

REGULATIONS FOR OBTAINING A JOINT DOCTORATE

Adopted on 10 March 2011 and adjusted on 18 May 2016

As a result of the entry into force of the Enhanced Governance Powers (Higher Education) Act (*Wet Versterking Bestuur*), Utrecht University is now entitled (based on Article 7.18, paragraph 6 of the Higher Education and Research Act (*WHW*)) to provide a 'Joint Doctorate' in collaboration with one or more Dutch or international universities, based on the doctoral candidate's completion of the doctoral degree study. 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 programme 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 first doctoral thesis defence ceremony.
2. The application for permission to pursue a Joint Doctorate programme shall include the following:
 - Further information about the Joint Doctorate programme, including the way it has been set up and information about the partner or partners collaborating in the programme;
 - A letter of approval with the Joint Doctorate programme by the Dean;
 - A Memorandum of Understanding between the partners in which the quality criteria which the joint degree will have to meet are laid down (in conformity with Articles 9 and 12 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 programme 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 institutes involved in the collaboration. These are preferably partners the collaboration with whom has been formalised at the central organisational level (e.g. LERU and Utrecht University Partners). The quality of the partners will have to be evidenced: they must have an outstanding scientific reputation in the relevant field of expertise.
2. A Joint Doctorate programme is understood to mean a long-term doctoral degree collaboration between more than one cohort of doctoral candidates and the participation of at least two doctoral candidates.
3. In case of unfairness or unreasonableness of a serious nature, the Dean involved can submit a request for an individual Joint Doctorate programme with the Board to the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees. No commitments will be offered to the partner or partners involved with regard to the decision on the request by Board for the Conferral of Doctoral Degrees.
4. The training and supervision of the doctoral candidate shall be carefully discussed with the partner institute or institutes and the content of the doctoral research shall be laid down in writing before the start of the research.
5. The doctoral candidate shall be promptly registered with the universities involved in their supervision. In Utrecht, the doctoral candidate will be registered in Hora Est!
6. The partners will determine and lay down in writing the conditions for the thesis and the thesis defence.
7. The partners will determine 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.

8. The partners will determine and lay down in writing the aspects of the design of the doctoral degree certificate. A Joint Doctoral degree certificate is preferred. In exceptional cases only, a degree certificate will be issued by the university where the actual defence ceremony will take place, 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 it clear that a Joint Doctorate has been obtained.