



rijksuniversiteit  
 groningen

**THE UNIVERSITY OF  
GRONINGEN  
PHD REGULATIONS**

## Foreword

In 2017, the University of Groningen decided that its PhD regulations needed to be adapted to suit the demands and possibilities of the present time.

This led to these regulations which will take effect as of 1 September 2018.

The new regulations were developed in consultation with the University of Groningen's Doctorate Board and Graduate Schools.

The most salient changes in comparison with the old PhD regulations are that:

1. as of 1 April 2018, the Doctorate Board may award the *ius promovendi* to associate professors who have obtained a doctoral degree and they may then also be appointed as supervisors
2. associate professors who have been awarded the *ius promovendi* may no longer be co-supervisors (as is also the case for professors)
3. it is explicitly stated that PhD students will not be awarded a PhD by the Faculty, but by the University
4. the articles on the University of Groningen's data policy have been updated
5. the articles on the granting of *Cum laude* have been clarified
6. and finally, the chapters on joint and double doctorates have been merged into one chapter (Chapter 12).

With the new PhD regulations and the accompanying implementation regulations, the University of Groningen will have an up-to-date PhD system, which will put the increasing number of PhD students and their supervisors in an even better position to complete PhD programmes successfully.

On behalf of the Doctorate Board,

Prof. E. Sterken  
Rector Magnificus

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# Chapter 1

## GENERAL PROVISIONS

### **Article 1.1**      **Definition of terms**

1. The following definitions apply to these regulations:

Admissions Committee	the Graduate School Admissions Committee set up on behalf of the Dean to assess whether or not the prospective PhD student should be admitted to a PhD programme
Assessment Committee	the Assessment Committee which has been appointed by the Doctorate Board or the Dean to assess the thesis submitted by the PhD student
AWB	the General Administrative Law Act ( <i>Algemene wet bestuursrecht</i> ) which took effect on 1 January 1994 and any subsequent amendments
BBR	Administrative Regulations ( <i>Bestuurs- en Beheersreglement</i> ) of the University of Groningen
Board of the University	The Board of the University referred to in Articles 9.2 ff. of the Act; in these regulations, the Board of the University of Groningen
CAO-NU	the collective labour agreement for Dutch Universities referred to in Article 4.5 of the Act
Confidential advisor	a person who has been appointed by the Board of the University as a confidential advisor on matters of academic integrity
Co-supervisor	an assistant professor/lecturer with a PhD or a researcher of the same level who has been appointed by the Dean on behalf of the Doctorate Board to assist the supervisor in supervising the PhD student
Dean	the Chair of the Faculty Board within the meaning of Article 9.12 of the Act; in these regulations, in their capacity as a member of the Doctorate Board with a mandate (see 1.2.2.)
Degree programme	a degree programme within the meaning of Article 7.3 ff. of the Act, in combination with Article 2.3.1. ff. of the University of Groningen BBR
Doctorate Board	the Doctorate Board referred to in Article 9.10 of the Act; in these regulations, the Doctorate Board of the University of Groningen
Faculty	a faculty of the University of Groningen within the meaning of

	Article 9.11 of the Act
Graduate School	a graduate school as referred to in Chapter 2 of the University of Groningen BBR
Opposition	the persons mentioned in Article 7.4 of these regulations who may ask questions to the PhD student during the PhD ceremony
Professor	a post-holder referred to Articles 9.19 and 9.55 of the Act; a regular professor or professor by special appointment or an associate professor or honorary professor at the University of Groningen
PhD ceremony	the public defence of the PhD thesis on the basis of which the PhD can be obtained
PhD Examining Committee	appointed by the Dean on behalf of the Doctorate Board by virtue of Article 7.18.4 of the Act in conjunction with Chapter 7 of these regulations, which decides whether the PhD student can be permitted to defend their PhD thesis and in the presence of which the defence must take place
PhD programme	the programme that is drawn up depending on the PhD student's knowledge and experience
PhD research	the academic research on which the PhD thesis is based
PhD student	a person who has been given permission to start the PhD procedure in accordance with Article 7.18.2 or 3 of the Act in conjunction with Chapter 2 of these regulations, and who as such has been admitted by the Doctorate Board or the Dean to the PhD procedure
PhD thesis	an academic thesis in book form, or a (collection of) journal article(s), in writing or in digital form, or a technological design as referred to in Article 7.18.2b of the Act in conjunction with Chapter 4 of these regulations
Rector Magnificus	the post-holder referred to in Article 9.3.1 of the Act, who is also Chair of the Doctorate Board
Regulations	the PhD regulations of the University of Groningen, within the meaning of Article 7.19 of the Act
Supervisor	the professor or associate professor with a PhD and <i>ius promovendi</i> appointed as such by the Dean on behalf of the Doctorate Board by virtue of Article 7.18.4 of the Act in conjunction with Chapter 3 of these regulations
the Act/WHW	Higher Education and Research Act ( <i>de Wet op het hoger onderwijs en wetenschappelijk onderzoek</i> ) (Stb. 1992, 593 and any subsequent amendments)

The University                      The University of Groningen  
University                            a Dutch or foreign university.

2. Any masculine forms used in these regulations, the explanatory notes and the appendices should be read as feminine forms if they refer to a female person or post-holder.

**Article 1.2                      *Composition of the Doctorate Board***

1. The Rector Magnificus is the Chair and also a member of the Doctorate Board. If the Rector Magnificus is absent, a Dean appointed by him can act as Deputy Chair of the Doctorate Board. The Chair represents the Doctorate Board both within and outside the University of Groningen, both at law and otherwise.
2. At the University of Groningen, the Doctorate Board consists of the Deans of the faculties (see Article 2.6.1.33 of the University of Groningen BBR).
3. Secretarial services for the Doctorate Board are provided by the secretarial staff of the Rector Magnificus and the PhD degree registration office of the University of Groningen.

**Article 1.3                      *Mandate/Sub-Mandate***

1. a. The Doctorate Board may give the Rector Magnificus a mandate to perform the tasks and exercise the powers set out in the Act, the University of Groningen BBR and in these regulations, including the power to give a sub-mandate to another member of the Board to perform certain tasks and exercise certain powers.  
b. The Doctorate Board is authorized to change or withdraw this mandate at any time, and also to take action itself or to have some other party take action while the mandate remains in force, provided the person who has been given the mandate is notified.  
c. The Rector Magnificus or a member of the Board who has been given a mandate to perform the tasks and exercise the powers referred to in Article 1.3.1a is accountable to the Doctorate Board. The Rector Magnificus provides the Board with the requisite information either on request or at their own discretion.
2. a. In consultation with the Rector Magnificus, the Dean may, for a period to be determined in advance, give a sub-mandate to the Graduate School Admissions Committee of the Faculty in question to perform the tasks and exercise the powers relating to admission to a PhD programme that are set out in these regulations.  
b. The Admissions Committee consists of at least three individuals employed by the University of Groningen. The director of the Graduate School is an ex officio member and Chair of the Admissions Committee. Only professors can be members of the Admissions Committee, unless the Rector Magnificus decides otherwise.  
c. The Dean is authorized at all times to change or withdraw the sub-mandate referred to in Article 1.3.2a, and also to take action or have someone else take action while the mandate is still in force.  
d. The Dean will immediately notify the Doctorate Board, specifically the Rector Magnificus and the person with a sub-mandate, of any decisions regarding the allocation of, amendment to or withdrawal of a sub-mandate.  
e. The Admissions Committee which has been given a sub-mandate will be accountable to the Dean for performing the tasks and exercising the powers referred to in Article 1.3.2a. and will provide the Dean with the requisite information.

3. a. In consultation with the Rector Magnificus, the Dean may, for a period to be determined in advance, give a sub-mandate to the directors of the research institutes of the faculty in question to perform the tasks and exercise the powers relating to the registration and storage of data that are set out in these regulations.
- b. The Dean is authorized at all times to change or withdraw the sub-mandate referred to in Article 1.3.3a, and also to take action or have someone else take action while the mandate is still in force.
- c. The Dean will immediately notify the Doctorate Board, specifically the Rector Magnificus and the person with a sub-mandate, of any decisions regarding the allocation of, amendment to or withdrawal of a sub-mandate.
- d. The director of the research institute who has been given a sub-mandate will be accountable to the Dean for performing the tasks and exercising the powers referred to in Article 1.3.2a. and will provide the Dean with the requisite information.

#### **Article 1.4      *The PhD degree***

1. At the University of Groningen, a PhD is obtained on the grounds of a PhD procedure, subject to the rest of the provisions of these regulations.
2. The Doctorate Board awards the PhD.
3. The defence will take place in the presence of the Doctorate Board or of a PhD Examining Committee appointed by the Doctorate Board.
4. The PhD Examining Committee referred to in Article 1.4.3 will consist of professors both from the University of Groningen and from other Dutch or foreign universities. Associate professors who have been awarded the *ius promovendi* may serve as full members of the PhD Examining Committee. Associate professors who have not been awarded the *ius promovendi* may serve as advisory members of the PhD Examining Committee. The composition of the Committee is set out in more detail in Article 7.1 of these regulations.

#### **Article 1.5      *Scope of these regulations***

The regulations of the University of Groningen will apply to all PhDs at this University and, subject to the provisions of Chapter 12 of these regulations, to PhDs which are awarded as a result of collaboration between this University and other universities elsewhere, to the extent that no different agreements were reached when this collaboration was entered into.

#### **Article 1.6      *Duty of confidentiality***

Subject to the provisions of Article 2.5 of the AWB and what is stated about them in the CAO-NU, those present at or involved in correspondence about a PhD procedure and the matters discussed at or in connection with the non-public meetings referred to in Chapters 6, 7 and 8 and in connection with the matters discussed and the correspondence relating to awarding the *cum laude* distinction referred to in Chapter 9, and in connection with granting honorary PhDs as referred to in Chapter 11, and also with regard to the correspondence and the matters discussed in relation to the dispute settlement regulations set out in Chapter 13 of these regulations, have a duty of confidentiality.

**Article 1.7**                    ***Confidential advisor on matters of academic integrity***

1. The University has confidential advisors on matters of academic integrity.
2. The confidential advisors carry out their duties in accordance with the University's Regulations for the Protection of Academic Integrity.



# Chapter 2

## THE PHD STUDENT

### **Article 2.1**      *Definition of terms*

A PhD student is an individual who has been admitted to the PhD procedure and has in fact embarked on writing a PhD thesis. The PhD student may not have previously obtained a PhD from the University of Groningen.

### **Article 2.2**      *Finding supervisors and co-supervisors*

1. Prospective PhD students will discuss their PhD research with the professors, associate professors and lecturers who are in their opinion the most suitable or with the professor who has already taken responsibility for the supervision of the PhD research.
2. The request for the appointment of supervisors or co-supervisors must comply with Article 2.3 and must indicate the ranking order. At least two supervisors or one supervisor and one co-supervisor will be appointed. The maximum number of supervisors/co-supervisors is three. In exceptional cases a fourth supervisor/co-supervisor can be appointed.
3. If a prospective PhD student cannot find a supervisor or co-supervisor, the prospective PhD student will look for supervisors in conjunction with the director of the Graduate School. The director of the Graduate School will submit a nomination to the Dean for approval.
4. If a conflict arises between one of the supervisors or co-supervisors and the PhD student during the PhD programme, they will refer the conflict to the director of the Graduate School, who will attempt to resolve the matter. In case no solution can be found for the conflict, the Dean decides.

### **Article 2.3** *Application for admission to the PhD programme*

1. The prospective PhD student will be admitted to the PhD procedure if the Graduate School Admissions Committee in question has, in accordance with the relevant admission procedure, responded positively to the application for admission. To be admitted, the prospective PhD student must at least submit a certified copy of their Master's degree certificate and a copy of their passport as well as a provisional training and supervision plan. The training and supervision plan must at least state the subject of the PhD thesis and the names of the supervisors and co-supervisors the PhD student would like the director of the Graduate School to appoint.
2. Prospective PhD students who are not basing their application to be admitted to the PhD procedure on an examination as referred to in Article 2.4.1a, taken at the University of Groningen, must, along with their application to the Admissions Committee, submit a copy of their passport and a certified copy of a degree certificate acquired elsewhere by passing an examination within the meaning of Article 2.4.1a of these regulations, or, if they have not obtained a Master's degree as referred to in Article 2.4.1a, they must follow the procedure of the implementation regulations referred to in Article 2.4.2. A provisional Training and Supervision Plan must also be submitted.
3. The Admissions Committee will notify the prospective PhD student of its decision regarding the application referred to in Articles 2.3.1 and 2.3.2 as soon as possible, but within six weeks at the most. In special cases this time limit can be extended.
4. If the subject of the PhD is not in the same field as the examination referred to in Articles 2.3.1 and 2.3.2, then notwithstanding Article 2.3.3 the Doctorate Board will make its decision regarding admission to the PhD procedure on the basis of a well-substantiated proposal presented by the prospective PhD student.

5. As soon as the application for admission to the PhD programme has been approved, the PhD student is registered in Hora Finita and the starting date is determined. The PhD student and the supervisors and co-supervisors will, in accordance with the requirements of the Graduate School, submit a fully completed training and supervision plan to the Graduate School for approval by the director of the Graduate School, at the latest within three months after the start of the PhD programme, stating the subject of the PhD thesis and the names of the supervisors and co-supervisors the PhD student wants appointed or approved, and if possible an overview of the training plan and the dates on which the result and development meetings will take place. Once the training and supervision plan has been approved by the director, it will be signed by the Dean or a person mandated by the Dean. The Dean is responsible for registering the training and supervision plan in Hora Finita.
6. At the start of the PhD programme, PhD students will confirm in Hora Finita that they will adhere to the Dutch Code of Conduct for Academic Practice issued by the Association of Universities in the Netherlands (VSNU) and the University of Groningen's Regulations for the Protection of Academic Integrity.

#### **Article 2.4 Admission to PhD procedure**

1. The PhD procedure is open to everyone who:
  - a. has been awarded a Master's degree on the basis of Articles 7.10a.1, 2 or 3 of the WHW, in accordance with the provisions of Article 7.18.2 of the Act, and
  - b. has demonstrated the ability to conduct independent academic research by writing a PhD thesis, and
  - c. has met the other requirements set out in these regulations.
2. In exceptional cases the Doctorate Board may admit to the PhD procedure individuals who meet the requirements set out in Articles 2.4.1b. and c., but not those set out in 2.4.1a. (see Article 7.18.3 of the Act). For this purpose the Doctorate Board will establish implementation regulations. See Appendix 1, parts A and B, of these regulations.

#### **Article 2.5 Responsibility for the PhD thesis**

1. The PhD student has conducted the academic research described in the PhD thesis independently or has made, as referred to in Article 2.5.2, an essential contribution to parts of it. The PhD student is responsible for the PhD thesis.
2. In the case of jointly conducted academic research, the results of the research may lead to a joint PhD thesis by two PhD students, provided the following requirements have been met:
  - a. each of the authors has made an independent and distinguishable contribution which is sufficient for the PhD, to the satisfaction of the supervisors and co-supervisors
  - b. each of the authors accepts personal responsibility both for a particular part of the PhD thesis and for the coherence of the thesis as a whole
  - c. it is indicated in the PhD thesis which share each author had in writing it
  - d. each of the authors has added the required number of propositions ('*stellingen*' in Dutch) to the thesis as referred to in Article 4.2.
3. In the case of a joint PhD thesis as referred to in Article 2.5.2, the procedures and rules set out in these regulations apply for each PhD student separately.

#### **Article 2.6 Collaboration with supervisors and co-supervisors**

The PhD student will submit the manuscript to the supervisors and co-supervisors in its entirety or in sections, will make alterations as agreed, and will then submit the manuscript to the supervisors and co-supervisors for approval.

# Chapter 3

## THE SUPERVISORS

### **Article 3.1**      **Appointment of supervisors**

Once the Dean has appointed the supervisors and co-supervisors by means of signing the training and supervision plan referred to in Article 2.3, the Dean ensures that the names of the supervisors and co-supervisors are registered in Hora Finita. The supervisors appointed must include at least one professor from the University of Groningen or an associate professor who has a PhD and has been awarded the *ius promovendi*. In addition, one or two professors from another university in the Netherlands or another country can be appointed as supervisors. The primary supervisor must be affiliated with the University of Groningen. If an intended second or third supervisor is a professor at a foreign university, the Dean will conduct a detailed investigation before appointing that professor.

### **Article 3.2**      **Appointment of co-supervisor(s)**

1. At the proposal of the PhD student and with the consent of the supervisor(s) and the intended co-supervisor, the director of the Graduate School of the Faculty in question may appoint a co-supervisor to supervise the PhD student in addition to the supervisor.
2. The prospective co-supervisor must be employed by a university; however, the supervisor(s) may ask the Rector Magnificus in writing, stating the reasons, to make an exception to this. The co-supervisor must have the right to use the title 'Doctor' in the Netherlands or must have obtained a doctorate and must have expertise in the relevant academic field or fields.
3. Professors are excluded from being co-supervisors, as are associate professors who have a PhD and to whom the *ius promovendi* has been awarded by the Doctorate Board.
4. The proposal of the PhD student referred to in Article 3.2.1 must be submitted in time for the co-supervisor to provide a substantial amount of supervision for the preparations for and writing of the PhD thesis.
5. The name of the co-supervisor must be listed on the reverse side of the title page of the PhD thesis in question.

### **Article 3.3**      **Duties of supervisors**

1. The supervisors and co-supervisors are responsible for accepting the manuscript as a PhD thesis and ensure that the PhD thesis meets the academic standards that generally apply to a PhD thesis. The Netherlands Qualification Framework serves as a guideline for this.
2. The supervisors and co-supervisors will supervise the PhD student in writing the thesis and also ensure that the deadlines that have been agreed or can be considered reasonable for the assessment and discussion of drafts submitted to them are met.
3. The supervisors and co-supervisors will read the content of the manuscript of the PhD thesis, assess the manuscript submitted or parts of thereof, and consider whether it meets the requirements supervisors can set on the basis of their responsibility for the PhD thesis.
4. The supervisors and co-supervisors may make suggestions to the PhD student for alterations and/or additions to the manuscript. The PhD student will follow these suggestions as much as possible.
5. A supervisor or co-supervisor may only withdraw as supervisor or co-supervisor in exceptional cases, stating the reasons. They must notify the PhD student, the other supervisors and co-supervisors, the director of the Graduate School and the Dean of their withdrawal without delay. Article 2.2.3 will apply *mutatis mutandis*.

### **Article 3.4**            ***Honourably discharged professors***

1. An honourably discharged professor may only act as supervisor if they were appointed as supervisor before their discharge and if the PhD thesis is approved by the Assessment Committee within five years of their discharge.
2. If the Assessment Committee does not approve the PhD thesis within five years of the supervisor's honourable discharge, the appointment will lapse and the Dean will appoint another professor as supervisor, on the recommendation of the director of the Graduate School and after hearing the views of the PhD student, unless in the Dean's opinion – provided more than one supervisor was appointed – the appointment of a new supervisor is unnecessary.

### **Article 3.5**            ***Several supervisors and co-supervisors***

1. The director of the Graduate School of the faculty in question must appoint at least two and no more than three supervisors and co-supervisors. In exceptional cases a fourth supervisor or co-supervisor may be appointed. The Dean will appoint the nominated supervisor(s) or co-supervisor(s).
2. The supervisors and co-supervisors will distribute the tasks among themselves, taking the PhD student's views into account. This distribution of tasks will be recorded in a written statement, which – if more than one supervisor has been appointed – will indicate which person is the primary supervisor.
3. The distribution of tasks will not affect the responsibility of the supervisors and co-supervisors for the PhD thesis as a whole.
4. The supervisors and co-supervisors will approve the PhD thesis jointly and will jointly give the PhD student a statement regarding the defensibility of the propositions ('*stellingen*') as referred to in Article 4.2.

### **Article 3.6**            ***Prohibited relationships***

1. Close family members of the PhD student (to the fourth degree) or other individuals who have a relationship with the PhD student that means that they cannot reasonably be required to pass judgment will not be eligible for appointment as supervisor or co-supervisor and may not be members of the Assessment Committee or PhD Examining Committee.
2. Close family members of the co-supervisor (to the fourth degree) or other individuals who have a relationship with the co-supervisor that means that they cannot reasonably be required to pass judgment may not be members of the Assessment Committee or PhD Examining Committee.

# Chapter 4

## THE PHD THESIS

### **Article 4.1**      **Definition of terms**

1. The PhD thesis is:
  - an academic thesis about a certain subject, or
  - a collection of academic publications that may or may not have been published previously, or
  - a tangible technological design, accompanied by thorough documentation which can be taken away and examined.
2. Where these regulations refer to the PhD thesis, the term may also be taken to mean a part of a PhD thesis as referred to in Article 2.5.2 of these regulations.
3. In order to safeguard the storage of the thesis and to ensure that the thesis and the research data remain available to the University of Groningen for further research and education, the PhD student must sign the licence agreement, as included in Appendix 8. This agreement must be signed before the thesis is submitted for approval by the Assessment Committee.
4. In so far as the University of Groningen is the employer of the PhD student, the CAO-NU and the Dutch Patent Act apply with regard to intellectual property rights.
5. The University of Groningen is entitled to store this work in the relevant section of the University of Groningen Library, to be used for the purpose of academic teaching and research, and to publish it on the internet as referred to in Article 4.7.
6. The PhD student must ensure that the copyright provisions have been complied with, as elaborated in Article 4.7 and Appendix 8: the Licence Agreement.
7. Data (e.g. databases) and accompanying explanations will in any case be filed for the purpose of verifying the research. They will be made available for further scientific research in accordance with the guidelines of the University of Groningen's Data Policy and the Data Policy of the research institute.
8. The Dean or the director of the research institute may grant a full or partial exemption from this requirement for a certain period if there are compelling reasons to do so.

### **Article 4.2**      **Propositions ('stellingen')**

1. At least six propositions must be added to the PhD thesis. These propositions must be academically defensible. As soon as possible after approval of the PhD thesis as referred to in Article 5.1, the PhD student will submit the propositions to the supervisors and co-supervisors through Hora Finita. The supervisors and co-supervisors will assess the quality of the propositions submitted and also assess whether the propositions are defensible.
2. The supervisors and co-supervisors are responsible for registering the decision as to whether or not the propositions are defensible in Hora Finita.

### **Article 4.3**      **Language**

1. The PhD thesis and the corresponding propositions must be written in Dutch or English, or, with the approval of the Doctorate Board, in another language.
2. If the PhD thesis is written in Dutch, an English translation of the title (and any subtitle) as well as an English abstract of the content must be provided as a separate appendix to the thesis. If the PhD thesis is written in English, a Dutch translation of the title (and any subtitle) as well as a Dutch abstract of the content must be provided as a separate appendix to the thesis.

3. If a PhD thesis is written in a combination of languages, for the sections written in Dutch a translation of the title as well as an abstract of the content must be provided in a permitted language. For sections not written in Dutch, a Dutch translation of the title and a Dutch abstract of the texts must be included.
4. If the PhD thesis is written in a language other than Dutch or English, a Dutch and English translation of the title and the abstract must be provided.
5. Optionally, the PhD may also include a summary in Dutch for non-experts.

#### **Article 4.4            Contents**

1. The PhD thesis must include:
  - a title page which complies with the format set out in Appendix 7
  - a table of contents
  - an introduction which at least includes the research question addressed in the PhD thesis
  - an academic analysis
  - a conclusion
  - an abstract
  - if possible, a list of names and subjects and/or a list of sources
  - a brief version of the PhD student's CV
  - The propositions must accompany the PhD thesis as a separate appendix.
2. Optionally, the PhD student may include a brief and concise foreword and a summary in Dutch for non-experts.

#### **Article 4.5            Collection of academic publications as a PhD thesis**

1. Article 4.4 will apply *mutatis mutandis* to a PhD thesis whereby the academic analysis consists of a collection of academic publications which may or may not have been published previously. The relationship between these publications must be outlined and explained in an introduction and summary conclusion. The publications in question must be added as chapters.
2. Academic publications are eligible only if they meet the following criteria:
  - the publications must form a coherent whole; a guideline for this is that previously published publications must not have been published more than five years before the PhD thesis is submitted to the Assessment Committee for assessment.
  - written consent must be given for use in the thesis of publications for which the copyright has been given to third parties
  - a written statement by the supervisors must be submitted to the Assessment Committee showing that the PhD student's share of the scientific articles is an essential and sufficient part of the research project in question.

#### **Article 4.6            Form**

- The PhD thesis and the accompanying propositions must be made available in both printed and digital form.
- Two ISBNs (International Standard Book Number) for the PhD thesis must be requested through the website of the University of Groningen Library; one for the printed version and one for the electronic version.

#### **Article 4.7            Printing and submitting the PhD thesis**

- A.** After receiving notification of admission as referred to in Article 6.3, the Rector Magnificus will give the PhD student permission to have the PhD thesis printed.
- B.** As soon as possible after the PhD thesis and the accompanying propositions have been printed, but three weeks before the date of the defence at the latest, the PhD student will

submit to:

1. the PhD degree registration office of the University of Groningen, Broerstraat 5, Academy Building:
  - 3 printed copies of the PhD thesis and the accompanying propositions
  - 1 printed copy of the title page
2. to the Graduate School:
  - 1 printed copy of the PhD thesis and the accompanying propositions
3. via Hora Finita:
  - to the University of Groningen Library, Broerstraat 4: the electronic version of the thesis and the accompanying propositions; if the thesis also appears as a commercial edition, the electronic version must be supplied together with a copy of the agreement with the publisher authorizing publication of the electronic version
  - The PhD student must upload various abstracts to and complete a questionnaire in Hora Finita (under the Communication tab) no later than five weeks before the date of the PhD defence for the Communication Office and the University of Groningen Repository.

The summaries for non-experts which are intended for the Communication Office and for the University of Groningen Library must be written in Dutch and English, each no longer than 250 words.

4. The University of Groningen Library will make the thesis available in printed and electronic form, in principle before the PhD defence (subject to and stating the date of the defence), but no later than one month after the defence. The electronic version will be made public through the University of Groningen Repository. The Rector Magnificus may grant a full or partial exemption from publication for a certain period if there are compelling reasons to do so.

# Chapter 5

## ASSESSMENT OF PHD THESIS BY THE SUPERVISORS

### **Article 5.1**      ***Approval of PhD thesis by the supervisors***

- If the supervisors and co-supervisors are of the opinion that the PhD thesis meets the required academic standard and can be regarded as an adequate demonstration of competence to carry out independent academic research, the supervisors and co-supervisors give their approval.
- The supervisors and co-supervisors are responsible for registering their approval in Hora Finita, after which the PhD student, the Dean and the director of the Graduate School will automatically be notified of this.

### **Article 5.2**      ***Supervisors withhold approval of the PhD thesis***

1. If a supervisor withholds approval of the PhD thesis, then at the request of the PhD student and after hearing the views of the student, the supervisors and the co-supervisors, the Dean will decide whether to appoint a different supervisor.
2. If a co-supervisor withholds approval of the PhD thesis, then at the request of the PhD student and after hearing the views of the student, the supervisors and the co-supervisors, the Dean will decide whether to appoint a different co-supervisor, unless in the Dean's opinion the appointment of a new co-supervisor is unnecessary, because there are already several supervisors and co-supervisors.

### **Article 5.3**      ***Time limit***

The supervisors and co-supervisors must respond to a written request submitted by the PhD student for approval of the PhD thesis within six weeks. If the supervisors or co-supervisors withhold their approval, they must also state their reasons for this.

### **Article 5.4**      ***Further action***

1. As soon as possible after receiving the approval referred to in Article 5.1. and if necessary the statement referred to in Article 2.4.2, and after the appointment of the Assessment Committee referred to in Article 6.1, the PhD student will submit the PhD thesis which has been approved by the supervisors and co-supervisors, with a submission letter, to the Dean and the members of the Assessment Committee as described in Article 6.1.
2. The PhD student will also submit the title page of the PhD thesis, which is in accordance with the designated format, to the PhD degree registration office via Hora Finita.



# Chapter 6

## THE ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE

### **Article 6.1**      ***The Assessment Committee***

1. As soon as possible after receiving the approval referred to in Article 5.1, the Dean of the Faculty covering the subject area of the PhD thesis appoints an Assessment Committee.
2. The Assessment Committee consists of three members. In the event of a joint PhD or a double PhD, the Committee consists of four members. The (primary) supervisor makes a recommendation regarding the composition of the Assessment Committee. Following approval by the Dean, the (primary) supervisor determines whether the candidates are willing to be members of the Assessment Committee.
3. Only professors employed by a university who have not co-authored with the PhD student on publications included in the PhD thesis may be members of the Assessment Committee. The Assessment Committee consists of at least one professor from the University of Groningen and one professor from another university in the Netherlands or another country. Professors from a foreign university must have at least a level equivalent to the Dutch level. If necessary, the Dean will conduct a further investigation into this matter.
4. For honourably discharged professors, the rule applies that they may be members of the Assessment Committee for up to five years after their honourable discharge. Co-supervisors may not be members of the Assessment Committee.
5. Article 3.6 applies *mutatis mutandis* to membership of the Assessment Committee.

### **Article 6.2**      ***Chair of the Assessment Committee***

The Dean is Chair of the Assessment Committee. The Chair is not a member of the Assessment Committee.

### **Article 6.3**      ***The Assessment Committee's decision***

1. The Assessment Committee must announce its decision regarding the PhD thesis within four weeks of its appointment.
2. If the members of the Assessment Committee wish to meet to discuss the thesis, their discussions will be confidential.
3. When making its decision, the Assessment Committee will limit itself to a qualitative judgment of the main features of the study submitted, based on the research question agreed between the supervisors and co-supervisors and the PhD student.
4. All members of the Assessment Committee will provide a substantiated opinion of the PhD thesis in writing via Hora Finita. If at least one of the members of the Assessment Committee gives a negative assessment, the Dean will decide about the approval of the PhD thesis. The Dean will consult the members of the Assessment Committee in connection with this decision.
5. The Chair of the Committee will ensure that the approval or rejection of the PhD thesis is registered via Hora Finita, after which the PhD student, the supervisors, the PhD degree registration office, the director of the Graduate School and if necessary the members of the Assessment Committee will be notified of the decision.
6. If the Assessment Committee withholds its approval, as referred to in the second sentence of Article 6.3.4, then unless the Dean decides otherwise, the Committee will be deemed to have been dissolved after making its decision known. In the event that the Assessment Committee or the Dean withhold their approval, as referred to in the second sentence of Article 6.3.4, the supervisor may ask the Dean to appoint a new Assessment Committee. Members of the dissolved committee may be members of this new committee.

# Chapter 7

## THE PHD EXAMINING COMMITTEE

### **Article 7.1**      **Composition of the PhD Examining Committee**

1. As soon as possible after being notified of the positive decision referred to in Article 6.3.4, the Dean will give the PhD student permission to defend their thesis and will appoint a PhD Examining Committee on the recommendation of the primary supervisor. The defence will then take place in the presence of this committee.
2. The PhD Examining Committee consists of at least five members, including:
  1. professors, both from the University of Groningen and from other universities in the Netherlands or other countries and
  2. associate professors from the University of Groningen who have been awarded the *ius promovendi* by the Doctorate Board
  3. a maximum of two associate professors or lecturers with PhDs and who have not been awarded the *ius promovendi* as advisory members

The members of the Assessment Committee and the Chair as referred to in Article 7.2 will be included in this number, but the experts as referred to in Article 7.3 will not be. Co-supervisors may not be members of the PhD Examining Committee.

Professors from a foreign university must hold a position which is equivalent to that of a professor appointed by a Dutch university. If necessary, the Dean will conduct a further investigation into this matter.

The primary supervisor will check in advance whether the intended individuals are willing to sit on the PhD Examining Committee.

3. Article 3.6 will apply *mutatis mutandis* to membership of the PhD Examining Committee.
4. At least half of the committee members must be affiliated with the University of Groningen. The primary supervisor may ask the Rector Magnificus in writing, stating the reasons, to exclude the application of this provision.

### **Article 7.2**      **Chair of the PhD Examining Committee**

1. The Chair of the PhD Examining Committee is the Rector Magnificus or their deputy. The Chair must be a Professor.
2. The Chair is member of the PhD Examining Committee.
3. The Chair invites members of the committee to speak and tells them when to stop.
4. The Chair appoints one of the members of the committee to be the secretary. The secretary must be a professor employed by the University of Groningen.

### **Article 7.3**      **Expert**

At the request of the primary supervisor, the Dean may admit to the defence individuals who may use the title 'Doctor' in the Netherlands and who are specialists in the subject area (or part of the subject area) of the PhD thesis; if the PhD Examining Committee agrees, they will take part in the opposition and will have an advisory vote in the deliberations about whether or not to award the PhD.

**Article 7.4            *Taking part in the opposition***

- The opposition consists of the PhD Examining Committee, possible experts in the field and the supervisors. The Chair is not part of the opposition. During the defence, a maximum of nine individuals may take part in the opposition. In exceptional cases, this number may be deviated from, at the Dean's discretion.
- The opposition from the audience is not included in the number mentioned in Article 7.4.1.
- Opposition from the audience is permitted provided that the Dean of the faculty is notified three weeks in advance.

**Article 7.5            *Convening the PhD Examining Committee***

The Dean will convene the PhD Examining Committee in good time to hold the opposition during and to attend a closed meeting prior to the defence.

**Article 7.6            *Substitution of a member of the PhD Examining Committee***

1. If due to unforeseen circumstances a member of the PhD Examining Committee is unable to attend the preliminary meeting, as referred to in Article 7.5, or the defence, the primary supervisor must ensure a substitute or solution is found in good time (to which Articles 7.1.4 and 3.6 will also apply). The solution may involve the opposition in question being read out by another member of the PhD Examining Committee. It is not possible to attend the defence via telephone or video connection.
2. If the provisions of Article 7.6.1 apply, the supervisor must notify the Dean of this no later than 48 hours before the start of the defence or as soon as possible.

# Chapter 8

## THE PHD CEREMONY

### **Article 8.1**      *Date, time, place*

The PhD student will discuss the date of the PhD ceremony with the supervisors and co-supervisors and the Dean as soon as possible after receiving notification of the approval of the manuscript as referred to in Article 5.1. Subject to the approval of the Assessment Committee, the date, time and place will be fixed by the PhD degree registration office.

### **Article 8.2**      *Public nature of meetings*

Subject to the provisions of Article 1.4.3, the PhD ceremony will be open to the public.

### **Article 8.3**      *The defence of the PhD thesis*

1. The provisions of the protocol, as included in Appendix 5, also apply.
2. The PhD ceremony, including the defence of the PhD thesis, will be conducted in Dutch or English or, with the permission of the Rector Magnificus, in another language.
3. The defence will end 45 minutes after the beginning of the public session; the session will be terminated by the Chair.

### **Article 8.4**      *Decision-making*

1. After the defence has been terminated, the PhD Examining Committee, on behalf of the Doctorate Board, will make a decision at a closed meeting about awarding the PhD.
2. When deciding whether or not to award the PhD, the committee will take into account the decision of the Assessment Committee referred to Article 6.3.1 and the student's defence of the PhD thesis.
3. A refusal to award the PhD on the grounds of the student's defence of the PhD thesis must be based on the unanimous opinion of the PhD Examining Committee.

# Chapter 9

## CUM LAUDE

### **Article 9.1**      **Proposal to award the *cum laude* distinction**

1. If a PhD student has shown outstanding ability to conduct independent academic research, the PhD Examining Committee, on behalf of the Doctorate Board, may decide to confer the *cum laude* distinction (an honours distinction).
2. A proposal to award the *cum laude* distinction can be put forward by the primary supervisor or by a member of the Assessment Committee. A proposal in writing stating the reasons must be submitted confidentially to the Dean at least eight weeks before the date of the PhD ceremony.
3. The Assessment Committee must be unanimous in their opinion that the *cum laude* distinction should be conferred. At the request of the Dean, the Assessment Committee will nominate at least two external referees who are professors in the subject area of the PhD thesis and are not co-authors of any of the publications included in the thesis. The Dean will appoint two but no more than three referees, preferably from those nominated, but the Dean may also decide to choose someone else. The external referees decide on the *cum laude* designation. The external referees will submit confidential recommendations in writing to the Dean via Hora Finita within three weeks of being appointed.
4. At least two referees, regardless of the number of designated referees, must have assessed the PhD thesis as 'outstanding' for the *cum laude* designation to be awarded. The assessment of the referees and the proposal to award the *cum laude* designation will be confidentially communicated by the Dean to the members of the PhD Examining Committee as soon as possible prior to the ceremony.
5. The Dean will ensure that the proposal referred to in Article 9.1.4 is registered in Hora Finita, after which it will be automatically registered by the PhD degree registration office.
6. Regarding the proposal to award the *cum laude* distinction, the PhD Examining Committee will take note of:
  1. the significance and degree of originality of the research question and methods
  2. the academic and technical standard of the work
  3. the opinions of the external referees
  4. the share of work on the PhD project completed by those other than the PhD student
  5. language and style
7. At the meeting referred to in Article 8.4.1 about the proposal to award the PhD, a secret ballot will be held among the members of the PhD Examining Committee who are eligible to vote to decide whether or not to award the *cum laude* distinction. Votes may only be for or against the proposal. A vote for or against the proposal takes place with due observance of the defence by the PhD student. The proposal is rejected if more than one member votes against it. In all other cases the proposal will be accepted. The Rector Magnificus, or the person replacing them, shall abstain from voting, even though they are a voting member of the PhD Examining Committee.

# Chapter 10

## CERTIFICATE

### **Article 10.1**      ***Certificate***

- As proof that the PhD has been awarded, the new Doctor will receive a certificate in Latin, on behalf of the University, signed by the Rector Magnificus, the secretary of the PhD Examining Committee and the supervisors and co-supervisors and a statement written in English.
- If the PhD has been awarded the *cum laude* distinction, this will be stated on the certificate.
- As proof of successful completion of the Graduate School's degree programme, the student may also be given a certificate from the Graduate School in addition to the PhD certificate.

# Chapter 11

## HONORARY PHD

### **Article 11.1**      **Authority to award an honorary PhD**

The Doctorate Board may award natural persons honorary PhDs for outstanding contributions to academic disciplines represented at the University of Groningen.

### **Article 11.2**      **Procedure**

1. In response to a proposal submitted to the Doctorate Board to that end, if possible with the nomination of a supervisor, the Board of the most appropriate faculty may recommend the conferral of an honorary PhD.
2. A recommendation in writing, accompanied by a detailed account of the reasons, a CV and a list of publications, will be sent confidentially to the Rector Magnificus, who will present the recommendation to the Doctorate Board.
3. If the Doctorate Board intends to accept the recommendation, the opinion of the Board of the University will be sought.
4. With due regard for the views of the Board of the University, the Doctorate Board will make a decision regarding the conferral of the honorary PhD. If the Doctorate Board decides in favour, it will also appoint one or two professors as supervisors.
5. The decision referred to in Article 11.2.4 will be made known in writing, confidentially, to the Board of the University, the Dean in question, the supervisor(s) and the candidate.
6. Except in special circumstances, an honorary PhD will not be conferred upon an individual who is not present in person at the session referred to in Article 11.4.1.
7. The decision will not be made public until the candidate has stated that they will accept the honorary PhD and will be present in person at the session referred to in Article 11.4.1, subject to the provisions of Article 11.2.6.

### **Article 11.3**      **Regalia**

The honorary doctor will receive a certificate from the supervisor(s), signed by the Rector Magnificus, the members of the Doctorate Board and the supervisor(s). They will also receive the cappa (special hood for honorary doctorates).

### **Article 11.4**      **Presentation of the regalia**

1. The regalia associated with the conferral of the honorary PhD will be presented during a special public session of the Doctorate Board: the honorary PhD ceremony.
2. On behalf of the Doctorate Board, the Rector Magnificus will invite interested parties to attend this ceremony.

# Chapter 12

## DOUBLE AND JOINT DOCTORATE

### **Article 12.1. Definition of terms**

1. These regulations also apply to joint or double PhD programmes, unless otherwise stipulated in this chapter.
2. Arrangements may be made between the University of Groningen and one or more other universities, possibly in different countries, about awarding a joint or double PhD on the basis of a PhD thesis which meets the provisions of these regulations. These agreements will be recorded in an agreement which will be submitted to the Board of the University of Groningen for signature. This agreement must be entered into at least two years before the planned PhD ceremony.
3. For a double PhD, a PhD is conferred by two universities separately on the basis of a programme that has been approved by both universities and for which the research has been conducted for at least six months at each of the universities. The two universities bear joint responsibility for supervision and will be represented in both the Assessment Committee and the PhD Examining Committee.
4. For a joint PhD, a PhD is conferred by two or no more than three universities jointly on the basis of a programme that has been approved by both universities and for which the research has been conducted for at least six months at each of the universities. The two universities bear joint responsibility for supervision and will be represented in both the Assessment Committee and the PhD Examining Committee.
5. For further regulations regarding joint and double doctorates, please refer to the Protocol (Appendix 4) and the concept agreements for joint and double doctorates, which can be found on the University of Groningen website.

### **Article 12.2 PhD research project**

- The PhD research project and the thesis based on it must be the result of one or more research programmes established jointly by the University of Groningen and one or more universities as referred to in Article 12.2. To as great an extent as possible, the teaching and research programmes will be set up in consultation with the Dutch or foreign partner university.
- Preferably, the PhD research project and the PhD thesis should contain an international component,
- The supervisor appointed by the foreign university must have the *ius promovendi* according to the rules of the country of the partner university.
- The PhD student should spend at least six months, in accordance with Articles 12.1.3 and 12.1.4, but preferably a proportionate amount of the time spent on the PhD at the partner university or universities to follow course units and/or to conduct research for the PhD thesis. A statement about this will be submitted to the Doctorate Board. In addition, the University of Groningen supervisor must demonstrate that they are responsible for supervising the PhD student for a proportional amount of the time spent on the PhD.
- If the PhD thesis is written in Dutch, it must be accompanied by an abstract written in English.



**Article 12.3      *The Assessment Committee and the PhD Examining Committee***

1. For a joint or double PhD programme, the Assessment Committee and the PhD Examining Committee referred to in Chapters 6 and 7 of these PhD regulations must each include at least one member from each university involved.
2. In the event of a double or joint PhD programme, the Assessment Committee has four members.

**Article 12.4      *The defence of the PhD thesis***

The defence of the PhD thesis will be conducted wholly or partially in Dutch, English or the language of at least one of the countries in which the foreign university referred to in Article 12.1 is located.

**Article 12.5      *The certificate***

1. In the event of a joint degree:
  - the certificate referred to in Chapter 10 of these regulations will be issued jointly on behalf of the universities referred to in Article 12.1, or
  - the universities referred to in Article 12.1 each issue a certificate stating that these certificates are only valid jointly
2. In the case of a double doctorate, both universities will issue a certificate stating that the PhD student received joint supervision.

# Chapter 13

## DISPUTE RESOLUTION REGULATIONS

### **Article 13.1**      **General**

1. The provisions of the AWB will apply.
2. The regulations do not address the settlement of legal status disputes.

### **Article 13.2**      **Disputes regarding the implementation of the PhD regulations, administrative appeal**

1. If a dispute arises in connection with the implementation of the provisions or the appendices of these regulations concerning a decision by or on behalf of the Doctorate Board, an interested party may submit a substantiated notice of objection to the Doctorate Board within six weeks of being notified of the decision.
2. A committee as referred to in Article 7.13 of the AWB will prepare the Doctorate Board's decision regarding the notice of objection. At the University of Groningen this is the Disputes Committee, as referred to in Chapter 5 of the BBR.
3. The committee consists of a Chair and two other members.
4. The Chair must meet the requirements for appointment as district court judge and must not be employed by the University of Groningen. The two other members are professors who are not members of and do not act under the responsibility of the Doctorate Board.
5. While preparing its recommendations, the committee will hear the parties involved and will be entitled to gain any information which is necessary to perform its duties responsibly.
6. The committee will make recommendations in writing to the Doctorate Board. The recommendations will be accompanied by written accounts of the hearings.
7. Notwithstanding the provisions of the AWB, in certain cases the Doctorate Board may decide, upon request, to apply the internal time limits referred to in the PhD regulations.

### **Article 13.3**      **Decision of the Doctorate Board**

1. Within four weeks after receiving the recommendations, but within ten weeks at the most after receiving the notice of objection, the Doctorate Board will make its decision known in writing, stating the reasons, to the person who submitted the objection and to other parties involved.
2. If the decision regarding the objection differs from the recommendation made by the committee referred to in Article 14.2.5, the reason for this difference will be stated; in all cases the committee's recommendation will be sent along with the decision.
3. **Article 13.4 Appeal to the administrative court**  
Within six weeks after the decision has been made known to the person who submitted the objection, an interested party may appeal against a decision of the Doctorate Board as referred to in Article 14.3.1, provided the contested decision can be appealed under the General Administrative Law Act.

# Chapter 14

## FINAL AND TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS

### ***Article 14.1***

1. In cases not covered by these regulations, or if there is a difference of opinion as to the interpretation of the provisions of these regulations, the Doctorate Board will decide.
2. In very exceptional cases, the Doctorate Board, at the suggestion of the Rector Magnificus, may deviate from these regulations, subject to mandatory legal provisions.
3. Requests to deviate from the regulations must be submitted to the Doctorate Board in writing, stating the reasons.

### ***Article 14.2***

If the provisions of these regulations are not complied with, the Rector Magnificus is authorized to postpone the PhD ceremony until a date to be determined at their discretion.

### ***Article 14.3***

1. All pending applications for admission to a PhD programme will, unless the Doctorate Board decides otherwise, be brought into line with these regulations as of the date these regulations take effect.

### ***Article 14.4***

1. These regulations may be cited as: The 'University of Groningen PhD regulations', or 'PhD regulations, University of Groningen 2018'.
2. These regulations shall enter into force on 1 September 2018, with the exception of the articles relating to the right of associate professors with a PhD to supervise a PhD student. These articles apply retroactively from 1 April 2018. The provisions of the second sentence of Article 2.2.2 will apply to PhD programmes which started after 20 February 2013.
3. The previous PhD Regulations will then lapse.

As decreed by the Doctorate Board on 6 June 2018.

# Appendices

- Appendix 1** IMPLEMENTATION REGULATIONS AS REFERRED TO IN ARTICLE 2.4.2
- Appendix 2** EXPLANATORY NOTES TO THE PHD REGULATIONS: GENERAL AND SECTION BY SECTION
- Appendix 3** SOME RELEVANT ARTICLES OF THE ACT
- Appendix 4** PROTOCOL FOR JOINT DOCTORATES WITH FOREIGN PARTNERS
- Appendix 5** PROTOCOL FOR THE PHD CEREMONY
- Appendix 6** PHD TIMELINE
- Appendix 7** TITLE PAGE TEMPLATE
- Appendix 8** EXAMPLE OF A LICENCE AGREEMENT
- Appendix 9** PUBLICITY

## Appendix 1

### IMPLEMENTATION REGULATIONS AS REFERRED TO IN ARTICLE 2.4.2

1. **ADMISSION to a PhD programme in exceptional cases on the basis of Dutch certificates, if the prospective PhD student does not meet the requirement set out in Article 2.4.1a.**

#### **Article A.1**      **Mandate**

The power, as referred to in Article 2.4.2, to the extent that it relates to applications to be admitted to a PhD programme on the basis of Dutch certificates, will be exercised by the Graduate School Admissions Committee in question, on behalf of the Dean in question and at the request of the Doctorate Board.

#### **Article A.2**      **Objective**

The prospective PhD student must convince the Graduate School Admissions Committee that they are able to conduct independent academic research and have a realistic chance of completing a PhD thesis.

#### **Article A.3**      **Documentation**

A prospective PhD student must substantiate their application as much as possible by providing certificates, (academic) publications, letters of recommendation regarding positions held, written statements by academic researchers and the proposed supervisor(s).

#### **Article A.4**      **Procedure**

1. In accordance with the current admissions procedure, to be admitted to a PhD programme the prospective PhD student must submit an application in writing, accompanied by the available documentation, to the Admissions Committee.
2. The Admissions Committee will decide on the basis of the documents submitted whether or not it considers the candidate capable of conducting independent research which could lead to a completed PhD thesis, before the candidate starts the PhD research. If necessary, the Admissions Committee in question will interview the applicant. The Admissions Committee will make its decision in writing, stating the reasons. This may be accompanied by a recommendation that the candidate should remedy certain deficiencies.
3. The Admissions Committee will make its decision known to the applicant in writing, stating the reasons, within six weeks. If the decision cannot be made within six weeks, the Admissions Committee will notify the applicant of this and state a reasonable time limit within which the decision can be expected.
4. If the final decision is positive, the applicant will be admitted to the PhD programme. If the final decision is negative, the applicant will not be admitted to the PhD programme.
5. Chapter 14 of the PhD regulations will apply *mutatis mutandis*.
6. Once the Admissions Committee has decided that the applicant will be admitted to the PhD programme, the other provisions of the PhD regulations will apply.

## **2. ADMISSION to a PhD procedure in exceptional cases in which the requirement set out in Article 2.4.1a has not been met, on the basis of foreign certificates**

### **Article B.1 Mandate**

The power, as referred to in Article 2.4.2, to the extent that it relates to applications to be admitted to a PhD programme on the basis of foreign certificates, will be exercised by the Graduate School Admissions Committee in question, on behalf of the Dean in question and at the request of the Doctorate Board.

### **Article B.2 Objective**

The prospective PhD student must convince the Graduate School Admissions Committee that they are able to conduct independent academic research and have a realistic chance of completing a PhD thesis.

### **Article B.3 Documentation**

A prospective PhD student must substantiate their application as much as possible by providing certificates, (academic) publications, letters of recommendation regarding positions held, written statements by academic researchers and the (proposed) supervisor.

### **Article B.4 Procedure**

1. In accordance with the current admissions procedure, to be admitted to a PhD programme the prospective PhD student must submit an application in writing, accompanied by the available documentation, to the Admissions Committee. The committee compares the foreign qualifications with the Dutch standard.
2. The Admissions Committee will decide on the basis of the documents submitted whether or not it considers the candidate capable of conducting independent research which could lead to a completed PhD thesis, before the candidate starts the PhD research. If necessary, the Admissions Committee in question will interview the applicant. The Admissions Committee will make its decision in writing, stating the reasons.
3. The Admissions Committee will make its decision known to the applicant in writing, stating the reasons, within six weeks. If the decision cannot be made within six weeks, the Admissions Committee will notify the applicant of this and state a reasonable time limit within which the decision can be expected.
4. If the final decision is positive, the applicant will be admitted to the PhD programme. If the final decision is negative, the applicant will not be admitted to the PhD programme.
5. Chapter 14 of the PhD regulations will apply *mutatis mutandis*.
6. Once the Admissions Committee has decided that the applicant will be admitted to the PhD programme, the other provisions of the PhD regulations will apply.

## Appendix 2

### EXPLANATORY NOTES TO THE PHD REGULATIONS: GENERAL AND SECTION BY SECTION

The purpose of this appendix is to explain the rules in the PhD regulations. Should any difference of opinion arise, the text of the PhD regulations will prevail.

#### 1. General

The authority for the PhD regulations lies with the Doctorate Board (Article 9.10 WHW). Article 7.19 of the WHW mandates this Doctorate Board to draw up PhD regulations. Furthermore, the Act is limited to providing a number of conditions. The text of a few relevant articles of the Act is included in Appendix 3. These regulations also comply with the requirements of the General Administrative Law Act.

#### Section by section explanatory notes

##### Chapter 1 General Provisions

###### *Articles 1.2 and 1.4*

The WHW is based on the system of the undifferentiated doctorates. The underlying reason for this is that, due to the increasing specialization in academic disciplines and increasing differentiation between universities, it is no longer meaningful to give someone a PhD in a certain academic field. Such a qualification creates the impression of expertise in the entire field, whereas in reality the expertise in question is in a certain area of a field or an area where two academic fields overlap to such an extent that it is difficult to choose. A PhD is now more a research qualification; it is an academic qualification only in relation to the subject of research.

##### Chapter 2 The PhD student

###### *Article 2.2*

In most cases the supervisors and co-supervisors have been working with the PhD student for a long time; satisfactory collaboration is a crucial prerequisite for the success of the PhD research project. If they agree, and if the teaching remits of the supervisors and co-supervisors match the subject of the PhD research to a sufficient degree, then as a rule the Dean will appoint the individuals nominated.

###### *Article 2.3*

The University of Groningen has an admission procedure for PhD programmes (see Implementation Regulations 1A or 1B in Appendix 1). Before beginning a PhD programme, the PhD student, along with the supervisors and co-supervisors, draws up a training and supervision plan (TSP) which marks the beginning of the PhD programme.

As a rule, the Graduate School in question will register the training and supervision plan and the PhD student in Hora Finita at the request of the respective Dean.

In accordance with Article 2.3.6, the required compliance with the rules regarding academic integrity will be explicitly pointed out to the PhD student.

###### *Article 2.4*

Under the WHW, a Dutch Master's degree directly entitles the holder to apply for a PhD programme. A foreign certificate or a certificate other than a Master's degree requires an additional procedure for the holder to be admitted to a PhD

programme. At the University of Groningen, the rule is that permission to proceed to the PhD ceremony is granted only after admission to the PhD programme has been granted.

### **Chapter 3 Supervisors and co-supervisors**

#### *Articles 3.1 and 3.2*

All PhD students at the University of Groningen must be supervised by more than one individual. For all PhD programmes at the University of Groningen, the primary supervisor must be affiliated with the University of Groningen. In addition to professors, as from 1 January 2018 associate professors with a PhD and who have been granted the *ius promovendi* may also be supervisors.

Sometimes, depending on the field of research, a specialist who is a professor from another university may be asked to take charge of part of the supervision as a supervisor. Of course, it is possible that this person was in contact with the PhD student first and that it is only at a later stage of the research that it has become helpful to get in touch with a supervisor affiliated with the University of Groningen.

It can also happen that a PhD student conducts their research under a supervisor who does not have the *ius promovendi*, but who does have the title of ‘Doctor’. It is advisable to offer this person a place in the procedure as a co-supervisor to ensure that they can also contribute to the assessment. If the supervisor obtains the *ius promovendi* during the PhD procedure before the supervisors already appointed have approved the PhD thesis, then with the consent of the other supervisors and the PhD student this supervisor can also be appointed as a supervisor.

The Dean may delegate the registration of the names of the supervisors and co-supervisors to the Graduate School.

#### *Article 3.3*

The supervisors and co-supervisors are also responsible for the content of the PhD thesis and their (contribution to the) supervision must be substantial. The intention of the regulations means that it is impossible for a professor of the University of Groningen to be associated with a PhD procedure *pro forma*.

#### *Article 3.4*

The *ius promovendi* is associated with being a professor. It lapses by operation of law (Article 9.19 WHW) five years after the honourable discharge of a professor; however, the five-year extension is only possible if the professor in question was appointed as a supervisor before being honourably discharged. For the PhD student this means that if they want to keep the same supervisor, they must try to ensure that their PhD thesis is approved by the Assessment Committee within those five years.

For associate professors with a PhD who have been awarded the *ius promovendi* by the Doctorate Board, the *ius promovendi* is connected to the duration of the allocation and to their appointment at the University of Groningen. An associate professor with a PhD and who has been granted the *ius promovendi* may not be a co-supervisor.

#### *Article 3.5*

The view of the Doctorate Board is that the group of supervisors and co-supervisors in its ultimate form should be an assessing body; because it can be expected from supervisors and co-supervisors that their assessment of the PhD thesis will be positive, the maximum number of supervisors and co-supervisors is three.



## **Chapter 4            The PhD thesis**

### *Articles 4.4 and 4.5*

The PhD will be assessed as a whole; that is, including any appendices and the foreword. In the case of a PhD thesis or other academic work, it is assumed that when the work is complete, all relevant information that can reasonably be known has been incorporated into the work. The Doctorate Board's guideline for this is a period of five years of validity for publications based on research which was terminated after the publication. A deviation from this guideline could, for example, occur in the case of a partial study in the PhD thesis. The PhD student can prevent this by updating the research (at this stage, the PhD student is in fact still working on it). Sometimes, several authors want to use the same publication for a PhD thesis. The criterion is whether or not it constitutes an essential and substantial share of the research project; it is up to the supervisor to decide. In principle, it does not matter whether the person in question is the first or subsequent author; this is why no particular order has to be used regarding who uses the publication first for their PhD.

### *Article 4.6*

The PhD candidate is expected to make the PhD thesis available as a printed book and in electronic form (via the repository of the University of Groningen). It must be readable and must have a clear structure. It must meet the standards of neatness and the book must not contain any inappropriate information such as advertisements etc. (except for a very modest reference – possibly with a logo – to a sponsor at the back). The propositions should be added to the PhD thesis as a separate document. The PhD student must also apply for two ISBNs via the University of Groningen Library – one for the printed version and one for the electronic version; this makes it easier to find the PhD thesis.

The ISBNs must be listed below each other on the reverse side of the title page (i.e. not the official 'UG PhD thesis title page') of the PhD thesis.

Following each ISBN, the relevant format (electronic or printed) must be indicated in brackets. For example:

ISBN 978-90-367-6311-0 (printed version) ISBN 978-90-367-6312-7 (electronic version).

ISBNs for this purpose can be requested free of charge from the University of Groningen Library.

### *Article 4.7*

The PhD student may not have the thesis printed until the Dean has given their permission. This permission is not given until the Assessment Committee has made a positive decision regarding permission for the PhD student to proceed to the PhD ceremony in the manner set out in Article 6.3. An application can be submitted via Hora Finita for full or partial reimbursement of the costs of the copies of the PhD thesis made available to the University of Groningen.

## **Chapter 5            Assessment of the PhD thesis by the supervisors**

### *Article 5.1*

Approval by the supervisors does not guarantee approval of the PhD thesis by the Assessment Committee. The supervisors and co-supervisors are expected to stand by their approval.

### *Article 5.2*

At a certain point in time, the draft of a PhD thesis must be finalized. If, after discussions between the supervisors and the PhD student, the time has come for the PhD student to submit the final version, then in accordance with these regulations the appointment of a supervisor or co-supervisor will lapse if that supervisor communicates in writing that they are withholding approval.

## **Chapter 6                    The Assessment Committee**

### *Article 6.1*

The independence and objectivity of the proposed members must be guaranteed.

### *Article 6.3*

Once the supervisors and co-supervisors have approved the PhD thesis, nothing stands in the way of prompt completion of the PhD procedure. Prior to approval, the main concern was to conduct research; after this point, the main concern is to assess the standard of the results. Those who have been asked to assess the work are expected to do so within a reasonable period, because – like all other examination candidates – PhD students cannot be expected to wait a long time for an assessment. The Doctorate Board considers four weeks reasonable and sufficient.

The Assessment Committee's opinion may lead it to recommend, via the Dean, that the PhD Examining Committee award the *cum laude* distinction. See Chapter 9.

## **Chapter 7                    The PhD Examining Committee**

### *Article 7.1*

The regulations refer to an Assessment Committee and a PhD Examining Committee. The reason behind the decision to have these two tiers was to maintain the 'defence' element of the thesis. After all, can a committee approve a PhD thesis and then reject it if the defence is insufficient (in the presence of that same committee)?

Can the defence actually still be insufficient if the PhD thesis has apparently not raised enough problems to prevent it being approved?

The purpose of adding new members (expansion of the Assessment Committee into a PhD Examining Committee) is to ensure that the defence will receive sufficient unbiased criticism at least from those members. A request in writing, stating the reasons, can be submitted to the Rector Magnificus to deviate from the provisions of Article 7.1.2.

### *Article 7.2*

The role of the Chair is mainly ceremonial and to maintain order. The Chair represents the Doctorate Board which rarely sits on the PhD Examining Committee itself (except in the case of honorary PhDs). The Chair is entitled to intervene should any irregularities (procedural or otherwise) arise.

### *Article 7.3*

This Article is about the independent advisor. This advisor is expected to be sufficiently specialized in the field of the research or part of that field that they are able to advise the Committee. The co-supervisor, on the other hand, should be seen as a supervisor who is mainly concerned with the research process. The independent advisor referred to here may play an important role during the assessment process.

### *Article 7.4*

Opposition from the audience is permitted provided that the Dean of the faculty is notified three weeks in advance.

## **Chapter 8                    The PhD ceremony**

### *General*

The Dean will ensure that invitations to attend the PhD ceremony and notice of the PhD ceremony are sent via Hora Finita in good time. The Dean can ask the faculty beadle or the secretarial staff of the Graduate School to perform this task. Obviously, the highest academic degree can only be awarded on the basis of individual academic qualities. While in the case of a double PhD there is only one PhD thesis, the standards that apply to single PhDs still apply in full.

## **Chapter 9**

### ***Cum laude***

#### *Article 9.1*

The term 'outstanding', in accordance with the assessment system used in the Netherlands, in Article 9.1.4 means that, in the opinion of the members of the Assessment Committee and PhD Examining Committee and the opinion of the referees, the PhD thesis is one of the best 5% of PhD theses within its field in the Netherlands.

## **Chapter 10            The certificate**

#### *Article 10.1*

The signatures of the Rector Magnificus (the term 'Rector Magnificus' refers to the position and not the holder – the certificate may also be signed by a person who deputizes for the Rector Magnificus as Chair of the PhD Examining Committee), the secretary of the PhD Examining Committee and the supervisors on the certificate determine its validity.

## **Chapter 11            Honorary PhDs**

The Doctorate Board awards honorary PhDs only to individuals who are either very academically distinguished or who have made major contributions to an academic field.

## **Chapter 14            Dispute settlement regulations**

#### *General*

Chapters 6 and 7, specifically Article 7.13 and Section 7.3, of the AWB apply. The Doctorate Board is the reviewing body referred to in those provisions.

#### *Article 14.2*

If in connection with the implementation of the PhD regulations a dispute arises which cannot be resolved between the parties, then of course one of the parties can first ask an individual such as a Dean, the director of the Graduate School or the Rector Magnificus to mediate before starting a formal objection procedure, taking into account the time limit for objections stated in the AWB.

#### *Article 14.5*

If a party takes a dispute to the administrative court, particular attention must be paid to the provisions of Chapter 8 of the AWB. Article 8.4.e of the AWB contains the following provision: no appeal can be lodged against a decision regarding an assessment of the knowledge or skills of a candidate or student who has been examined or tested in some other way on the subject in question, or regarding the establishment of examination or test questions or assignments.

### **N.B. Articles A.4.4 and B.4.4**

The assessment of the Graduate School Admissions Committee is a provisional assessment of the capabilities of the person in question, not an assessment of a PhD thesis as referred to in Article 6.4. The right to defend the PhD thesis in the presence of the PhD Examining Committee (the PhD ceremony within the meaning of Chapter 8) cannot be derived from it.

## Appendix 3

### A FEW RELEVANT ARTICLES OF THE ACT

#### **The Higher Education and Research Act (text valid as of 1-02-2018: *Wet op het Hoger Onderwijs en Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek*).**

##### **Article 9.10. Doctorate Board**

1. A university has a Doctorate Board. The Doctorate Board consists of professors.
2. The Doctorate Board consults with the Board of the University regarding the conferral of the degree referred to in Article 7.19.2.
3. The provisions regarding the duties, composition and method of appointment of the Doctorate Board are stipulated in the University of Groningen Administrative Regulations.

##### **Article 7.19. PhD regulations; honorary PhD**

1. Subject to the provisions on this matter contained in this Act, the Doctorate Board will establish PhD regulations. These regulations will regulate:
  - a. Procedure relating to preparations for the PhD and relating to the conferral of the PhD itself, including the duties and powers of everyone who is or may be involved in the PhD
  - b. Provisions relating to the settlement of disputes which may arise in relation to the preparations for the PhD and the conferral of the PhD itself
  - c. If applicable, procedure relating to Article 7.18.6.
2. The Doctorate Board is authorized, on the recommendation of the Board of the University, to award honorary PhDs to natural persons in recognition of outstanding achievements.

##### **Article 7.18. Conferral of the degree of PhD; admission to and organization of the PhD ceremony**

1. The Doctorate Board of a university, the Open University or an ideological university is authorized to award the degree of Doctor or Doctor of Philosophy on the basis of a PhD ceremony. The degrees of Doctor and Doctor of Philosophy are considered equal.
2. Admission to a PhD procedure will be granted to any person:
  - a. Who has been awarded a Master's degree on the basis of Article 7.10a.1 or 7.10a.2, and who
  - b. has demonstrated their ability to conduct independent academic research by writing a PhD thesis or developing a technological design, and
  - c. has satisfied the requirements set out in the PhD regulations referred to in Article 7.19.
3. In exceptional cases, the Doctorate Board may admit individuals to a PhD procedure who meet the requirements set out in Article 7.18.2b or 2c, but not those of Article 7.18.2a.
4. For each PhD procedure, the Doctorate Board will appoint a supervisor. A professor or another staff member of a university, ideological university or the Open University who has been awarded the degree of Doctor or Doctor of Philosophy, who, in the opinion of the Doctorate Board, has sufficient expertise to act as supervisor may be appointed as supervisor. The PhD ceremony will take place in the presence of the Board or a committee consisting of professors and other individuals appointed by the Board whom the Board considers sufficiently competent to sit on the committee, with due regard for the PhD regulations referred to in Article 7.19.
5. For the purpose of the application of Article 7.18.4, professors by special appointment at

public universities are regarded as professors of that university.

6. A university may award the degree of Doctor or Doctor of Philosophy jointly with one or more other Dutch or foreign universities on the basis of a PhD procedure. Articles 7.18.1 to 5 will apply *mutatis mutandis*. The universities can make more detailed arrangements regarding the implementation within the provisions of the PhD regulations.

#### **Article 7.10a Conferral of degrees**

1. The Board of the University will award the Bachelor's degree or the Master's degree to students who have passed the final examination of a Bachelor's degree programme or Master's degree programme post-initial Master's degree programme respectively as referred to in Article 7.3b, a. Depending on the field of the successful final assessment for a Bachelor's degree, a Master's degree or a post-initial Master's degree programme, the degree will be «of Arts» or «of Science». For a programme or group of programmes different additional words can be approved by ministerial order.
2. The Board of the University will award the Associate degree to anyone who has successfully passed the final examination of an associate degree programme in higher professional education, the Bachelor's degree programme to anyone who has successfully passed the final examination of a Bachelor's degree programme in higher professional education and the Master's degree to anyone who has successfully completed a Master's degree programme or a post-initial Master's degree programme as referred to in Article 7.3b, part b, in higher professional education. Depending on the field of the successful final assessment for a Bachelor's degree, a Master's degree or a post-initial Master's degree programme, the degree awarded shall be associated with the addition that has been tested with a positive result pursuant to Article 5a.2, Paragraph 2a(a).
3. The Board of the University may supplement the Associate degree and the Bachelor's or Master's degrees and the addition thereto by stating the discipline or professional field to which the degree relates.

#### **Article 7.3a. Associate, Bachelor's and Master's degree programmes**

1. Within university education, the following programmes are distinguished:
  - a. Bachelor's degree programmes
  - b. Master's degree programmes, following on from the Bachelor's degree programmes referred to in a.
2. Within higher professional education, the following programmes are distinguished:
  - a. Associate degree programmes
  - b. Bachelor's degree programmes and
  - c. Master's degree programmes, following on from the Bachelor's degree programmes referred to in b.

#### **Article 7.22. Using the titles Doctor, Doctor of Philosophy or Doctor *honoris causa* in references to the degree holder's name**

1. An individual upon whom a Doctor or Doctor of Philosophy degree has been conferred on the grounds of a PhD procedure as referred to in Article 7.18, or an individual upon whom an honorary Doctor's degree has been conferred by virtue of Article 7.19.2, is entitled to express that degree in references to their own name.
2. An individual who, pursuant to the Article 7.22.1, is entitled to express the degree referred to in that paragraph in references to their own name is also entitled to use the title Doctor of Doctor of Philosophy.
3. The degrees referred to in the first subsection, referred to as D or PhD, follow the individual's name. The titles mentioned in the second subsection are, abbreviated to Dr, placed before the name or, abbreviated to PhD, after the name.
4. The person in question will make a choice between adding the degree to their name in references as referred to in the first subsection or using the title as referred to in the second subsection.

**Article 18.37          Admission to PhD procedure for holders of ‘old style’  
certificates**

A person who met the criterion referred to in Article 7.18.2a on or before 31 August 2002, as those provisions were formulated on 31 August 2002, will have the same rights as a person who meets the criterion referred to in Article 7.18.2a.

## Appendix 4

# PROTOCOL FOR JOINT DOCTORATES WITH FOREIGN PARTNERS

### Introduction

Since the new Improved Governance (Higher Education) Act took effect, the conferral of a joint PhD in the Netherlands has become legally possible. This is a step further than the ‘double PhDs’ or ‘*cotutelle du thèse*’ that were previously possible. With a joint PhD, not only is the PhD programme jointly supervised and are the partners represented in the PhD Examining Committee, but the certificate is also given jointly.

The Faculties have expressed clear interest in arranging joint PhDs with other universities. However, it has also become apparent that there are many uncertainties about the Board’s requirements for approving a joint PhD programme and about the procedure for obtaining permission for a joint PhD. This protocol sets out the basic requirements for the approval of a double or joint PhD and the procedure which must be followed.

Joint supervision of PhD students does not necessarily lead to a joint PhD. For instance, ‘*cotutelle internationale de thèse*’ (international joint thesis supervision) is now very common and leads to a single or double degree, depending on the local rules of the partners.

In the Netherlands, the right to confer PhDs is restricted to universities and institutions which have been designated this right by law. Unlike for the initial degree programmes (Bachelor’s and Master’s), there is no accreditation procedure for PhD programmes. The university safeguards its PhD programmes through its own quality assurance system. PhD programmes and theses are included in research assessments and are externally reviewed. The universities discuss the standards and desired outcome targets at meetings of the Council of University Rectors (Association of Universities in the Netherlands). It is within this Council that self-regulation takes place. Under the Treaty of Maastricht (subsidiarity principle), teaching and research are matters that are regulated at the national level. The EU can promote collaboration and bring players to the table, for instance through the Erasmus Mundus or Marie-Curie programmes, but may not prescribe regulations for the organization of PhDs. As a result, within Europe and outside Europe there are many different views and rules relating to PhDs.

### Basic requirements for the approval of joint and double PhD

Before students start working towards a joint or double PhD, three essential aspects must be taken into account, namely:

- The partner(s)
- Contribution to and organizational context of the research
- Financial aspects

With respect to these three aspects, the following conditions apply.

#### Partners

A maximum of three partners can be involved in a joint PhD; as a rule there are two. This is regardless of whether or not the partners are part of a larger consortium.

Joint PhDs are entered into with another university, not with a consortium. It must also be clear which partner will act as the primary supervisor.

In the event of a double doctorate, there is one partner university. The supervisors from the University of Groningen and the partner university are on an equal footing and share the supervision workload equally (50/50).

The partners are chosen explicitly on the basis of their academic quality and advantages. An overview of the University of Groningen's 'preferred partners', which will be automatically approved, is currently being prepared. If a proposed partner is not on this list, that partner's quality and advantages must be substantiated in relation to the research project and to the Faculty's strategy when applying for the joint PhD. The Dean is responsible for this. The International Strategy and Relations department must approve the selected partner university before a contract for a joint or double doctorate is concluded.

Within the University of Groningen, the following parties are important in connection with a joint or double PhD: the candidate, the primary supervisor at the University of Groningen, the research institute, the Graduate School, the Dean, the Doctorate Board (which at the University of Groningen is the College of Deans) and the Rector and Board of the University.

The decision as to whether or not a PhD can be a joint PhD (that is, one certificate issued jointly by the partners) is made by the Board of the University. If the partner does not belong to the select group of 'preferred partners', the Dean may submit a request, stating the reasons, for a joint PhD to be given in a specific case. The outstanding quality of research in a certain area as well as the ranking of the partner university in general must be obvious.

#### Contribution to and organizational context of the research

If a joint or double PhD is to be conferred, the University of Groningen must make at least a proportionate contribution to the research project in relation to the number of partners. It has been agreed in the Council of Rectors that, in the case of a joint or double PhD involving two universities, each university should contribute 50% (as a basic principle). This means that, if possible, the PhD student will in fact be working in Groningen during this time.

If possible, the joint PhD should also form part of an existing joint research project. This ensures a clear framework for the joint PhD since specific agreements relating to research and collaboration are already in place.

#### Financial aspects

##### *Cost and revenue*

Clear prior agreements must be reached by the partners involved regarding the cost and revenue associated with the PhD procedure. The principle is that the procedure will at least be cost-neutral for the University of Groningen. These agreements are recorded in a joint or double PhD agreement (see *University of Groningen model on My University*).

##### *PhD premium*

In the Netherlands a PhD premium is awarded upon the successful completion of a PhD. The Ministry of Education has determined that in the case of a joint or double PhD, the PhD premium will only be awarded if the PhD ceremony actually takes place in the Netherlands. For all parties involved this may be a reason to hold the ceremony in the Netherlands.

However, there may be situations in which the partner has an interest in the PhD ceremony being held in their own country, in which case no PhD premium can be claimed.

Such cases are permitted provided the joint or double PhD does not result in a negative balance for the University of Groningen.



Exceptions to this rule are possible only if:

- The partner institution's worldwide ranking is considerably higher than that of the University of Groningen.
- The joint PhD is part of a major, prestigious project (such as the Erasmus Mundus projects or other major EU projects).
- There is some other clear quality advantage for the research group or the faculty (building up a long-term relationship, strengthening reputations etc.).

However, any shortfalls should be limited.

### **Application procedure for a double or joint PhD**

On My University (see link below), you can download a copy of the procedures for applying for and concluding an agreement for a joint or double doctorate programme.

<https://myuniversity.rug.nl/infonet/medewerkers/faciliteiten-voorzieningen/juridisch-advies/international-collaboration-agreements/double-joint-doctorate-agreements>

## Appendix 5

### PROTOCOL FOR THE PHD CEREMONY

Below is a summary of the protocol.

1. The PhD ceremony takes place in public, in the presence of the Doctorate Board and/or the PhD Examining Committee, at a fixed time when the candidate is admitted to the PhD ceremony.
2. PhD ceremonies are held in the University of Groningen's auditorium at Broerstraat 5 in Groningen. In unforeseen circumstances, PhD ceremonies may be held elsewhere.
3. The discussion is a dispassionate academic discussion. No disturbances from the audience other than opposition are permitted.
4. During the PhD ceremony the Chair, the supervisor(s), the members and guests of the PhD Examining Committee will wear the clothing prescribed by protocol:
  - Professors: gown and cap; women must wear sober clothing and black shoes and men a dark suit, white shirt with a sober tie and black shoes.
  - Other committee members:
    - women: sober clothing and black shoes
    - men: dark suit, white shirt with sober tie and black shoes
  - External professors are invited to wear their own gowns and caps. The university also makes a limited number of gowns and caps available for professors.
  - PhD candidates and the two assistants ('paranymphs') should also wear appropriate ceremonial attire. For men, preferably a dress suit with white shirt and white bow-tie and for women, clothing in subdued colours; a long skirt is not compulsory.
5. Before the PhD ceremony, the Doctorate Board (at the University of Groningen, the College of Deans), chaired by the Rector Magnificus or his deputy, meet in the Faculty Room in question. In this meeting, the Rector Magnificus draws up a list of the opponents, agrees after consulting with them on an order in which they will speak, divides the speaking time and designates a secretary for the committee.
6. The PhD student and both assistants must be present about 30 minutes before the beginning of the ceremony. The beadle (*pedel*) waits for the PhD student and the assistants in the foyer of the Academy Building and takes them to one of the Faculty Rooms. The beadle then gives a short introduction to the protocol to the PhD ceremony. If necessary they can change in this room, which is locked during the ceremony.
7. A few minutes before the ceremony begins, the beadle takes the Chair and members of the PhD Examining Committee to the auditorium, followed by any other professors attending, who are wearing their gowns. The primary supervisor walks on the right side of the Rector Magnificus.
8. The beadle announces the arrival of the Board in the customary way at the entrance to the auditorium:

'The Doctorate Board'.

9. The members of the Doctorate Board, the retired professors and the guests take their seats; the Rector Magnificus and the secretary behind the left-hand table, the supervisor behind the right-hand table, the opponents as much as possible directly behind those tables in the other seats, the other individuals in the second and subsequent rows behind the two tables. Caps are taken off.
10. Then the beadle goes to fetch the PhD student and the assistants and brings them to the auditorium. Order: beadle, first assistant, PhD student, second assistant. One of the assistants may carry the PhD thesis, a writing pad and pen to make notes and possibly some literature that the PhD student may wish to consult during the discussion.
11. In the auditorium, they stand together (with the PhD student in the middle) opposite the Rector Magnificus and the Doctorate Board and bow simultaneously, once to the left, then once to the right.

12. Then the Rector Magnificus (wearing his cap) stands up and says:

‘Dear candidate, the Doctorate Board of this University, represented by us, has read your PhD thesis and the accompanying propositions and we are ready to hear you defend it. Please take your seat’.

The Rector Magnificus sits down and takes off his cap.

13. The PhD student takes a seat behind the small table. The documents brought by one of the assistants for the PhD student are placed on the table. The assistants take their seats on the chairs reserved for them, the first to the left and to the right of the centre aisle.
14. Then the defence takes its place, with the Rector Magnificus or their deputy acting as chair.

Rector Magnificus:

‘Does anyone in the audience wish to exchange ideas with the PhD student? If so, please take your seat behind the blue table. I call upon you to speak.’

After the opponent has asked their question and explained it briefly if necessary, the Rector Magnificus says:

‘Dear candidate, I call upon you to answer the question asked concisely’.

If no one in the audience wants to ask a question or after the question asked by the member of the audience has been answered, the Rector Magnificus says:

‘I now call upon Professor ...’ (etc.)

A few minutes before time runs out, the beadle enters the auditorium and stands in the doorway. After exactly 45 minutes he says in a clear voice:

‘Hora finita’.

The discussion then taking place is concluded as quickly as possible. Then the Rector Magnificus says:

‘The Doctorate Board will withdraw for some time to consider its decision’.

15. The Rector Magnificus will then suspend the ceremony so that the Doctorate Board can consider its verdict. Escorted by the beadle, the PhD Examining Committee and the

other members of the procession leave the auditorium. These other members attend the deliberations of the PhD Examining Committee as observers, unless the Rector Magnificus decides then and there that the deliberations will be closed. The PhD student and assistants are escorted back to the Faculty Room by a member of staff of the Porter's Office.

16. In the course of the deliberations, a decision is made regarding the PhD. If a proposal has been made to award the PhD with the *cum laude* distinction, a written ballot is held. Only the official members of PhD Examining Committee may vote. The Chair, the supervisor(s) and co-supervisor(s) and the specialists may not vote. The proposal is rejected if more than one member votes against it. Members must vote either in favour of or against the proposal. Abstentions are not permitted. At the end of the deliberations, the certificate is signed by the Rector Magnificus, the secretary and the supervisor(s).
17. After the deliberations, which must be as brief as possible, the beadle escorts the Doctorate Board back to the auditorium. When all have taken their seats, the beadle also escorts the PhD student and the assistants back into the auditorium. They walk to the tables at which the Doctorate Board are sitting and stand in a V formation (PhD student just in front of the assistants).
18. As soon as they are standing in front of the Board, the Rector Magnificus puts their cap on and says, standing:

'Dear candidate, the Doctorate Board of this University, represented by us, after reading your PhD thesis and the accompanying propositions and after hearing you defend it, has decided to award you the doctorate at the University of Groningen which you desire.'

If the *cum laude* distinction has been awarded, the Rector Magnificus adds:

'And because of ... (for example, your exceptionally meritorious PhD thesis (and your excellent defence)), the highest distinction from the faculty for your studies, namely *cum laude*.'

19. The Rector Magnificus continues:

'Your (primary) supervisor, Professor ....., is authorized to award you this honour in the customary fashion.'

The Rector Magnificus sits down and takes their cap off.

20. The supervisor puts their cap on, stands up and says:  
'I am happy to accept the task assigned to me by the Rector Magnificus.'

After these words, the supervisor takes off their cap to speak to the PhD student, starting as follows:

'However, before performing this task, I would like to address a few personal words to you.'

This is followed by the laudatio (maximum of six minutes), given by the supervisor.

When this is finished, the supervisor puts their cap back on, invites everyone to stand and, when everyone has risen, says the following:

‘By virtue of the powers vested in us by law, in accordance with the decision of the Doctorate Board of this University, I promote you, ..... to the title of Doctor and grant you all the rights associated by law or custom with a doctorate at the University of Groningen.’ Do you, as a Doctor, promise to act in accordance with the Netherlands Code of Conduct for Scientific Practice both now and in the future?’

The PhD student replies: ‘I promise.’

After the supervisor has asked those present to take their seats again, the supervisor remains standing and continues:

‘Now that I have performed the task assigned to me, let me be the first to congratulate you on your PhD (with distinction) and to address you as “Doctor”.’

After congratulating the new Doctor, the supervisor returns to their seat, sits down and takes off their cap.

The Rector Magnificus stands up, puts on their cap and says:

‘As proof of this PhD, (awarded with distinction), I will present you with this certificate, signed by the Rector Magnificus, secretary and supervisor(s) and sealed with the Grand Seal of the University. But before doing so, learned Sir/Madam, it is my pleasant duty to congratulate you, also on behalf of the Doctorate Board of this University, on the degree you have been awarded.’

(Shakes hands with the new Doctor, is given the certificate by the secretary, hands it to the new Doctor and returns to his seat).

Rector Magnificus: ‘I now declare this ceremony closed.’ (Taps the gavel).

Then the beadle escorts the Doctorate Board to the reception area or, if the reception is not being held in the Academy Building, back to the Faculty Room. A staff member of the Porter’s Office will then escort the new Doctor, the assistants and the family to the reception area or to the Faculty Room, if the reception is being held elsewhere.

21. In principle, the ceremony is conducted in Dutch. However, if one or more members of the PhD Examining Committee do not speak Dutch, the majority of the ceremony takes place in English. At the supervisor’s request, the ceremony may be conducted completely in English. This request must be submitted to the Dean.

During the PhD ceremony, the following forms of address will be used:

Chair: ‘Honourable Rector’/‘Honourable Rector Magnificus’

Supervisor: ‘Highly learned supervisor’

Co-supervisor: ‘Very learned opponent’

Professors: ‘Highly learned opponent’

Other members of the committee and experts: ‘Very learned opponent’

PhD student: ‘Dear candidate’

### **Reception**

A reception may be held after the PhD ceremony.

## Appendix 6

### PHD TIMELINE

Action	Timeline	Completed by supervisor/PhD student	Completed by Doctorate Board
Register for PhD programme	Registration after admission to the PhD programme	Submit request to Admissions Committee	
Draw up training and supervision plan	As soon as possible after being admitted to PhD programme, at the latest before starting the PhD programme	PhD student and supervisors draw up TSP and submit it, signed, for approval to the director of the GS, at the latest at the start of the PhD programme	Dean signs TSP and takes care of registration in Hora Finita
Approval of PhD thesis by supervisor(s) + proposal for composition of Assessment Committee	At least <b>3.5 months</b> before intended date of PhD ceremony	Supervisor(s) and co-supervisor(s) register approval in Hora Finita	On the recommendation of the primary supervisor, the Dean sets up Assessment Committee and appoints its members
Discuss date of PhD ceremony	At least <b>3.5 months</b> before intended date of PhD ceremony	Arrange provisional date with PhD degree registration office	Register provisional date
Apply for ISBNs	At least <b>2 months</b> before intended date of PhD ceremony	PhD student	Via University of Groningen Library website
Approval of propositions	At least <b>2 months</b> before proposed PhD ceremony date	Supervisors register approval of propositions in Hora Finita	
Approval of title page	At least <b>2 months</b> before proposed PhD ceremony date	PhD student submits title page to PhD degree registration	PhD degree registration office approves title page Via Hora Finita

Announcement of Assessment Committee's decision regarding admission to PhD ceremony	At least <b>8 weeks</b> before proposed date of PhD ceremony		Dean takes care of registration via Hora Finita, which then notifies PhD student, supervisor, PhD degree registration office and director of GS. PhD thesis can then be printed and date of PhD ceremony is finalized
Possible request for <i>cum laude</i> distinction by supervisor or Assessment Committee	At least <b>8 weeks</b> before proposed date of PhD ceremony	Supervisor/Assessment Committee submits request to Faculty Board with recommendations for external	Dean takes care of registration in Hora Finita and approached external referees. This is automatically registered at the PhD degree registration office
Opinion of external referees regarding <i>cum laude</i> registered in Hora Finita	At least <b>2 weeks</b> before proposed date of PhD ceremony	Dean receives referees' opinion via Hora Finita	PhD degree registration office is notified of opinion via Hora Finita.
Send information regarding publicity	At least <b>5 weeks</b> before proposed date of PhD ceremony	PhD student submits required information via	
Send printed copies of PhD thesis, accompanying propositions and title pages to PhD degree	At least <b>3 weeks</b> before proposed date of the PhD ceremony	PhD student	
Send printed copy of PhD thesis and accompanying propositions to	At least <b>3 weeks</b> before proposed date of PhD ceremony	PhD student	
Send electronic versions of PhD thesis, accompanying propositions and abstracts for non-experts and	At least <b>3 weeks</b> before proposed date of the PhD ceremony	PhD candidate supplies required information via Hora Finita	
PHD CEREMONY in the presence of the whole			

## Appendix 7

### TITLE PAGE TEMPLATE

Please note: in the Dutch title of the PhD thesis the words are written in lower case except for the first word and any names.



rijksuniversiteit  
 groningen

-----**Title of PhD thesis**-----

Subtitle (if applicable)

**PhD thesis**

to obtain the degree of Doctor at the University of  
 Groningen  
 on the authority of the  
 Rector Magnificus, Prof. E. Sterken  
 and in accordance with a decision by the Doctorate Board.

This thesis will be defended in public on

.... (day) ....(month)....20.... by.....

-----**name**-----

(the PhD student's name in full)

born on ----(date in full)---in -----(place of  
 birth)-----  
 and country of birth if this is not the Netherlands



**Supervisor(s)**

name(s) of the supervisor(s) with initials and full titles without reference to universities

If applicable:

**Co-supervisor(s):**

name(s) of the co-supervisor(s) with initials and full titles without reference to universities

**Assessment committee:**

Names of the members of the Assessment Committee with initials and full titles, without reference to universities

Please note: titles are written as follows:

1. Prof.
2. Dr
3. MSc, MA, LL.M or PhD are written after the name of the individual in question.
4. etc.

## **Appendix 8**

### **EXAMPLE LICENCE AGREEMENT**

#### **FOR NON-EXCLUSIVE PUBLICATION IN DIGITAL FORM OF A PHD THESIS DEFENDED AT THE UNIVERSITY OF GRONINGEN VIA THE UNIVERSITY OF GRONINGEN REPOSITORY**

With due observance of the supplement to Article 4.7 of the PhD regulations of the University of Groningen.

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#### **PhD student**

- Agrees to make their PhD thesis available worldwide in digital form; this availability is non-exclusive.
- Declares that the PhD thesis is their own work.
- Declares that the electronic version is identical in content to the printed edition and includes all parts not included in the printed edition for technical and/or logistical reasons (CDs, video, etc.).
- Declares that, to the best of their knowledge, their PhD thesis does not infringe the intellectual property rights of others.
- Declares that if their intellectual property rights to the PhD thesis are transferred to a third party, this third party will stipulate that the latter will maintain the licence and take over this agreement.
- Grants this licence for an indefinite period.
- Waives the right to terminate this licence by rescinding or dissolution.
- Declares that they, for any contribution based on work sponsored or subsidised by an institution or organization other than the University of Groningen, have complied with all obligations in respect of publication imposed by this sponsor, institution or organization.
- Declares that they have the right to grant permission as set forth in this licence, subject to the exceptions specified on the next page.

#### **University of Groningen Library.**

- Declares that it will not transfer the licence to a third party.
- Declares that it has received the digital copy of the PhD thesis.
- Will convert the PhD thesis into other file formats or media for the purpose of ensuring future digital accessibility, all this without affecting the content.
- Will make one or more back-up copies of this PhD thesis and keep them for the sake of security and preservation of the files.
- Will, if the publisher objects to the expiry of the embargo referred to on the next page, indemnify the PhD student against damage claims by the publisher in this respect.

## Exceptions to the licence agreement

### *Explanatory note*

- *If you fully agree to the non-exclusive publication, you can skip points 1 to 4 and sign immediately.*
- *If you have any questions, please send an email to: dissertations@rug.nl*

1. With regard to the material in chapter(s)\_\_\_\_\_ the PhD student (partially) does not own any intellectual property rights and/or copyright. For this material, they have the full permission of the rightsholder to grant this licence to the University of Groningen. The text or content of these chapters clearly indicates the material and its origin.
2. The material in chapter(s)\_\_\_\_\_ has been or will be submitted for publication to a publisher within 12 months. In anticipation of acceptance by a publisher, the University of Groningen Library has placed this material under embargo for one year. Unless the author, due to agreements made with a publisher, makes further agreements with the University of Groningen Library, the Library shall make the material in the aforementioned chapters available after the agreed embargo period.
3. The material in chapter(s)\_\_\_\_\_ has been published or accepted for publication by a publisher. The agreements made with the publisher (a copy of which is attached to this agreement) make it necessary to impose an embargo on this material for one year. If the PhD thesis also appears as a commercial edition, a copy of the agreement with the publisher, in which the publisher gives permission for the publication of the electronic version, must be enclosed.
4. If, due to agreements entered into, it is desirable to keep the material under embargo for a period exceeding 1 year after the PhD ceremony, the Rector Magnificus of the University of Groningen will set a reasonable duration of the embargo bearing in mind the agreements entered into and any explanation thereof provided by the PhD candidate. In such cases, PhD students must submit a written and reasoned request to the Rector Magnificus of the University of Groningen along with this agreement. If necessary, such a request may also be submitted at a later date via: dissertations@rug.nl.

### **PhD student**

Name: .....

Title of thesis: .....

Date of PhD ceremony: .....

Place of signature: .....

Date of signature: .....

Signature: .....

### **The University of Groningen, on behalf of the Board of the University**

Name: Ms Marjolein Nieboer (Director of the University of Groningen Library)

Place of signature: Groningen

Date of signature: .....

Signature: .....

## **Appendix 9**

### **PUBLICITY**

The media would like to be informed about the most important results of your PhD research. On this basis, journalists can determine whether and how they will report on your PhD thesis. The University of Groningen considers it important to meet the identified needs of the media. In addition, the Higher Education and Research Act (WHW) emphasises knowledge transfer as an important task of a university.

Therefore, the PhD student must upload various abstracts and answer a questionnaire in Hora Finita (under the Communication tab) no later than five weeks before the date of the PhD ceremony for the Communication Office.

The Communication Office uses this information to:

1. Determine whether it is desirable to focus attention on your research by issuing a separate press release. This happens if your research has news value for a wide audience. If this is the case, the Communication Office will contact you. The Communication Office writes this press release in consultation with you. You do not have to write this text yourself.
2. Include a short report on the main results of your research in the weekly newsletter for the media. This report will also be written by the Communication Office based on your abstract and the answers to the questionnaire in Hora Finita.

Publicity for medical PhD ceremonies is arranged by the Press Office of the University Medical Centre Groningen (UMCG). They will receive your questionnaire and abstracts via the University of Groningen's Communication Office.