



Results PhD Supervisor survey 2023

Graduate School of Life Sciences
v. 0.1

www.uu.nl/lifesciences

bit.ly/PhDCourseCentre

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Survey response

- The emailaddresses of (co-)supervisors were obtained from MyPhD d.d. March 1st 2023.
- The survey was successfully delivered to 1,892 addresses.
- The survey was open from May 10-June 10 2023.
- We received 359 complete responses (19%).



Number of responses per faculty / institute

Affiliation	total #	% of total
Vet. Med.	38	11
- promotor	17	
- copromotor	19	
- both	2	

Affiliation	total #	% of total
Science	49	14
- promotor	21	
- copromotor	26	
- both	2	

Affiliation	total #	% of total
UMC Utrecht	137	38
- promotor	36	
- copromotor	88	
- both	13	

Affiliation	total #	% of total
Máxima	32	9
- promotor	9	
- copromotor	23	
- both	0	

Affiliation	total #	% of total
Hubrecht	3	1
- promotor	0	
- copromotor	3	
- both	0	

Affiliation	total #	% of total
Westerdijk	2	1
- promotor	1	
- copromotor	1	
- both	0	

Affiliation	total #	% of total
RIVM	6	2
- promotor	1	
- copromotor	5	
- both	0	

Affiliation	total #	% of total
Other	92	26
- promotor	27	
- copromotor	58	
- both	7	



Number of (co-)supervisors who participate in a particular PhD programme

	Vet. Med.	Science	UMC Utrecht	Total
Biomembranes	1	4	2	7
Clinical & Experimental Neuroscience	2	0	25	27
Cancer, Stem Cells & Developmental Biology	1	4	13	18
Clinical & Translational Oncology	1	0	8	9
Cardiovascular Research	0	0	16	16
Computational Life Sciences	3	4	2	9
Drug Innovation	1	15	4	20
Environmental Biology	6	7	0	13
Epidemiology	10	0	18	28
Infection & Immunity	16	6	21	43
Life Sciences Education Research	1	2	12	15
Molecular Life Sciences	2	11	1	14
Medical Imaging	0	0	10	10
Regenerative Medicine	6	2	19	27
Toxicology & Environmental Health	3	0	0	3
Not in a programme	9	4	18	31
I don't know	2	2	10	14
I didn't know the GSLs had programmes	0	2	3	5



Number of programmes in which a (co-)supervisor participates

Number of programmes (including 'not in a programme') to which the PhD candidates of a (co-)supervisor are registered in MyPhD. Entries of supervisors whose PhD's were not in a programme at all were excluded.

# programmes	1	2	3	4
	279	66	28	1



What goes well?

Top 9 of the topics mentioned (75% of total)

Topic	# mentions
Good course programme	65
Annual progress meetings	62
Clear guidelines, PhD & Supervisor Guide	52
Keeping track of progress	48
Clear procedures for thesis defence	31
Training for supervisors	27
Networking opportunities, communities, retreat for PhD's	23
Involvement of independent advisor / mentor	18
Interaction with other supervisors	18



What needs improvement?

Top 10 of the topics mentioned (61% of total)

Topic	# mentions
(Enforcing) annual progress meetings with independent advisor	27
Information for new and existing supervisors	32
MyPhD	19
Information for PhD candidates	7
Support when things do not go well /exchange with other supervisors	6
Guidelines on number of papers	6
Help for PMC supervisors	5
Procedures for / help with contract extensions	5
Track does not enough freedom, students treated as children / flexibility in training programme	5
Tracking progress	5



Proposed action points

1. Provision of up to date information on the GSLs to new and existing PhD supervisors. Also: division of tasks between School and faculty / institute.
2. Enforcement of annual progress meetings with the independent advisor / mentor.
3. Transform MyPhD into an effective management and progress tracking tool accessible to the GSLs, for both quantitative and qualitative data (in progress).



① Informing new and existing PhD supervisors

New supervisors

- Onboarding events of faculties (in progress)
- Via letters of appointment to professors
- Meet up with newly-appointed professors ()



① Informing new and existing PhD supervisors

Newsletter for PhD supervisors

- Frequency: 3 x / year or whenever needed
- Topics: events and training opportunities for supervisors and PhD candidates, nice to know, new courses for PhD candidates, events for PhD candidates, new guidelines from UU / UMC or GSLs if appropriate. E.g. new Doctoral Degree Regulations, new guidelines for recruitment of international PhD candidates etc, annual report on PhD domain, etc
- Issued by the GSLs i.c.w. the faculties (heads of research / vice deans of research / HR / deans)

F2F Information event + lunch

- Frequency: 3 x / year
- Potential topics: PhD programmes, TSA, PhD Course Centre, MyPhD, toolkit for supervisors, progress meetings, available support and whatever comes to the table.



② Enforcement of annual progress meetings with the independent advisor / mentor

- Inform new and existing supervisors how this needs to be executed (see action point 1): involvement of independent advisor / mentor, use of existing forms for progress reports.
- Solid process for administration, monitoring and reporting to the deans!
- ...

Responsibility: GSLs i.c.w. faculties/research offices

Requirements:

- Results of working group on independent advisor (in progress)
- Registration and monitoring must be arranged via MyPhD



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MyPhD

- MyPhD should be a database in which key actions during the PhD journey are administered (e.g. results of progress meetings).
- It should be easily accessible and interrogatable for the research offices, the PhD Team and PhD programme coordinators.