

Rules and policies for PhDs in a track

Version: January 2024

These Rules and Policies apply to those holding an appointment as ‘PhD candidate in a track’ at Leiden Law School. They are intended to supplement and elaborate on the University PhD Regulations. The term ‘PhDs in a track’ refers to a PhD candidate in a track who is registered for their PhD in one of the following departments: [Grotius Center for Legal Studies](#), [The Van Vollenhoven Institute for Law, Governance and Society](#), [International Institute of Air & Space law](#) and whose doctoral defence ceremony will be held at Leiden University.

A. Content of the position of the PhD in a track

1. The main objective for the PhD in a track is the preparation of a **PhD dissertation**. The dissertation can consist either of several collated (published or submitted) scholarly articles, a number of chapters forming a single unified monograph or, alternatively, a combination of both (see Art. 13 of the [PhD Regulations](#)).
2. The **topic** of the PhD dissertation must have a clear link to at least one of the research programmes of Leiden Law School. This is determined prior to the appointment.
3. The **final achievement standards** for the training as independent researcher are those contained in the VSNU report [Hora Est](#) of October 2004.

B. Length of and assessment

1. Initially, a PhD in a track is enrolled as a PhD candidate for one year. This period will be extended to a total of four-to-six years if the outcome of the evaluation meeting is positive.
2. An evaluation meeting (in person or online) with the PhD in a track is conducted in the first 12 months of the appointment.
3. The Dean of PhD studies will ensure that the evaluation committee (hereafter: ‘the Committee’), consists of a minimum of three assessors. The Committee consists of the supervisors of the dissertation, the coordinator of the track, and an assessor from outside the research programme. The Committee will be chaired by the Dean of PhD Studies. The Dean of PhD Studies may invite the coordinator of the applicable research programme of Leiden Law School, and/or the Head of the PhD candidate’s department, and/or parties from outside Leiden Law School to participate in the evaluation.
4. At least two weeks before the evaluation meeting the PhD in a track will submit to the Committee:
 - The personal [Training and Supervision Plan](#).
 - The most recent version of the research plan with a provisional table of contents indicating how much has been written of each article/chapter and when it will be completed.
 - A copy of the [data management plan](#).

- Those parts of the dissertation that have already been written (whether or not in the form of one or more articles).

The PhD in a track may be requested by the Committee to furnish further materials or information.

5. The Committee will review the following questions:

- Has the Dean of Leiden Law School provided a written notification to confirm that the candidate has met the admission requirements of Articles 3 and 4 of the [PhD Regulations](#)?*
- Is there a research plan including a clear problem definition and clear research questions, plus a realistic time line to research and write the planned articles and/or chapters?*
- Is there a [data management plan](#)?*
- Has the candidate written at least one article or an initial chapter on (an aspect) of the topic of the dissertation?*
- Is the draft likely to remain within the limit of 100,000 words?*
- Is there an agreed upon Training and Supervision Plan?*
- Does the research plan together, with the texts mentioned under (c), (d) and (e), reasonably warrant the expectation that the candidate will complete the PhD research successfully and within the applicable timeframe?*

During the evaluation meeting, consideration will also be given to whether the Training and Supervision Plan requires modification.

- After the evaluation meeting, the assessors will prepare their evaluation on the basis of the answers to the above questions. The Committee will inform the PhD in a track of the outcome as soon as possible. The Dean of PhD studies will ensure that a brief report is compiled which contains the answers to the questions. Once all the members of the Committee have had the opportunity to give their comments and agree with the contents of the report, copies will be circulated to the candidate, the supervisors and the track coordinator.
- If the response to all the aforementioned questions is unanimously positive, an extension of the appointment as a PhD candidate will be recommended to the Faculty Board.
- In the event of a unanimously negative response to one or more of the questions, the supervisors, in consultation with the personnel department, will draft a proposal to the Faculty Board outlining the case not to continue the appointment as a PhD candidate.
- If the Committee is unable to reach a unanimous decision on any of the questions, the Dean of PhD Studies will advise the Faculty Board to continue or terminate the appointment as a PhD candidate depending on the particulars of the case.
- Each year, an Annual Review (AR) is held by means of a questionnaire sent to the PhD in a track candidate. An important aspect of this meeting is the quality of the supervision. The main purpose of the AR is to monitor the quality of the supervision and other aspects of the support provided by the institute and/or faculty. The questionnaire should also be seen as an open invitation to contact the Dean of PhD Studies, to request a meeting in person.

C. Supervision

1. The principal supervisor will monitor the progress and quality of the PhD research, and also the working conditions in the track. He or she is expected to speak with the PhD in a track at least once in two months to discuss the progress of the PhD research. The co-supervisor is also responsible for the progress and quality of the PhD research, and supports the tasks of the principal supervisor.
2. The Track Coordinator will meet (in person or online) with the PhD in a track, if possible within two months of enrollment, and thereafter whenever necessary. He or she will discuss the planning and outline of the research. The Dean of PhD studies may act as confidant.
3. In the first quarter of the appointment as PhD in a track the supervisors, the Dean of PhD studies, and the PhD candidate in a track will agree on a personal [Training and Supervision plan](#). The PhD in a track ensures that this plan is kept up to date through the duration of the PhD registration. This Training and Supervision Plan may require that the Head of department, the sub-programme co-ordinator and/or one or more additional experts in the field of research will act as an advisory committee for the research project.

D. Financial arrangements

Travel and training costs

For information about possibilities for reimbursement of travel and training costs, please contact the Track Coordinator. Before expenses can be claimed, permission first needs to be obtained from the Head of Department (and/or the Scientific Director) and the supervisors.

For more information on financial arrangements for PhDs in a track see the [website](#).