

Doctoral programme @ Leiden Law School

Handbook PhD candidates, PhD fellows and contract PhDs

This handbook offers an overview of the most relevant information pertaining to the planning of the training part of your PhD project at Leiden Law School. If you are a PhD candidate, a PhD fellow, or a contract PhD at Leiden Law School you are automatically a member of the Graduate School. This means that you can: (1) follow the courses and workshops that the Graduate School organises; (2) make use of the support services the Graduate School offers; and (3) are subject to the Graduate School's quality control systems. The handbook is written as a general manual for (contract) PhD candidates and PhD Fellows at the Graduate School. Please keep in mind that procedures and practices may vary between institutes or departments.

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1. About the Graduate School

Leiden Law School is a high-standing institution in the field of research and education in law and its aim is to further strengthen this position. Doctoral research at Leiden Law School thus means research at the highest level. Given this ambition, it is crucial to nurture young research talent. The Graduate School of Leiden Law School is perceived as an important support instrument in achieving this ambition.

The Graduate School of Leiden Law School provides a targeted research and training infrastructure and a doctoral research quality care and control system, offers a wide range of support services and stimulates social exchange between PhDs.

Deanship of PhD Studies

The Graduate School of Law has a Deanship of PhD Studies. There are currently two Deans of PhD Studies: prof. dr. J.W. Ouwerkerk and Prof. Jean-Pierre van der Rest.

The Deans hold a meeting with doctoral candidates at the start of the PhD trajectory to introduce themselves and explain all kinds of matters related to the Graduate School and the doctoral programme. Moreover, they chair the evaluation meeting ('go/no-go' decision) that doctoral candidates have in the first quarter of their programme.

They provide all kinds of support to doctoral candidates, such as advice on the Training and Supervision Plan or on appointments and contract extensions. In addition, they monitor the quality of the doctoral training programme, supervision and research that is carried out at Leiden Law School, and provide recommendations for exploring and implementing new policy directions. Please see [this link](#) for more information.

2. The Doctoral Programme

A PhD candidate's workload consists of three elements: (1) training; (2) teaching and management; and (3) PhD research. For PhD candidates, approximately 77.5% of total activities will be allocated to the PhD research, 12.5% to receiving training, and 10% to teaching (and other organisational tasks for the department). The PhD fellow's workload consists of the same three elements, but the division is 58.33%, 8.33% and 33.33% respectively. Contract PhDs do not have any teaching obligations. On average 87.5% of their activities will be allocated to PhD research, and 12.5% to receiving training.

In the course of your PhD you will make agreements with your supervisors concerning your personal development and the supervision you receive. About three months after the start of your appointment, these agreements should be recorded in a Training and Supervision Plan. This plan contains provisional agreements concerning your research, supervision, training, and potential teaching duties as a PhD student (the latter is not relevant for contract PhDs). After that, your plan will be continuously updated with new courses that may prove relevant for you later in your PhD trajectory. Each year, at the

Performance and Development interview (known as ROG in Dutch) you will discuss your Training and Supervision Plan again.

2.1 Research and supervision

Receiving a PhD degree is considered the highest educational proof of possessing the research skills necessary to carry out independent research. Your supervisors have a professional and moral obligation to work with you towards achieving those independent research qualities that a PhD degree stands for. On the other hand, PhD candidates have the obligation to make good supervision possible.

In the Netherlands, in part due to its PhD system, PhD candidates are considered fellow researchers. This is in contrast to Anglo-American doctoral systems where PhD candidates are considered students. As a PhD candidate at Leiden Law School you have a strong role and voice in research groups and are treated as a colleague. This is reflected in the type of supervision you can expect. Your supervisory team will in most cases advise you what to do or what to look further into, rather than tell you explicitly what to do or how to do it. You may be expected to schedule supervision meetings and draft an agenda for them. You may also be advised to make and share notes or minutes of the meetings you have and agreements you make. Moreover, you are expected to hand in written work on time and formulate concrete questions for supervisors. Always critically assess and respond to feedback. It is up to you to indicate when feedback is not clear or if you require more guidance on a particular issue.

When you start your PhD, you make agreements with your supervisors about the way in which you will organise the supervision. Such agreements involve exchanging mutual expectations about the frequency of meetings, but also about the nature of what will be discussed. For example, some PhDs prepare an agenda for each meeting and write minutes of what has been discussed, whereas others rely on implicit communication about the mutual expectations that are often left unsaid. It is important to determine for yourself who will do what. You will record this in the Training and Supervision Plan, so that expectations and agreements about the supervision are clear to everyone involved.

About three months after the start of a PhD's appointment, these arrangements will be recorded in a Training and Supervision Plan (TSP). This plan contains provisional agreements concerning the research, supervision, training, and potential teaching duties of the PhD researcher. At this stage, the TSP is sent to the Graduate School and reviewed by the Deans of PhD studies who can provide advice. After that, this plan will be continuously updated by you in consultation with your supervisors. Each year, at the Performance and Development interview (ROG) the latest version of the Training and Supervision Plan will be discussed again.

2.2 Teaching and management obligations

PhD candidates and PhD fellows (not contract PhDs or PhDs participating in a track) are usually required to contribute to the bachelor's and master's courses at their department.

Teaching contributes to your academic development and future career opportunities in academia. Teaching formats may include plenary, large-scale lectures (Dutch: hoorcolleges) and small-scale seminars or tutorials (Dutch: werkcolleges). In addition, PhD candidates can also be asked to (co-)supervise bachelor's or master's theses or assist in correcting exams or papers. For every form of teaching you do, you are implicitly or explicitly allocated a certain amount of hours. These hours include preparation and actual contact or teaching hours. Each department will implicitly or explicitly use a specific teaching load model to calculate the number or allocated hours. These models are usually based on the number of participants, the level of the course and number of sessions. Teaching should in any case not impede on the progress of your PhD research and training. Always make clear agreements with your supervisory team about the number of teaching hours and ensure there is a fair allocation and distribution during your PhD project. Always include these agreements in your Training and Supervision Plan.

If you have no prior experience in teaching, you may want to follow a course in didactics. The University offers several courses for this purpose. Please discuss this with your supervisors and possibly the Dean of PhD studies and include this in your Training and Supervision Plan.

2.3 Training

As a PhD candidate, you invest in your professional and personal development by participating in the Graduate School's PhD training programme. This will help you to conduct your scientific research, write your dissertation, develop your career and gain self-insight.

According to the Leiden University PhD guidelines, employed PhD candidates, PhD fellows and contract PhDs follow a training programme with a total of 30 EC (840 hours). The European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) is a standard for the volume of learning and associated workload. One European Credit (EC) equals 28 hours of training. The Graduate School's training programme consists of three components.

2.3.1.1 Research skills (at least 15 EC)

Out of the total 30 EC, the Graduate School prescribes that half of the courses followed (15 EC) are aimed at acquiring and improving methodological knowledge and skills. There are only two courses within this category that are compulsory: [Scientific Conduct](#) (1 EC), and [How to write a Datamanagement Plan](#) (1 EC). Compulsory courses can only be replaced (by other courses) in consultation with the Dean of PhD studies. For the remaining 13 EC, PhD researchers are free to choose any of the courses offered by the Graduate School, but they can also take courses outside the Graduate School. The courses offered by the Graduate School of Law are free. For courses offered outside of the Graduate School, a fee usually applies.

[Courses offered by the Graduate School of Law](#)

[Philosophy of Science for Lawyers](#) (5 EC)

Topics to be discussed include the scientific method, scientific progress, facts and values in science, confirmation and falsification, truth and judgement, and scientific change. The first part of the course will be spent on the dominant traditions in philosophy of science in the 20th century, such as logical positivism, Popper's critical rationalism and the historic movement stemming from Kuhn. The second part of the course concentrates on the differences between the natural and social sciences on the one hand, and law on the other. Issues to be addressed include social and institutional facts, the role of (performative) language in the construction of social reality, and external and internal perspective in the study of law.

[Legal Methodology](#) (5 EC)

The aim of this Legal Methodology course is to familiarise PhD candidates with the full breadth of legal research. It builds on the foundation for doing legal research that students have laid throughout the bachelor's and master's stage of their studies. The primary aim of the course is to provide PhD candidates with the tools that they need to write an innovative and methodologically sound legal research proposal. The course focuses on the study of traditional legal sources. This course also includes a part on legal English and aims to improve the English language skills within a legal context.

[Qualitative Empirical Research Methods in Law](#) (3/5 EC)

Although qualitative research methods are often identified with the social sciences more generally than with the discipline of law in particular, lawyers and legal scholars also make use of qualitative research methods. Examples of this type of research are studies that examine people's perception of law and justice, the interactions between different courts, effects of gender, or legal aid and access to justice. The 3 EC introductory course will discuss different qualitative methods (interviews, focus groups, content analysis, observations). It aims to provide PhD-researchers with an understanding of the purpose and appropriate use of the major qualitative research methods, and to equip researchers with the skills to decide whether their research topic requires the use of qualitative research methods, to select the most appropriate research methods and to know how to report on them. PhD researchers can also choose an additional 2 EC in which they participate in working groups in which qualitative research techniques (such as interviewing) are put into practice.

[Quantitative Empirical Research Methods in Law](#) (5 EC)

The emphasis in the course will be on equipping practitioners to be critical consumers of empirical material that may be used in legal cases and controversies and in the formation and evaluation of legislation. Another purpose of this course is to equip students with knowledge of various quantitative empirical research methods they could employ in their own research project. The knowledge will be both theoretical and practical. The course will introduce students to such topics as survey research methodology, the design

and conducting of experiments, data gathering and analysis through descriptive statistics, the use of (multiple) regression, why samples need to be taken in particular ways, how to perform simulations or cross-country data analyses, and more. In addition to discussing how to perform these techniques, we will also read cases and articles in which each of the techniques has figured. Students will fulfil the course requirements by writing a paper, by class participation, by presentation of their research to the class, and by completing several exercises.

Scientific Conduct for PhDs in Law (1 EC)

A number of cases of scientific fraud and misconduct have been bad publicity for the scientific world. Are these cases signs of a system in crisis or just some anomalies in an otherwise good academic framework? This course will pay attention to the grey area and your role as an individual scholar in preventing misconduct. This course consists of an [introduction day](#) organised by the University and a workshop organised by the Faculty. This workshop on academic integrity will give you the opportunity to discuss scientific fraud and misconduct with fellow PhD candidates. You will learn to what extent the academic world already has - or perhaps needs to develop - a system to prevent academic misconduct and what role you can play as an individual scholar. The workload for this course amounts to 5 hours including attendance and preparation.

Courses offered outside of the Graduate School

The ['University Training programme PhDs'](#) also offers methodological courses. Examples are 'Writing an excellent research grant proposal for PhDs and postdocs', 'Academic writing for PhDs', and 'Qualitative interviewing and data analysis for PhDs'.

In addition, PhD researchers can take courses at other Leiden Graduate Schools and Research Masters, and in consultation, at other universities (please bear in mind that there can be costs involved).

Examples of courses that our PhD researchers have taken in the past include Leiden Global courses (<https://www.leidenglobal.org/courses>) such as Mixed Methods in the Social Sciences and Humanities (10 EC) or courses in econometrics or advanced quantitative methods at the Tinbergen Institute.

- o LeidenGlobal course: 'Mixed Methods in the Social Sciences and Humanities' (10 EC)
- o Tinbergen institute: 'Applied Macroeconometrics' (5 EC)
- o Utrecht: 'Advanced Qualitative and Legal Methods in Criminology' (5 EC)
- o University Training program: Open interview and qualitative data analysis (2 EC)

2.3.2 Transferable skills (at least 5 EC)

According to the PhD Guidelines, at least 5 EC worth of courses of must be followed in the area of transferable skills. All PhD researchers with teaching tasks should follow the course 'Introduction to teaching for PhDs', or at least one of the 5 modules of the University Teaching Qualification (BKO). PhD researchers can make use of what is offered within the ['University Training programme PhDs'](#). Courses to choose from include:

- Project management for PhDs (2 EC)
- Teaching in Practice (2 EC)
- University Teaching Qualification (BKO) (5EC)
- Supervising thesis students (1 EC)
- Communication in science (2 EC)
- Academic writing (2 EC)
- Data & project management (1 EC)
- Intellectual property (1 EC)
- Knowledge exchange & impact (1 EC)
- Writing for a wider public (1 EC)
- Academics and (social) media (1 EC)
- Effective communication (1 EC)
- Intercultural communication (1 EC)
- Negotiate (1 EC)
- Time management (1 EC)
- Presenting skills (1 EC)
- Speed reading (1 EC)
- Writing excellent grant proposal (1 EC)
- Competences & Motives (1 EC)
- Interview skills (1 EC)
- Networking skills (1 EC)
- Career Development day (1 EC)
- Career Orientation (1 EC)

2.3.3 Individual part of the training

PhD researchers can follow various training courses that benefit their personal development or that offer more in-depth substantive knowledge connected to the topic of their dissertation. For example:

- Courses from Honours College Law (1-5 EC)
- Courses from (advanced) LLM programmes (1-10 EC)
- Language education (e.g., in relation to data collection abroad) (1-5 EC)
- Summer Schools (1-5 EC)
- PAO courses (1-3 EC)

- Courses from (research)Master's programmes (1-10 EC)
- ICLON courses enhancing teaching skills (BKO) (1-5 EC)
- Internships (1-3 EC)
- Visiting scholarship (e.g. through LERU exchange) (1-3 EC)
- Presenting a paper on a conference (2 EC)
- Participating at a conference (1 EC)
- Organising a seminar/symposium/conference (2 EC)
- Participating in a seminar/workshop/symposium (1 EC)

2.4 The PhD Trajectory

Your career as a PhD researcher at Leiden University starts with the introduction day. These meetings are organised five times a year, and are compulsory for all new PhD researchers, preferably within the first 2-3 months of their appointment. New PhD researchers will receive a personal invitation and can sign up for the PhD introduction day via Self Service. Please see this link for more information. This introduction day is part of the compulsory course Scientific Conduct.

In addition you have an introduction meeting with one of the Deans of PhD studies of the Faculty of Law.

Most PhD candidates follow a 4-year trajectory. PhD fellows follow a 6-year trajectory. Regardless of the total length of the trajectory, you may find it helpful to distinguish between 3 phases of your PhD: the start, the middle and the final phase. For each phase, different courses may be of interest.

In the first year, PhD researches will mostly be working on fine-tuning their research plan. You are therefore advised to take courses that help you do this. In the middle of the trajectory, PhD researchers are advised to follow courses geared at enhancing their methodological skills and their personal effectiveness. In the final phase of the trajectory, PhD researchers are focused on writing the PhD and they may gain experience by presenting their work at a scientific conference.

In the following table you can see an overview of the three phases in a PhD-trajectory and the objectives and courses that could apply in each phase.

	Start	Middle	Final
Objectives	<i>Getting acquainted with the University, developing research plan, develop basis of research skills, first steps towards personal effectiveness</i>	<i>Further developing personal effectiveness, strengthening research skills, developing communication skills,</i>	<i>Finishing dissertation and preparation for further career options. Enlarging impact of research</i>
Research skills	Scientific conduct (1 EC) How to write a DMP (1 EC) Philosophy of science (5 EC)	Legal methodology (5 EC) Qualitative Empirical Research Methods in Law (3/5 EC) Quantitative Empirical Research Methods in Law (5 EC) Academic writing (2 EC) Open interview and qualitative data analysis (2 EC)	Knowledge exchange & impact (1 EC) Writing for a wider public (1 EC) How to write a research grant proposal (1 EC)
Transferable skills	Introduction meeting (1 EC) Project management (2 EC) Time management (1 EC) Speed reading (1 EC)	Communication in Science (2 EC) Networking skills (1 EC)	Competences & Motives (1 EC) Career orientation (1EC)
Individual options	Courses focused on content (5 EC)	Summer school (1-5 EC) Visiting scholarship/research stay (1-5 EC) Participating at a conference (1 EC)	Summer school (1-5 EC) Presentation at conference (2 EC)

2.5 Evaluation meeting

PhD candidates and contract PhDs are appointed initially for a period of one year. The appointment will be extended to a total of four years if the evaluation interview has been positive. The PhD fellow appointment is an appointment for 6 years, with the possibility of premature cancellation in case the evaluation meeting of the PhD fellow results in a negative decision. For PhD candidates the evaluation meeting takes place within nine months after the start of the PhD and it results in a go/no-go decision. Evaluation of the PhD fellow's performance will take place after 18 months from the date of initial appointment.

The Dean of PhD studies ensures that the evaluation committee consists of a minimum of three assessors. The Committee consists of the supervisors of the dissertation, and an assessor from outside the research programme or department. The Committee will be chaired by the Dean of PhD candidates. The Dean of PhD studies may invite the coordinator of the applicable research programme of Leiden Law School, and/or the Head of Department, and/or parties from outside Leiden Law School to participate in the assessment.

2.6 Data management

Leiden University has adopted a regulation for Data Management. The main general requirements are :

- all research projects must have a Data Management Plan (DMP) before they start
- research data must be stored securely during research
- after completion of the project, research data must be managed in such a way that it is findable, accessible, assessable, re-usable and sustainable
- data must be archived according to international guidelines for at least 10 years

The compulsory workshop: How to write a Data Management Plan provides you with guidelines that help understand how to manage the (digital) data collected throughout your project in accordance with university and funder requirements. You can contact the Centre for Digital Scholarship if you need any additional support.

If the research involves human participants, all associated data needs to be handled correctly. Personal or sensitive data, for example, may not be suitable for sharing with other researchers and informed consent may be required. In these cases, anonymization techniques, data aggregation for numeric data, or pseudonyms in qualitative data should be considered. If needed, this kind of research can be evaluated by the Faculty's ethical committee.

Example Portfolio

Hoko Horii

Hoko Horii has been a PhD candidate at Leiden Law School since March 2016. Hoko's research tries to understand the reasons behind the persisting gap between international human rights standards and social practice regarding child marriage in Indonesia. During her 4-year PhD trajectory, she fulfilled the training component of her PhD in the following way:

Research skills

- Scientific Conduct
- Philosophy of Science
- Qualitative Empirical Research Methods in Law
- Academic Writing
- Writing Clinic
- Open Interview and Qualitative Data Analysis
- Atlas.ti course

Transferable skills

- Effective communication for PhDs
- Creative thinking techniques for PhDs
- Improving your memories for PhDs
- Data and project management for PhDs
- Presentation skills
- Competences and motives

Individual part of the training

- University Teaching Qualification (BKO)
- The Law and Development Research Network PhD Course 'Resilience and equality: Questions for the North and the South'
- Paper presented at conference Law and Development Research, Past, Present and Future, Ostend, Belgium
- Paper presented at 4th Children's Rights Research Symposium. Interaction in International Children's Rights, Leiden Law School, Leiden.
- Paper presented at Human Rights Conference Global Human Rights at Risk? Challenges, Prospects, and Reforms, Leiden Law School, Leiden
- Paper presented at Conference 8th Southeast Asia Update, Leiden.
- Paper presented at Sciences Pro, école de droits, 8th Graduate Conference, Paris