

REGULATIONS FOR OBTAINING A JOINT DOCTORATE

Laid down on 10 March 2011

As a result of the entry into force of the Strengthening of Governance in Higher Education Act (*Wet Versterking Bestuur*), Utrecht University now has the opportunity to provide joint doctorates in collaboration with other Dutch or international universities. Prior permission from the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees is required.

With regard to the funding of joint doctorates, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science stated the following in a letter to the universities:

"Funding is based on a predefined amount per doctoral degree obtained in the Netherlands. In the case of a joint doctorate involving more than one Dutch university which is funded by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, the universities involved will be funded proportionally. In the case of a joint doctorate involving a Dutch university and an international university, the Dutch university will receive the full amount. This arrangement is conditional upon the actual doctoral study taking place in the Netherlands. This will be verified by an accountant. The objective is not to fund joint doctorates provided by a Dutch university which is funded by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and one that is not."

These Regulations stipulate the procedure for obtaining permission to pursue a joint doctorate at Utrecht University and the conditions the joint doctorate will have to meet.

1. Permission for a joint doctorate shall be applied for with the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees, preferably before starting the doctoral research but no later than two years prior to the doctoral thesis defence ceremony.
2. The application for permission to pursue a joint doctorate shall include the following:
 - Further information about the joint doctorate including the way it has been set up and the partners collaborating in the joint doctorate;
 - A letter of approval by the Dean;
 - A Partnership Agreement between the partners in which are laid down the quality criteria the joint degree will have to meet (in conformity with Articles 8 and 11 of the Utrecht University Doctoral Degree Regulations), and the stipulations regarding the doctoral degree track (including the doctoral thesis defence ceremony, composition of the Assessment Committee and the Doctoral Examination Committee, Cum Laude designation, etc.).

The conditions for pursuing a joint doctorate are the following:

1. No joint doctorates will be pursued without the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees' prior approval with regard to the partner institute involved in the collaboration.
2. The partner institute will have to have an outstanding scientific reputation in the relevant field of expertise. Preferred partners are institutes of existing and preferably formalised collaboration (e.g. LERU partners).
3. The training and supervision of the doctoral candidate shall be carefully discussed with the partner institute and the content of the doctoral research shall be laid down in writing before the start of the research.
4. The doctoral candidate shall be registered in time with the universities involved in his or her supervision. In Utrecht, the doctoral candidate will also have to be registered in Hora Est!
5. The partners will set and lay down in writing the conditions for the thesis and the thesis defence.
6. The partners will agree on and lay down in writing the way the thesis defence ceremony will be organised. A once-only ceremony in the presence of the Doctoral Examination Committee consisting of representatives of the partner institutes involved is preferred.
7. The partners will agree on and lay down in writing the aspects of the design of the doctoral degree certificate. A doctoral degree certificate from the university where the actual defence ceremony will take place is preferred, in combination with a separate certificate referring to the joint doctorate and stating the partner institutes involved. In the event that more than one certificate is required the certificates shall refer to the other certificates in order to make clear that a joint doctorate has been obtained.