

# Doctoral education guidelines

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## Introduction

All UT PhD candidates are required to complete a doctoral education programme of 30 EC, where 1 EC equals to 28 hours of study, including preparation and self-study. To plan their doctoral education programme, PhDs should consult the [University of Twente PhD Profile](#) and our [Exit Qualifications](#).

Within the first 3 months of the PhD trajectory, every candidate must plan their 30 EC doctoral education program in consultation with their promotor(s). The planned education activities are listed in the Training and Supervision Plan (T&SP). Throughout the PhD trajectory, the candidate completes the educational activities, with a recommendation to take the mandatory courses in the first year. The T&SP can be reviewed and amended, for example, during the annual assessment interviews. The T&SP and completed courses and activities must be recorded in the PhD monitoring system and endorsed by the promotor.

The 30 EC can be earned through formal courses, on-the-job training or informal learning. Formal learning options include courses, Capita Selectas, summer/winter schools, workshops, online courses and MOOCs. On-the-job learning can include activities such as laboratory training. Informal learning can include teaching, supervision/coaching, peer-reviewing of articles for scientific journals or conferences, coordinating research events, research acquisition, and active participation (e.g. presenting or giving feedback) at research group/department seminars or colloquia, as well as oral/poster presentations at conferences. The activities can be completed at UT (see below) but also at other universities, institutes, (inter)national research schools, conferences, etc. Training requirements and courses offered by project partners or sponsors can be included too.

## Guideline overview:

A doctoral education programme is always personalized. The main principle for planning the 30 EC doctoral education programme is:

- 15 ( $\pm$ 5) EC in scientific disciplinary skills, such as those offered by faculties, institutes or research schools.
- 15 ( $\pm$ 5) EC in academic skills, including professional, reporting and presentation skills, referred to as 'generic' or 'transferable' skills. These academic skills can be developed in various ways; the courses and workshops offered by the UT are particularly beneficial. You can find them in the [Course finder](#).

The following five academic skills activities are mandatory for all PhD's:

1. PhD Intake Briefing and PhD/EngD Introductory Workshop, including the Academic Integrity course (1.5 EC);
2. Data management course, faculty specific (1 EC);
3. Academic Publishing course (2 EC);
4. Presentation Skills course (2.0 EC);
5. Scientific Information course (0.5 EC).

To request exemptions from parts of the education programme, the promotor must submit the request to the Dean TGS. Exemptions exceeding 20 ECs are referred to the Doctorate Board. The mandatory courses Academic Integrity and Data Management cannot be exempted under any circumstance. Promotors must email exemption requests, along with supporting documentation (e.g., certificates, transcripts, statements, detailed CVs, conference programmes), to [exemptions-tgs@utwente.nl](mailto:exemptions-tgs@utwente.nl).

## Detailed guidelines:

### A. Course modality options for all mandatory courses

All mandatory courses consist of two parts. The first part covers the essential principles and concepts. This first part is delivered live or through online courses such as the Nature Masterclasses on publishing or presentations. In the second part, candidates can choose between two modalities to apply and demonstrate their knowledge:

- a. apply and demonstrate their knowledge through e.g. an assignment, assessed by the lecturer.
- b. apply and demonstrate their knowledge under the supervision of the promotor within the research group. For example, as part of the Academic Integrity course, candidates might play the Erasmus University Integrity Dilemma Game with their group under the supervision of the promotor. The promotor will then assess whether the intended learning outcomes are met and document the confirmation in the PhD monitoring system.

## **B. EC Calculation**

1. If activities lack an assigned EC figure, calculate the EC by dividing the number of hours spent by 28 and rounding to the nearest 0.5 EC.
2. Group short-duration activities together to total at least 0.5 EC to avoid fragmentation. Include preparation and execution time (e.g., preparing for a conference oral or poster presentation or teaching) as educational activities.
3. Document all completed EC activities with one of the following:
  - a. Transcript of records;
  - b. Course certificate;
  - c. Conference programme;
  - d. Statement from the trainer or coordinator.

## **C. Maximum amount of ECS for similar activities**

A maximum amount of ECs applies to:

1. Attendance (implying active participation) of research group discussion meetings, research colloquia, conferences/workshops, research days of institutes/research schools: maximum 5 EC.
2. Language courses: maximum 5 EC.
3. Presentation of papers and/or posters on conferences/symposia: maximum 5 EC.
4. Research acquisition and management involving research grant writing, research event organization and board membership of a scientific/professional organization: maximum 5 EC.
5. Peer-review of articles for scientific journals or conferences: maximum 5 EC.
6. To overcome gaps in disciplinary knowledge, PhD candidates may take master's courses without an upgrade assignment in a different discipline from their previous studies, with the promotor's approval and the consent of the teaching staff: maximum 5 EC.
7. Teaching and supervising/coaching of MSc/BSc students (when lecturing, the Taste of Teaching course must be followed): maximum 10 EC.

## **D. Scientific disciplinary options if post-master level courses are not available**

If a post-master level disciplinary course is not available at UT or elsewhere, the PhD candidate has two options:

1. Set up a Capita Selecta course (supervised self-study). The PhD candidate and the supervising academic staff must outline the learning objectives before beginning the activity.
2. Follow a master's course with an 'upgrade' assignment. This option is only possible if the course lecturer agrees to include the PhD candidate in the course and assess the upgrade assignment. The final assignment must meet post-master level standards, at a higher level of complexity than the standard master's course assignment. The PhD candidate must discuss the requirement for this 'upgrade' assignment with the course lecturer before starting the master's course. Since PhD candidates cannot register in Osiris, EC credits obtained in Master modules must be documented with a signed declaration from the course lecturer.

## **E. Exemptions for PhD course requirements**

The mandatory courses Academic Integrity and Data Management cannot be exempted under any circumstances. For other courses, promotors can request exemptions for PhD candidates based on prior achievements or specific circumstances. If a candidate is exempt from a particular course, the corresponding ECs are subtracted from the 30 EC total. The candidate must then complete the remaining ECs to fulfill their educational program requirements. Exemptions can be requested in the following situations:

1. UT MSc Research Honours Programme graduates:
  - a. Exemption from the Academic Presentations.
  - b. Documentation required: Research Honours Diploma.
3. PhD candidates with prior publications:
  - a. Exemption from the Academic Publishing and Scientific Information courses for those who published at least one paper as the first author in a peer-reviewed journal or conference before starting the PhD.
  - b. Documentation required: list of publications.
4. PhD candidates with prior presentations:
  - a. Exemption from the Academic Presentations course for those who presented at conferences before starting the PhD.
  - b. Documentation required: conference programmes.
5. Transferring PhD candidates:
  - a. Exemptions available for those who began their PhD at another university (not part of a joint or double degree).
  - b. Documentation required: transfer letter, transcript of records and/or course certificates.

Promotors must email exemption requests, along with supporting documentation (e.g. certificates, transcripts, statements, detailed CVs, conference programmes), to [exemptions-tgs@utwente.nl](mailto:exemptions-tgs@utwente.nl). Exemptions exceeding 20 ECs are referred to the Doctorate Board.

## EC education activity registration checklist

The activities you record need to follow the Doctoral Education Guidelines provided in the previous sections and match what is outlined in your Training and Supervision Plan (T&SP). If any changes to your T&SP were agreed upon with your promotor, these must be accurately reflected in the activities you register. Use the following checklist:

### Type of activity:

1. Be consistent in how you classify activities.
2. For exemption items, document the corresponding exemption letter issued by the Doctorate Board.

### Organizers name:

1. List the organizing institution names in English.
2. Avoid using excessively long activity names.
3. If multiple institutions organized the activity, use 'Various' as organizer name.
4. Preferably, list the full name of the organizing institution (e.g. University of Twente) rather than acronyms (e.g. UT). Do not enter names of departments, research groups and individual persons.

### Start/Finishing date:

1. The TGS education certificate supplement only lists the finishing year. Therefore, record the finishing year accurately.

### EC calculation:

1. 1 EC is equivalent to 28 hours of workload. EC figures must be rounded to the nearest 0.5 EC.
2. Group short-duration activities together to total at least 0.5 EC.
3. The EC figure must match the EC (or hour) figure listed in the certificate or in the trainer/coordinator statement or confirmation email.
4. Check the Doctoral Education Guidelines in the previous section to ensure that you stay within the maximum ECs allowed e.g. 10 ECs for teaching/supervision tasks.

**Proof of attendance documents:**

1. Every activity must have a corresponding document uploaded:
  - a. Courses, summer/winter schools: Certificate or statement by the trainer. Master's courses with 'upgrade assignments' require the course lecturer to explain why the assignment is considered post-master level.
  - b. Capita Selectas: List of learning objectives and a statement by the supervising staff member confirming that the agreed objectives were met.
  - c. Conferences: conference programme or the registration confirmation email.
  - d. Peer-review: review submission confirmation email or statement by editor or conference chair.
  - e. Research group seminars: statement by the seminar coordinator.
  - f. Teaching/supervision: statement of coordinating staff member.
2. The provided evidence must either state the estimated workload (in EC or hours) or contain sufficient information to allow its calculation.

If you need help, contact the Support Office of the Twente Graduate School ([supportoffice-tgs@utwente.nl](mailto:supportoffice-tgs@utwente.nl)).