

Doctoral Education Guidelines

1. Introduction

As a PhD candidate at Delft University of Technology (TU Delft) the Doctoral Education (DE) programme is an integral part of your PhD trajectory. This programme facilitates you in developing the competences (knowledge, skills, attitudes, insights) and mindset you need to successfully complete your PhD trajectory and become an independent researcher.

2. DE requirements

In order to obtain a doctoral degree from the TU Delft you have to complete the DE programme. This programme consists of freely chosen courses and learning on the job activities in 3 competence categories (**discipline related skills**, **research skills** and **transferable skills**) of the Doctoral Education Competence Model. For each category, you must obtain a minimum of 15 GS credits, making a total of 45 GS credits.

Competence Model



The Competence Model serves as the foundation of the Doctoral Education programme. This model outlines all the vital competences you need to successfully navigate your PhD and thrive as an autonomous researcher. A more in-depth overview of the [DE Competence Model](#) can be found on the [Graduate School website](#).

Competence Model Category	Minimum number of GS credits	Applicable DE activities		
		UGS courses	Learning on the Job	Other courses
Discipline related skills	15	-	-	✓
Research skills	15	✓	✓	✓
Transferable skills	15	✓	-	✓

Mandatory courses

You are free to design the main part of your Doctoral Education programme to fit your needs in consultation with your supervisory team. But there are 3 mandatory elements to every DE programme:

1. You must participate in all modules of the **PhD Start-up course** (consisting of module A and module B with a total of 2 GS credits). This course is part of the **transferable skills** category.
2. You must obtain at least 1 GS credit via **Career Development courses**. The UGS offers various career development courses, but you are also free to follow such a course elsewhere. This is part of the **transferable skills** category.
3. You must obtain at least 5 GS credits via **Learning on the Job activities**. All Learning on the Job activities are part of the **research skills** category.

Additional requirements

- Your Faculty Graduate School (FGS) might have additional requirements for your DE programme. These requirements can be found on the website of your FGS.
- All activities in your DE programme should be planned in consultation with your supervisory team.

3. DE activities

You can obtain credits for your DE programme through a number of different activities.

UGS DE courses

The University Graduate School (UGS) offers a wide range of courses for the **research skills** and **transferable skills** categories. The current offer of courses can be found in the [DE Course Guide](#) on the Graduate School website.

- **Research skills** courses have a course code which starts with an **R**.
- **Transferable skills** courses have a course code which starts with a **T**.

Learning on the Job activities

The **research skills** category is the only category in which you can obtain credits via Learning on the Job (LotJ) activities, all other credits should be obtained via courses.

- Refer to the [Learning on the Job: Scope of Activities](#) document, for an overview of the activities that are eligible for LotJ.
- Several FGS have their own Learning on the Job activity list, which replace the UGS list. These lists can be found via your FGS website.

Other courses

For all three categories (**discipline related skills**, **research skills** and **transferable skills**) you can also obtain credits through:

- Doctoral level courses organised at TU Delft (e.g. by your faculty or FGS)
- Research school courses
- Summer schools
- Doctoral level courses at other universities
- Online courses (only MOOCs which provide a verified certificate upon completion can be registered in your Doctoral Education programme)
- Master level courses

Always consult with your supervisory team regarding the knowledge level, suitability, quality and costs of an external course before enrolling.

Make sure the course you choose aligns with the definition of the intended course category in the competence model. In case of doubt you can contact your Faculty Graduate School.

4. GS credits

Graduate School credits (GS credits) are used to quantify the workload of Doctoral Education courses.

1 GS credit = 12 hours of workload (including self-study)

Restrictions

- 0.5 GS credits is the smallest fraction that can be allocated to a course or Learning on the Job activity.
- You can obtain a maximum of 5 GS credits per course.
- You can obtain a maximum of 4 GS credits via language courses. If there is a need to take more language courses, you may do so but without obtaining GS credits.

UGS DE courses

- You can only obtain credits by attending the full course. This requires you to actively participate in all course sessions and fulfil all self-study assignments.

Doctoral level courses

For doctoral level courses provided by parties other than the TU Delft Graduate School, the workload on the certificate is likely provided in either hours, days or ECTS instead of GS credits. Use the conversions below to calculate the number of GS credits.

- If the workload on the certificate is provided in hours: **12 hours = 1 GS credit**. Use this conversion table:

GS credits	official workload including self-study	Workload range (hours)	
		<i>min</i>	<i>max</i>
0,5	6 hours	≥ 4	< 9
1,0	12 hours	≥ 9	< 15
1,5	18 hours	≥ 15	< 21
2,0	24 hours	≥ 21	< 27
2,5	30 hours	≥ 27	< 33
3,0	36 hours	≥ 33	< 39
3,5	42 hours	≥ 39	< 45
4,0	48 hours	≥ 45	< 51
4,5	54 hours	≥ 51	< 57
5,0	60 hours	≥ 57	

- If the workload on the certificate is provided in days: **1 day = 1 GS credit** (assuming there is a self-study component to the course)
- If the workload on the certificate is provided in ECTS, the following conversion table can be used:

ECTS	GS credits
0.5	1.0
1.0	2.5
1.5	3.5
2.0	4.5
≥ 2.5	5.0*

*) This is the maximum amount of credits you can obtain per course.

Contact your FGS in case of uncertainty regarding the number of credits to be assigned to a course.

Master level courses

- 1 ECTS = 1 GS credit for Master-level courses.
- You can only obtain credits by completing the full course and passing the exam.
- For more information on how to enrol for TU Delft MSc courses, check the [Course enrolment Master courses page](#).

5. DE costs

UGS DE courses

- All UGS DE courses are financed by the University Graduate School and can be followed free of charge by TU Delft PhD candidates. Hand-outs are included in the price of the course.
- Additional materials that might be required for some courses, need to be financed by the department/funding body of the PhD candidate.
- Your department will be charged in case of late unenrolment or in case of non-attendance, as indicated in the section **UGS DE course enrolment**.

TU Delft MOOCs

All TU Delft PhD candidates can get full access to MOOCs offered by TU Delft for free. This includes access to all course content, access to graded assignments and a verified certificate upon completion of the MOOC.

- For an overview of the TU Delft MOOCs go to: edX.org/school/delftx
- In order to get full access, the **PhD supervisor** needs to request a voucher via email to edX-TLS@tudelft.nl. This message should contain the following information:
 - State that this request is for **PhD training**.
 - The **URL of the course run** you wish to participate in.
 - The **email address** of the PhD candidate.
- Upon approval you will receive the voucher within 10 working days.

4TU doctoral level courses

All TU Delft PhD candidates can participate in the doctoral level courses provided by the other universities within the 4TU federation free of charge.

- [University of Twente \(UT\)](#)
- Eindhoven University of Technology (TU/e) - this course overview is not publicly available, send an email to hrm.id-support@tue.nl for details.
- [Wageningen University & Research \(WUR\)](#)

FGS courses

Most Faculty Graduate Schools provide free faculty-specific courses to the PhD candidates of their faculty. Check out the website of your FGS for more information (see the **Contact details** section for links).

Research School courses

- Courses provided by [Research Schools](#) are generally free of charge for PhD candidates who are affiliated with the Research School.
- PhD candidates who are not affiliated with the Research School can often join for a fee. This fee needs to be financed by your department/funding body. In this case, always consult with your supervisory team regarding the costs before enrolling.

Other courses

- Any applicable costs for other courses you might choose to follow need to be financed by your department/funding body.
- Always consult your supervisory team regarding costs before enrolling in a course.

6. UGS DE course enrolment

The University Graduate School offers a wide range of courses for the [research skills](#) and [transferable skills](#) categories. Check the [DE Course Guide](#) on the UGS website for the current offer of courses.

Enrolment

- You can enrol for these courses via [CoachView](#).
- You should only enrol for a course if you are able to attend all sessions of the course.

Unenrolment

- Send an email to graduateschool@tudelft.nl to request the cancellation of your enrolment if you are unable to attend (a session of) a course you have enrolled for.

Costs for unenrolment and no-shows

- Unenrolment up to 7 working days in advance of the start of the course: free of charge.
- Unenrolment within 7 working days in advance of the start of the course: €160 per GS credit (charged to your department for the total number of GS credits the course entails)
- Not attending one or more sessions of a course you are enrolled in: €160 per GS credit (charged to your department for the total number of GS credits the course entails)

7. Keeping track of your DE progress in DMA

In order to complete your Doctoral Education programme, you are required to keep track of the credits you've obtained during your PhD.

- You need to provide a proof of attendance for all Doctoral Education courses. This can be a course certificate or diploma, or use the [Course Attendance Form](#) in case no other proof is issued.
- Upload your proof of attendance to the DE section in DMA.
- Keep all your proof of attendance documents, as you may be asked to show them.
- For full instructions on how to register your DE activities in DMA, please consult the [DMA manual](#).

Proof of attendance

UGS DE courses

- When the course instructor indicates you have passed the course, you will receive your course certificate within 7 working days after the course is finished. An exception to this are courses where post-course assignments are required. For these courses it might take longer to receive the course certificate.

Learning on the Job activities

- Check with your Faculty Graduate School what is needed to register your Learning on the Job activities.

Other courses

- Only MOOCs which provide a verified certificate upon completion can be registered in your Doctoral Education programme.
- For Master level courses: use the [Course Attendance Form](#). The lecturer must indicate that you have passed the exam and record your grade on the form.
- For other courses where no certificate or diploma is issued by the organiser: use the [Course Attendance Form](#).

Completion of the DE programme

- Carefully check the spelling of all course titles and Learning on the Job activities in DMA. These will be used in your DE certificate.
- After uploading all your DE activities in DMA, ask your FGS to do the final check of your DE programme. (Please note: your DE programme needs to be approved in order to be able to get a defence date)
- For further details, check the [DMA manual](#).

8. Exemption / full dispensation

The Doctoral Education programme of TU Delft enables all PhD candidates to further develop their professional skills and continue to learn and grow to become autonomous researchers. Therefore, exemptions and full dispensations will only be granted in exceptional cases.

Exemption

Who's eligible

PhD candidates who have completed courses prior to starting their PhD at TU Delft, are eligible for requesting an exemption from partaking in a specific part of the Doctoral Education programme.

Exemption framework

- Only courses which were completed after obtaining the Masters degree are eligible.
- The courses you put up for exemption must be of a knowledge level and quality which is in line with the Doctoral Education programme.
- You should be able to provide a proof of attendance (course certificate or similar)
- The total exemption request should be for a minimum of 5 GS credits.
- Per course you can get a maximum exemption of 5 GS credits.
- If you are granted an exemption, you are still required to complete the remainder of the DE programme.
- If you are granted an exemption for more than 15 GS credits, you will not receive a DE certificate.

Procedure

The exemption request should be sent to the FGS within 1 year after starting your PhD at TU Delft. Please note that more stringent rules on this timeline may apply within your faculty.

1. Make sure to consult with your promotor before applying for an exemption.
2. Fill out the DE Exemption Request Form.
3. Send the form to your FGS office, cc to your promotor.
4. The FGS director reviews the exemption request and provides their verdict to the PhD candidate, promotor and UGS via email, no later than 4 weeks (with exception of the summer holidays) after receiving the request.
5. In case of approval by the FGS director, register your approved exemption request in DMA (see the DMA manual for instructions)

Full dispensation

Who's eligible

For some very exceptional cases where a very experienced doctoral candidate can demonstrate they already have acquired all the required skills at a high level, a request can be made for a full dispensation from the entire Doctoral Education programme.

Requirements

You should be able to demonstrate that you have developed all the required skills at such a high level that participating in the Doctoral Education programme would not be of any benefit.

The argumentation needs to demonstrate the level of development for each of the 3 skill categories within the Doctoral Education programme.

1. **Discipline related skills** – You have the breadth and depth of knowledge required in the field of doctoral research.
2. **Research skills** – You have the ability (research skills) to conduct scientific research.
3. **Transferable skills** – You have developed the personal and professional skills required to successfully complete your PhD project in a timely manner.

Use the [DE Competence Model](#) and [DE Competence Development Guide](#) as guidelines for what is expected from PhD candidates at TU Delft in relation to Doctoral Education.

Procedure

The dispensation request should be sent to the FGS no later than 4 months after starting your PhD at TU Delft.

1. Make sure to consult with your promotor before requesting a full dispensation.
2. Write a dispensation request in line with the requirements mentioned above and include any proof of competence.
3. Your (intended) promotor sends the dispensation request to the FGS director via the FGS office for their statement of advice, no later than 4 months after the start date of your doctoral programme.
4. When the FGS director is in favour of the request, they forward the dispensation request to the Board for Doctorates via the Doctoral Education coordinator.
5. The Board for Doctorates reviews the dispensation request and provides their verdict to the PhD candidate, intended promotor and FGS via email, no later than 4 weeks (with exception of the summer holidays) after receiving the request by the FGS director.
6. In case the full dispensation is granted, this will be registered in DMA by the Graduate School. Please note that this means you will receive no Doctoral Education certificate upon completion of the doctoral programme.

References

Related documents

1. [DE Competence Model](#)
2. [DE Competence Development Guide](#)
3. [DE Course Guide](#)
4. [Learning on the Job - Scope of Activities](#)
5. [Course Attendance Form](#)
6. [DMA Manual](#)
7. [DE Exemption Request Form](#)

All these documents can be found via the [Doctoral Education intranet page](#) or [I'm a PhD candidate](#).

Useful links

UGS DE courses

- [CoachView](#) - Sign up for the UGS DE courses via CoachView.

Doctoral Education updates

- [TU Delft PhD Community @Teams](#) - Exchange experiences, share tips with fellow PhD candidates and get the latest updates on upcoming courses and Doctoral Education activities.
- [PhD News](#) - Sign up for the monthly PhD News email, to keep track of the latest news and major updates.

Contact details

University Graduate School	graduateschool@tudelft.nl	UGS website
FGS Architecture and the Built Environment	ABE@tudelft.nl	FGS A+BE website
FGS Aerospace Engineering	graduateschool-AE@tudelft.nl	FGS AE website
FGS Applied Sciences	graduateschool-TNW@tudelft.nl	FGS AS website
FGS Civil Engineering and Geosciences	graduateschool-CEG@tudelft.nl	FGS CEG website
FGS Electrical Engineering, Mathematics and Computer Science	graduateschool-EEMCS@tudelft.nl	FGS EEMCS website
FGS Industrial Design Engineering	graduateschool-IDE@tudelft.nl	FGS IDE website
FGS Mechanical Engineering	graduateschool-ME@tudelft.nl	FGS ME website
FGS Technology, Policy & Management	graduateschool-TPM@tudelft.nl	FGS TPM website