, 2023, enter into force on June 1, 2023, with the simultaneous repeal of the PhD Regulations of October 10, 2019.

