

Admission to doctoral programme without a NL Master's degree or equivalent

Procedure Graduate School of Geosciences, adopted by FB on 22 February 2022

Translation of the adopted proposal in Dutch; in case of any differences between the Dutch text and the English translation, the Dutch text prevails.

1. Background

The *Doctoral Degree Regulations* of the UU and the *Higher Education and Research Act* state that in special cases, someone who does not possess a Master's degree can still be admitted to the doctoral programme. This concerns people who do not have a Dutch Master's degree and who do not have an equivalent degree¹ either. Below is a proposal for a process description for the admission of such PhD candidates within the GSG.

2. Framework

The framework is formed by:

- Higher Education and Research Act;
- Doctoral Degree Regulations of the UU including an accompanying letter from the Rector.

The relevant passages are included in the appendix.

3. Proposed procedure

The proposed supervisor shall submit a request for admission to the doctoral programme to the dean or a person appointed on his/her behalf. This request consists of

- curriculum vitae of the prospective PhD candidate, including relevant diplomas;
- thesis;
- motivation of the intended supervisor.

The dean or a person appointed on her/his behalf submits the request to the Board of Examiners of the most relevant department that runs the PhD programme in which the candidate wishes to participate.

The Board of Examiners advises on the admissibility of the candidate to the doctoral programme. If necessary, the examination committee may seek the advice of another Board of Examiners that is best suited to the candidate's educational background. The Board of Examiners gives its advice on the basis of the information provided and any interviews with the prospective PhD candidate and supervisor. In their advice, the Board of Examiners takes into account the alignment of the candidate's educational background with the learning outcomes of the Masters of the Graduate School of Geosciences. This can lead to a recommendation to follow one or more courses from the Master programmes of the Graduate School of Geosciences.

The dean then submits a file to the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees. This file consists of

- curriculum vitae of the prospective PhD candidate including relevant diplomas;
- motivation of the intended supervisor;
- advice from the consulted Board of Examiners;
- assessment of the dean and proposal for a decision for the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees.

The Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees assesses the file and takes a decision on the admission. The office of the faculty in question informs the prospective PhD candidate and prospective supervisor of the decision.

¹ The Admissions Office can be consulted for advice on the equivalence of the diploma..

Appendix. Relevant passages from the Doctoral Degree Regulations of the UU

From Doctoral Degree Regulations Utrecht University (adopted on 28 January 2020)

Source: <https://www.uu.nl/en/organisation/phd-programmes/practical-matters/regulations-and-forms>

Article 4 Request for admission / Exemption

1. At the start of the research that will serve as the basis for their doctoral studies, PhD candidates shall submit to the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees a request for admission to the doctoral programme. This request may not be submitted without prior approval of the Dean.
2. At the applicant's request, the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees may grant admission to the doctoral programme to anyone who does not possess the required degree in order to be admitted, but who does fulfil the provisions of Section 7.18, Subsection 2 under b and c of the WHW., provided the applicant can clearly prove to have sufficient knowledge. This request shall be accompanied by a recommendation from a professor at Utrecht University.
3. [Paragraph 3 not relevant here]

Section 7.18 WHW. Conferral of the degrees of Doctor or Doctor of Philosophy; admission to the pursuit of a doctorate and structure of the process

1. The Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees of a research university, the Open University or a university set up on an ideological basis shall be authorised to confer the degrees of Doctor or Doctor of Philosophy upon completion of the doctoral degree process. The degrees of Doctor and Doctor of Philosophy are equivalent.
2. The pursuit of a doctoral degree shall be open to anyone who:
 - a. has earned the degree of Master pursuant to Section 7.10a, Subsections 1 or 2.
 - b. has written a doctoral thesis to prove their competence for the independent pursuit of science, or, as the case may be, has manufactured a doctoral design, and
 - c. has satisfied the requirements set out in the regulations pertaining to the conferral of doctorates as referred to in Section 7.19.
3. In exceptional cases, the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees may grant admission to the doctoral degree process to persons who meet the second paragraph under b and c but do not meet that paragraph under a.

From letter of the rector accompanying communication about the new doctoral degree regulations (dd 19-02-2020)

Source: <https://www.uu.nl/sites/default/files/ubd-letter-rector-procedures-doctoral-degree-studies-en.pdf>

3.e International diplomas

In the event of a PhD candidate holding an international diploma, the supervisor may ask either the Admissions Office or Nuffic for advice on the candidate's entitlement to admission to the doctoral programme at Utrecht University.

3.f Diplomas that do not directly entitle the holder to admission to the doctoral programme

If there is no clear decision as to the entitlement to admission to the doctoral programme, the diploma will be submitted to the Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees for obtaining a final decision, prior to the start of the doctoral programme. A dossier will be prepared which will contain a substantiation by the prospective supervisor and an opinion by the Board of Examiners regarding the level of education of the candidate.