

Leiden University PhD Guidelines

These guidelines apply to PhD candidates at Leiden University, namely (in accordance with the 2019 Key Figures for University Research (KUOZ) categories of PhD candidate¹ allocated by the Association of Universities in the Netherlands (VSNU)) to:

1. PhD candidates in employment: employed PhD candidates (*werknemer-promovendi*) and employees on a PhD track (*promoverende medewerkers*)² (VSNU categories 1a and 1b);
2. contract or externally financed PhD candidates who are not employed by Leiden University or LUMC. These PhD candidates may be employed by external research organisations. Dual PhD candidates who are writing a PhD dissertation with the support of their employer also fall into this category (VSNU categories 2a, 2b and 3);³
3. external PhD candidates who are not in employment but who are studying towards a PhD in their free time and using their own funds (VSNU category 4).

These guidelines apply to all PhD candidates with immediate effect. Some of these guidelines do not apply to external PhD candidates. Any exceptions are stated in the relevant articles.⁴ Article 10b applies to external PhD candidates starting their studies after 8 February 2021.

Provisions

1. Upon arrival, all PhD candidates are registered in the HRM employee registration system of either the University or LUMC, as well as in the Graduate School's Converis PhD candidate tracking system. External PhD candidates must be registered as soon as possible, and in all cases no later than one year following the first contact with their prospective PhD supervisor, in either the University's or LUMC's HRM employee registration system, and in the Converis PhD candidate tracking system. (See Chapter 2 of the PhD Regulations for an explanation of the start of the doctoral process.)
2. All PhD candidates are entitled to a LU Card that grants them benefits including access to the library. With the exception of external PhD candidates, all PhD candidates may use copying and printing facilities without charge, in accordance with the faculties' rules for academic staff.
3. With the exception of external PhD candidates, all PhD candidates are entitled to a workplace in the faculty.
4. With the exception of external PhD candidates, all PhD candidates are given the opportunity, within reason, to attend at least two academic conferences during their period of appointment.

¹ See Appendix 1

² It is no longer possible to register an 'employee on a PhD track' as such in SAP. These PhD candidates are now registered as 'external PhD candidates' (*buitenpromovendi*).

³ Faculties have the power to determine a minimum value for scholarships or external financing in order for a PhD candidate to be eligible for the rights associated with having a scholarship or external financing. If this minimum value is not met, the candidate is not comparable to an employed PhD candidate and is treated as an external PhD candidate.

⁴ The Dual PhD Centre offers external PhD candidates a range of facilities, for which it charges a fee.

5. Faculties must clearly inform prospective PhD candidates about the available facilities (including courses, research costs, etc.) when offering them a place in a Graduate School.

Training, supervision and preparation for entering the labour market

6. A training and supervision plan must be drawn up for every PhD candidate at the start of the doctoral process. Employed PhD candidates, contract PhD candidates and externally financed PhD candidates must draw up these plans within three months following the formal start date of the PhD programme (*aanstellingsdatum*, 'appointment date'). External PhD candidates must do this within a maximum of six months following admission to the Graduate School. (See Chapter 2 of the PhD Regulations for an explanation of the start of the doctoral process.)
7. In addition to the first supervisor, each candidate has at least one other supervisor or co-supervisor. The training and supervision plan records the distribution of responsibilities between the various supervisors.
8. Each PhD candidate in employment has an annual performance and development review. Each PhD candidate has an annual review or monitoring meeting (in the case of external PhD candidates, this review will take place every two years) with one or two impartial staff members. The quality of the supervision will form an important part of this review.
9. At the end of the period set out in the training and supervision plan, a 'go/no go' decision will be made and recorded in writing for each doctoral process. In the case of employed PhD candidates, contract PhD candidates and externally financed PhD candidates, this decision will be made at the end of the first year.
For external PhD candidates, the decision will be made no earlier than one year and no later than two years after their start date.
10. Training plan.
 - a. With the exception of external PhD candidates, all PhD candidates must follow a training plan that is established at the start of the doctoral process. The plan encompasses the entire doctoral process and consists of at least:
 - i. 140 hours of academic training activities (scientific integrity, training in the candidate's specialism, conference attendance, etc.)
 - ii. 140 hours of training activities focusing on transferable skills (such as giving presentations, academic English, time management, career orientation, entrepreneurship).
 - b. External PhD candidates must at least take the 'scientific integrity' course. In addition, in consultation with the prospective supervisor, it must be established which courses external PhD candidates need to take in order to be able to properly carry out their PhD research. As the institute or faculty has to pay for these courses, the course proposal must be submitted to the Scientific Director or the dean before the start of the doctoral process. If the proposal is not approved by the Scientific Director or dean, the proposed doctoral process will not go ahead.
 - c. The dean may, on behalf of the Doctorate Board and upon receipt of a reasoned request to that effect, grant an exemption in relation to specific components of this requirement.

11. Staff members who are supervising PhD candidates for the first time (as supervisor, co-supervisor or day-to-day supervisor) must take a relevant course.
12. Each institute or faculty organises periodic events for its own PhD candidates to explore their prospects on the labour market. Multiple institutes and/or faculties may also organise such events jointly.

Appendix 1: Categories of PhD candidates

There are many different ways to obtain a PhD. Universities and UMCs recognise four categories. Universities can use the category definitions to register the PhD candidates correctly and to provide good-quality information. A flow chart is available to help register PhD candidates in the correct categories.

The distinction has been refined to remove confusion about the terms 'self-funded PhD candidate' (*contractpromovendus*) and 'external PhD candidate' (*buitenpromovendus*) and about how to categorise PhD candidates who are employed by a university or UMC but who are not allocated any money or time to work on their dissertation. This categorisation clarifies the terms used and distinguishes between categories based on the sources of financing used by the candidates themselves. This distinction will not yield the correct definition in every case, but it does determine to a great extent whether a candidate is more or less clearly defined for the university or the UMC.

Finally, the statistics are always based on a candidate's primary category (the first registration), regardless of any other status gained later. Employed PhD candidates retain that categorisation, even if they spend a period of time working on their dissertations without being employed by the university or the UMC; PhD candidates who receive no money or resources from the university or the UMC will remain in that category, even if resources are temporarily made available to enable them to do research at the university or UMC.

Category 1: PhD candidate in employment

1a Employed PhD candidates

An employee who has an employment contract and an appointment focused on a doctoral track at his or her own university or UMC.

Indicators:

- a. Agreement to work towards a doctoral defence (access to Graduate School, training and supervision plan, research plan, supervisors appointed).
- b. Staff number and salary from university or UMC > 0.
- c. The first university job classification system (UFO) code is that of PhD candidate, or the UMC equivalent.

This group also includes all candidates who had this employment contract at any time before the doctoral defence, even if the contract ended before the doctoral defence took place.

1b Employee on a PhD track

An employee who has an employment contract and an appointment focused on a doctoral process at his or her own university or UMC.

Indicators:

- a. Agreement to work towards a doctoral defence (access to Graduate School, training and supervision plan, PhD plan, supervisor appointed).
- b. Staff number and salary from university or UMC > 0.
- c. The first UFO code is NOT that of PhD candidate or the UMC equivalent.

These PhD candidates receive funding and/or time to obtain a PhD from the university/UMC. This group also encompasses medical specialists whose UMC has exempted them from some of their regular duties. An employee who is on a PhD track, is financing his or her doctorate privately and does not have a time allocation from the university or UMC falls into category 4.

There may be a second UFO code with the 'PhD candidate' designation for the same appointment. It is also possible for the same person to have two employment relationships, one of which is as an employed PhD candidate.

The algorithm used by the VSNU to determine the primary employment relationship is as follows:

- a. The most significant employment relationship takes precedence.
- b. Where two employment relationships have the same scope, a permanent appointment takes precedence over a temporary appointment.
- c. Where employment contracts are the same, the higher salary scale takes precedence over the lower.
- d. Where salary scales are equal, the numerically lower UFO position takes precedence over the other UFO position.
- e. If the above fails to produce a satisfactory outcome, the employment relationship which appears first in the WOPI list takes precedence; this is the relationship with the earliest start date.

Categories 2, 3 and 4: PhD candidate NOT in employment

2 Contract PhD candidate

A person who does not have an employment contract with the university where the doctorate is to be completed, but who has the primary aim of obtaining a PhD and receives resources to that end from a scholarship funding body.

Indicators:

- a. Agreement to work towards a doctoral defence (access to Graduate School, training and supervision plan, PhD plan, supervisor appointed).
- b. No salary from university or UMC (or only a supplement to the scholarship).
- c. Doctoral funding made available by scholarship funding body.

2a Contract PhD candidate: own university or UMC. Scholarship granted by the candidate's own university or UMC (this includes PhD candidates in the 'doctorate teaching' (*promotieonderwijs*) experiment).

2b Contract PhD candidate: other/external scholarship provider. Scholarship granted by an organisation other than the university referred to under 2a, such as: NUFFIC, European Union, university outside the Netherlands, grant-awarding organisations and foundations (Fullbright, banks). The scholarship may be supplemented by the candidate's own university or UMC.

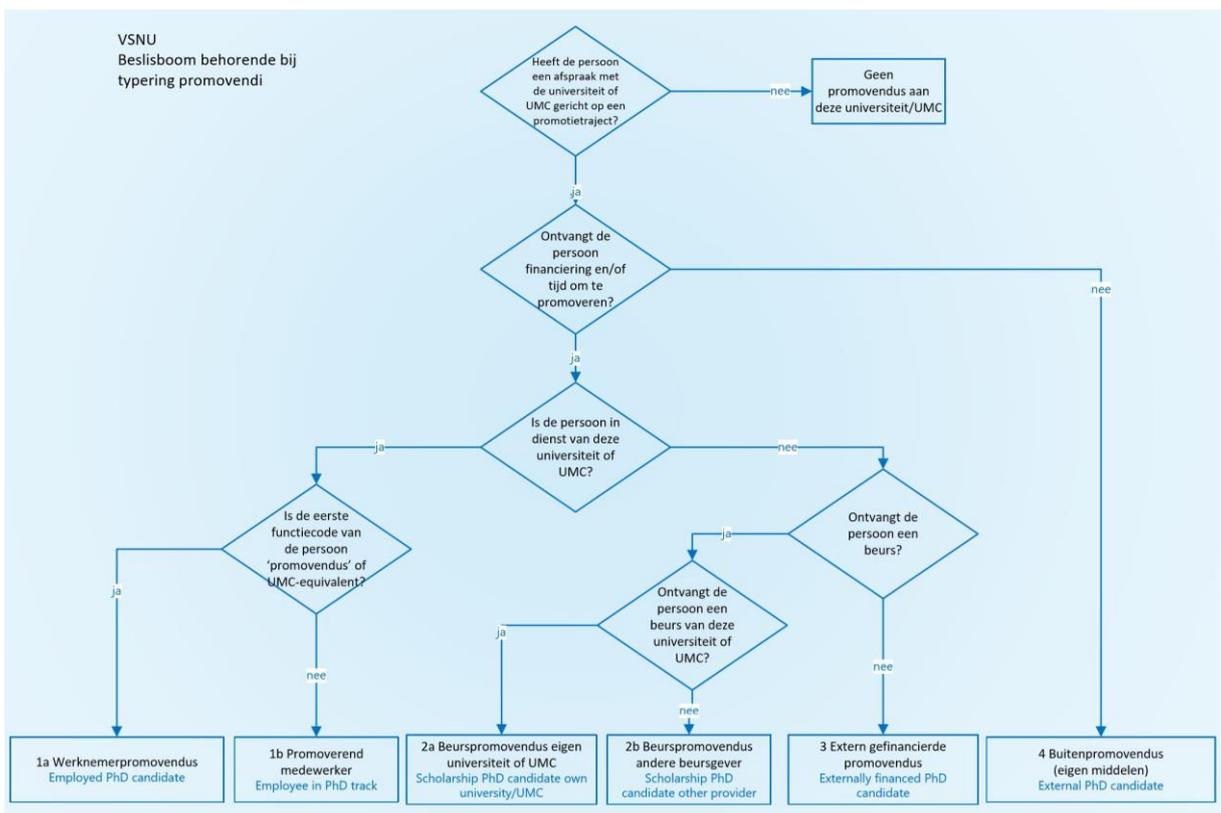
3 PhD candidate with external financing

A PhD candidate with external financing differs from an external PhD candidate in that he or she in some way receives funding for the doctorate, or in that he or she is permitted to obtain a PhD 'on the boss's time' (regardless of how much time is made available).

4 External PhD candidate (own funds)

A person who is not allocated any time or money by an external party to obtain a PhD, but who does intend to obtain a PhD. These candidates may use their own funds, or family members may make funds available. For example: pensioners who work towards a PhD; company employees who work on a PhD in their own time alongside their job; university employees who do not hold the UFO profile of PhD candidate and who are not allocated any time/money from the university to complete their doctorate (formerly known as employees on a PhD track); or medical specialists whose UMC has not granted an exemption from their regular duties. Indicators:

- Agreement to work towards a doctoral defence (access to Graduate School, training and supervision plan, PhD plan, supervisor appointed).
- No salary or scholarship from university or UMC.
- No funding and/or time allocated by employer/scholarship funding body (including the candidate's own university) to obtain a PhD.



Source: *Bestuurlijke commissie promotietrajecten (2019) Een gezonde praktijk in het Nederlandse promotiestelsel.* (Administrative committee doctoral processes (2019) A healthy practice in the Dutch doctoral defence system.) The Hague: VSNU