

Doctoral programme @ Leiden Law School

PhD candidates, PhD fellows, contract PhDs and PhDs participating in a track

This handbook offers an overview of the most relevant information pertaining to the planning of the training part of your PhD project at the Leiden Law School. If you are a PhD candidate, a PhD fellow, a contract PhD, or a PhD candidate participating in a track at the Leiden Law School you are automatically a member of the Graduate School. This means that you can follow courses and workshops that the Graduate School organizes for free and make use of our support services. The handbook is written as a general manual for the PhDs in the Graduate School and their supervisors. Please keep in mind that procedures and practices may vary between institutes or departments.

About the graduate school

Research at Leiden Law School means research at the highest level. Leiden Law School is a high-standing institution in the field of research and education in law and aims to further strengthen this position. Given this ambition, it is crucial to nurture research talent. The Graduate School of Leiden Law School is perceived as an important instrument to achieve this ambition. The organisation and quality assurance of Leiden Law School's academic research is carried out by the Meijers Research Institute and Graduate School. The Graduate School is responsible for research carried out by PhD candidates.

The Graduate School of Leiden Law School provides a targeted research and training infrastructure as well as a stimulating social environment. It aims to enable talented doctoral researchers to explore and test new ideas and experiences in order to contribute to the body of knowledge both within and across national borders. The Graduate School strives for excellent cutting-edge research across the full breadth of law.

The Graduate School of Law has a Deanship of PhD Studies. There are currently two Deans of PhD Studies: Dr. Masja van Meeteren and prof. dr. Jean-Pierre van der Rest. They conduct start and exit meetings with doctoral candidates. They can provide all kinds of advice to doctoral candidates including on the Training and Supervision Plan or on appointments and contract extensions. In addition, they monitor the quality of the training, supervision and research that is carried out within the Graduate School and on the basis of this, provide recommendations for exploring and implementing new policy directions. Please see [this link](#) for more information.

The Doctoral Programme

The PhD candidate's workload consists of three elements: 1) training 2) teaching and management, 3) the PhD research. Preferably, 77,5% of total activities will be allocated to the PhD research, 12,5% to receiving training, and 10% to teaching and other management or organization tasks that benefit the departments.

In the course of your PhD you 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 not 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 ('ROG') you will discuss your Training and Supervision Plan again.

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 researcher 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 are expected to schedule supervision meetings and draft an agenda for them. You are also 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 in 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.

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 and master 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 or master 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 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 courses 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.

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, developing your career and gain self-insight.

According to the Leiden University PhD guidelines, employed PhD candidates, PhD fellows and contract PhDs follow a training program with a total scope 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.

1. Research skills (at least 15 EC)

Out of the 30 EC in total, the Graduate School prescribed that half of the courses followed (15 EC) are aimed at acquirement and improvement of 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 candidates are free to choose any of 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. The Graduate School of Law currently offers the following courses:

1.1 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 judgment, 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 are, among other, 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 familiarize PhD candidates with the full breadth of legal research. It builds onto the foundation for doing legal research that students have laid in the bachelor and master 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.

Scientific Conduct for PhDs in Law (1 EC)

A number of cases of scientific fraud and misconduct were bad publicity for the scientific world. Are these cases signs of a system in crisis or just some anomalies in an otherwise good scientific framework? This course will give attention to the grey area and your role as an individual scholar to prevent misconduct. This workshop on scientific integrity will give you the opportunity to discuss scientific fraud and misconduct with fellow PhD candidates. You will learn to what extent science already has - or perhaps needs to develop - a system to prevent scientific misconduct and what role you can play as an individual scientist. The workload for this course amounts to 5 hours including attendance and preparation.

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, also lawyers and legal scholars do 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-candidates 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 candidates 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.

1.2 Courses offered outside of the Graduate School

The 'University Training program 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 candidates 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 candidates 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. 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. PhD students can make use of the offer within the 'University Training program PhDs'. Courses to choose from include:

- Project management for PhDs (2 EC)
- Introduction to teaching for PhDs (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)

3. Individual part of the training

PhD students 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. You can think of:

- Courses from Honours College Law (1-5 EC)
- Courses from (advanced) LLM programs (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 programs (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)
- Organizing a seminar/symposium/conference (2 EC)
- Participating in a seminar/workshop/symposium (1 EC)

The PhD Trajectory

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.

Your career as a PhD candidate at Leiden University starts with the introductory meeting. These meetings are organized five times a year, and are compulsory for all new PhD candidates, preferably within the first 2-3 months after registration. New PhD candidates will receive a personal invitation and can sign up for the PhD Introductory meeting via Self Service. In addition you have an introduction meeting with one of the Deans of PhD studies of the Faculty of Law.

In the first year, PhD candidates will mostly be working on fine-tuning their research plan. PhD candidates are therefore advised to take courses that help with this. In the middle of the trajectory, PhD candidates are advised to follow courses geared at enhancing their methodological skills and their personal effectiveness. In the final phase of the trajectory, PhD candidates 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) Projectmanagement (2 EC) Timemanagement (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)

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