PhD survey report
2020

Central PhD council, 2020
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1. Summary and recommendations

In this report we present the results of the bi-annual PhD survey at the UvA, held by the Central PhD council in 2020. A concise overview of all highlights of each survey section can be found in appendix II. We recommend reading these highlights for an overview of the results of the survey per section. However, from the outcomes of the survey we have identified five overarching focal points that we will discuss in this summary, reflecting on similarities and differences with respect to CPC survey results from previous years and incorporating insights from various relevant sources such as (but not exclusively): the UvA employer monitor, UvA crisis monitor, and the PNN national PhD survey.

Based on these points we will make several recommendations, which we would strongly recommend considering in policy formation and reflections on and improvement of existing policies. The five focal points for recommendations that we identify in this report are: (1) PhD trajectories, (2) recognition and reward, (3) working conditions, (4) wellbeing, (5) information provision.

PhD trajectory

The results of the UvA 2020 PhD survey highlighted some desirable and undesirable aspects of PhD trajectories at the UvA and some striking differences between PhD trajectories of candidates from different faculties and/or different sub-groups studied. PhD trajectories differ largely in, for example, the number of years a PhD candidate can spend on the research, the number of courses in PhD candidates take, and the amount of time PhD candidates spend on teaching and supervising students. We found that most PhD candidates aspire a research career (either in or outside academia) although eventually most PhD candidates leave academia. The survey did not address topics as valorisation, management tasks, or policy related tasks, though based on our experience, PhD trajectories also differ largely with respect to these aspects of a scientific career. Developing transferable skills such as valorisation, teaching, and management can help prepare for a career both in and outside academia.

We therefore encourage the Executive Board to provide all PhD candidates with career development training, including transferable skills training, that introduces PhD candidates to and prepares them for a career either in- or outside academia.

Recognition and reward

Despite the differences in trajectories with respect developing skills relevant for a potential (non-)scientific career, at the end of their trajectory PhD candidates are assessed solely on the PhD thesis. In the last years,

partly encouraged by the rewarding and recognition movement at Dutch universities, but also due to the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on PhD researchers, voices were raised about a more comprehensive assessment of PhD trajectories and the assessment of a PhD candidate as a scientist in a broader sense. Some Dutch institutions, like University Medical Centres and the University of Utrecht, already put this to practice. The 2016 UvA PhD survey resulted in a recommendation to the Executive Board to “formulate a vision on the purpose of doing a PhD at the UvA, and the implications for PhD candidates in the various disciplines and research institutes that the university offers.”

The current survey underlines the importance of continuing efforts in line with this recommendation. In light of the developments on the topic of ‘recognition and reward’ it would be advisable to reflect on this topic explicitly when formulating a vision and defining how this affects PhD trajectories and PhD assessment.

**Working conditions**

The working conditions of PhD candidates are reflected in several topics of the survey. Our finding indicates that there is a very large variation for PhD candidates at the UvA in work environment, available resources and budgets (such as travel and training budget), salary, and number of years available for a research project. These variations exist regardless of whether they have an employment contract or not, so are not only related to employed or external contract types. Within their recently published reports on the outcomes of a national PhD survey PNN has found similar variations in contract characteristics. They formulate a clear recommendation, emphasizing that negative deviations from (the equivalent of) a four-year fulltime contract should only be allowed in exceptional cases and under very strict conditions. Also, the consequences of such contracts on the working conditions of PhD candidates may lead to friction between PhD candidates.

In line with the PNN recommendation we would like to stress that this asks for strong commitment from central university HR departments in order to track down departments that might be offering dubious PhD contracts, and to urge them to keep themselves to the agreements in the collective labour agreement. We recommend to pursue equal work conditions (including side-conditions) for all PhD candidates, for similar work deserves similar rewards.

**Wellbeing**

Of all survey responses, the questions on progress and wellbeing are most prone to be affected by the COVID-19 measures, although we explicitly asked to fill out the survey keeping pre-COVID-19 times in mind. We must assume that the experienced wellbeing of PhD candidates may have changed since the PhD survey, as since then measures to prevent the spread of SARS-CoV-2/COVID-19 have significantly affected daily life. However, we feel that certain recommendations can still be made, as wellbeing has certainly not become less relevant. Only few PhD candidates considered their mental health poor, though we know that such self-report yields quite different results from validated questionnaires. For example, the PNN survey showed that, although most PhD candidates rated their mental health as fair, most PhD candidates are at (high) risk of mental illness. This matches the findings of the UvAcare project. Many PhD candidates mentioned

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6 See, for instance, the VSNU handreiking on coping with COVID-19 delays
employment after the PhD trajectory, academic publications, and academic performance as stressors for mental health. Especially knowing that academic output (in terms of research papers) may be insufficient for a career in or outside academia, this may be a huge stressor.

Apart from re-evaluating the assessment of PhD candidates, we recommend putting good care in place for PhD candidates and to make the available care visible.

Asked about their response to these events, most PhD candidates replied that they found counselling through their co-workers or supervisors. Interestingly, the support mechanisms offered by the UvA have been seldom used. The CPC contributes to discussions on social safety in conversations with various stakeholders, such as the university, faculties, the UvA Taskforce social safety, and the ombudsperson. A detailed analysis of social safety at the UvA can be found in the report ‘Doorbreek de stiltes’ from the Taskforce Social Safety.\textsuperscript{11} Measures that can contribute to social safety, specifically for PhD candidates, are listed both in the report from the Taskforce socials safety (p. 26) as well as the document ‘Sociale veiligheid in het tijdperk van Corona’ from the UvA ombudsperson.\textsuperscript{12}

As in previous PhD survey reports and discussions with stakeholders we continue to underline the importance of good supervision, clear expectations and feedback mechanisms, and the need for enforcement of desirable measures such as two or more supervisors and independent assessment (for instance during the yearly review).

\textbf{Information provision}

The last focal point we identify from the results presented in this report is information provision. Throughout the survey we observed that PhD candidates often are not properly informed or cannot find information about PhD-related matters. This begins at the start of the PhD trajectory, where only few PhD candidates have official HR talks about their working conditions (which is especially troublesome considering the wide diversity in work—or scholarship—conditions), and continues to show in topics as education, career development, and wellbeing and mental health. In addition, information provision seems to be scattered across employer webpages as well as student pages, both at the faculty and university level. PhD candidates mostly selected informal information sources as their go-to for information. Especially PhD guides are often mentioned, although these are most often (voluntarily) written by PhD candidates for PhD candidates, which is a great show of commitment to the PhD community but prone outdated or incorrect information provision.

We therefore recommend to compose an easily accessible PhD portal or information channel, with all university-wide, faculty-specific, and perhaps even institute-specific information relevant to PhD candidates. Such a portal should preferably be maintained by UvA staff involved in PhD regulations, to guarantee up-to-date and accurate information provision. Next to that, we urge the UvA to provide each PhD candidate with an HR appointment about employment (or scholarship) conditions—in which deviations from the standard PhD arrangement as described in the collective labour agreement should be discussed deliberately—prior to the start of the contract. Similar recommendations have been made in previous PhD


survey reports, for instance in the survey report from 2010, indicating that providing information and improving communication is of continued importance.¹

Concluding remarks
We realize that many PhD-related policies at the UvA are arranged at the faculty or institute level, which provides opportunities to learn from another. In the highlights per topic (see appendix II), we sometimes explicitly mention faculties where responses differed in relation to others, which we hope will allow faculties to identify issues or successful practices. We hope that this provides insights for future development policies that concern PhD candidates at the faculty level. Apart from learning from other faculties, we also recommend faculties to start conversations with their PhD candidates—for example through faculty PhD councils—about topics that deserve improvement.

As CPC, we are grateful for the fruitful collaboration with the UvA Board, academic affairs, and all types of task forces and work groups on PhD related matters that have developed over the years. Even though PhD candidates are rarely officially represented in the works council, PhD candidates are often invited to discuss their views on PhD related matters. We recommend the UvA to keep strengthening these bonds and seek advice from PhD candidates when PhD related matters are at stake.
2. Introduction

About the CPC
The Central PhD Council (CPC) of the University of Amsterdam (UvA) serves the interest of all PhD candidates at an administrative level, and is a sounding board for organizational developments concerning PhD candidates within the university. Each faculty of the UvA is represented in the CPC, with the exception of the Faculty of Medicine (AMC) who have their own PhD council. As such, the following faculties are represented in the CPC: The Faculty of Economics and Business (FEB), Faculty of Science (FNWI), Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences (FMG), Faculty of Humanities (FGW), Faculty of Law (LAW), and the Faculty of Dentistry (ACTA). The CPC represents more than 1500 UvA PhD candidates from these faculties at a central level. Additionally, the Central PhD Council is a member of the PhD candidates Network of the Netherlands (PNN), thereby also advocating the interests of PhD candidates at a national level.

Aim
To monitor the experience of PhD candidates on a number of topics, a bi-annual survey is held by the CPC among all PhD candidates. This survey is distributed among all faculties, including the Faculty of Medicine.\textsuperscript{13} The survey includes questions on several general topics; employment conditions, research environment, supervision, education, teaching, support, progress and wellbeing, social safety, finishing your PhD, and career development. The aim of this report is to monitor experiences of PhD candidates of all faculties, and to identify points for improvement.

Structure
The remainder of this document is structured as follows. In Section 3, we discuss the methods used to collect and analyse the survey responses. In Section 4, we discuss the results of the survey. Each general topic has its own paragraph, which starts with the highlights of the topic. We described the UvA-wide results, and elaborated on remarkable differences between faculties and types of PhD candidates. The highlights of each topic are also combined in Appendix II, to provide readers a quick overview of the results so that they can identify sections of the report that may be of particular interest to read, and which will also be made available as a separate document to facilitate sharing the outcomes of the survey.

SARS-CoV-2/COVID-19
In March 2020, the Dutch government took nationwide measures to prevent the spread of SARS-CoV-2/COVID-19. In line with these preventive measures, the UvA took preventive measures at all levels of organization within the university. These measures had, and continue to have, the potential to greatly impact PhD candidates directly and indirectly. Therefore, in addition to sections of questions on the aforementioned general topics, the questionnaire included a section with questions specifically inquiring about the overall impact of COVID-19 and associated preventive measures on each of the topics. The PhD survey was distributed during the first weeks of the “intelligent lockdown”\textsuperscript{14}. To limit the influence of the

\textsuperscript{13} The faculty of medicine did not participate in the PhD survey in previous years. They are included in the survey of this year, and will continue to be included in the following years.

\textsuperscript{14} The intelligent lockdown is a term used by the Dutch government to describe some of the nationwide measures that were taken to prevent the spread of SARS-CoV-2/COVID-19. Among other, these measures were an appeal to stay inside as much as possible, and work from home, unless employed in a job labelled “essential”.

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unique and unpredictable working conditions during the lockdown on how questions were answered, candidates were asked to answer questions on the general topics based on their experience throughout the year and before the start of the COVID-19 preventive measures. The perceived influence of the COVID-19 preventive measures on each of the general topics at the moment that the survey was held was measured separately (see appendix III), and will be used to reflect on the results in the general discussion.

**Words of gratitude**
We would like to thank the following persons, for without their valuable contributions this report would not exist. Former CPC members Tijmen Münker (ACTA, former chair), David Gardenier (FNWI), Wiebe Hommes (LAW), and Ioana Neamtu (FEB), for their contributions to the design and distribution of the survey. Amy Zeegelaar (policy officer; ‘academische zaken’ or AcZ), for her support in the survey distribution and her feedback on the draft report. Wouter ter Haar (‘bestuurlijke informatie’ or BI), for the design of the survey, implementing it in Qualtrics, and managing the raw data. Denise Haar-Van de Wetering (former policy advisor; AcZ), for her contributions to the survey design. All faculty contact persons for distributing the survey within their faculties. All PhD candidates that filled out the survey and provided us with valuable input for this report, directing our continuing efforts to improve the conditions of PhD candidates at the UvA.

**Additional information**
For any questions about the survey or this report, please contact the CPC at cpc@uva.nl.
3. Methods

Participants
The University of Amsterdam has no central record of the email addresses of all PhD candidates. Therefore, to reach as many UvA PhD candidates as possible, we distributed the survey via the contact persons for PhD candidates listed for each faculty on the official UvA website, who emailed all PhD candidates enrolled in their faculties.\(^\text{15}\) The first invitation was send on May 7, 2020, a reminder followed on May 14, 2020, the survey closed on May 21, 2020 (see Appendix I). PhD candidates were encouraged to participate by means of two dinner vouchers worth 50 euros each, which were allotted randomly to two of the survey participants.

In May 2020, a total of 1592 PhD candidates (all faculties excluding ACTA and AMC) were registered at the doctorate board (CvP), and should thus have received the invitation to join the survey. Additionally, approximately 120 ACTA PhD candidates received the survey invite, as well as an unknown amount of AMC PhD candidates. The survey yielded 743 responses in total, of which 605 completed surveys. A more detailed description of the participants is provided in the section ‘General characteristics’ (section 4.1).

Measures
The topics that were addressed in the survey are: general characteristics, starting a PhD project, research environment, supervision, education, teaching, support, progress and wellbeing, social safety, finishing your PhD, career development, and COVID-19. The questions per topic closely resembled those used in the 2020 UvA employee survey and a national PhD survey in development, on which an inter-university task force is currently collaborating. Questions were adapted to fit to the situation of PhD candidates where necessary. Some questions were added on social safety (in consultation with the Taskforce Social Safety), on housing and other formalities (in consultation with Student Services), and on the impact of the beginning COVID-19 pandemic. To limit the influence of the unique and unpredictable working conditions during the preventive measures of COVID-19 (e.g., the intelligent lockdown) on the survey responses, candidates were asked to reply based on their experience throughout the year but before the start of the COVID-19 preventive measures.

Data handling
The survey invitation informed PhD candidates that by participating in the survey, they agreed that their anonymized data would be used, and that results would not be traceable to individuals. The Qualtrics platform was used to gather responses. Data of the 2020 PhD survey is not shared with other parties or institutions. Conversations about a national PhD survey and sharing data the data from such a survey across collaborating universities are ongoing. This would allow for benchmarking across institutions. However, at the moment this type of data sharing has not been part of this survey and survey report.

Analyses
Data analysis was performed in the computer program R, and all syntax used for the analyses are available upon request from the CPC. Most survey questions had either selected choice (multiple or single choice) or five-point Likert-type scale response options (e.g., 1 = strongly agree, 2 = slightly agree, 3 = agree nor disagree, 4 = slightly disagree, 5 = strongly disagree). For some questions the answers to these questions were combined during analysis to create only 3 response categories, e.g. (1) strongly to slightly agree, (2)

\(^{15}\) https://www.uva.nl/en/research/PhD/contact-information/faculty-contacts/faculty-contacts.html
agree nor disagree, (3) slightly to strongly disagree. We analysed all responses for the total sample, and split for several subgroups (see table 3.1 below): split by faculty, split by type of PhD contract (employed at the UvA or not), and split by nationality (Dutch or not).

We only reported differences across these subgroups when considered these noteworthy. Interested readers can contact the CPC for more detailed results.

Table 3.1. Table showing the types of analyses performed, on which groups, and the acronyms used to present results.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analysis</th>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>Acronym</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total responses</td>
<td>UvA (total)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Responses per faculty</td>
<td>Faculty of Dentistry (ACTA)</td>
<td>ACTA</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Faculty of Medicine</td>
<td>AMC</td>
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<td>Economics and Business</td>
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<td>Faculty of Humanities</td>
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<td>Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences</td>
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<td>Faculty of Science</td>
<td>FNWI</td>
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<td>Amsterdam Law School</td>
<td>LAW</td>
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<tr>
<td>Responses per nationality</td>
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<td>Dutch</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Non-Dutch</td>
<td>Non-Dutch</td>
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<tr>
<td>Responses per type of employment</td>
<td>PhD candidates with UvA employment contract (&quot;PhD in dienst&quot;)</td>
<td>PID</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PhD candidates without UvA employment contract (&quot;PhD niet in dienst&quot;)</td>
<td>PNID</td>
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4. Results

4.1 General characteristics

The topic General Characteristics covered questions about PhD candidates’ faculty, type of PhD contract, project duration, and their nationality.

Highlights
- 743 PhD candidates responded to the survey, of which 605 completed the survey.
- The percentage of respondents across faculties resembled the distribution of PhD candidates across faculties (apart from FGW, which was slightly underrepresented in the survey).
- A slight majority of the respondents had a Dutch nationality (62%).
- A slight majority of the respondents did not have an employment contract at the UvA (PNID; 60%).
  - The percentage of PNID was high at ACTA and AMC, and low at FGW and LAW.
- Most responding PhD candidates had a >3 years and ≤4 years project (68%), followed by a project duration of ≤3 years (24%).
  - Short projects (>3 years and ≤4 years) were quite common at ACTA, AMC, FEB, and LAW, less common at FGW and FMG, and rare at FNWI.

Faculties
The Survey yielded 743 responses in total. PhD candidates were asked in which faculty they conducted their PhD research. Some PhD candidates indicated to work at different faculties, mostly AMC, ACTA, and/or FNWI. For further analysis, these PhD candidates were assigned in the following order: AMC, then ACTA, then FNWI. Respondents’ distribution across faculties was as follows: AMC (38%), FNWI (23%), FMG (17%), FGW (8%), LAW (5%), FEB (5%), and ACTA (4%), see figure 4.1.1 A.

Nationality
We also asked respondents about their nationality, but for reasons of anonymity we only distinguished between Dutch (62%) and non-Dutch (38%) PhD candidates. The percentage of non-Dutch respondents differed largely across faculties, with a minority of non-Dutch PhD candidates at AMC (20%), FGW (40%), and FMG (43%), about half of the respondents being non-Dutch at ACTA (50%), FNWI (50%) and LAW (46%), and a majority of non-Dutch PhD candidates at FEB (66%).

Type of PhD
We asked about PhD candidates’ type of PhD. The largest groups were scholarship PhD candidates (47%) and employed PhD candidates (34%) (figure 4.1.1 B). Also, a small group of respondents conducts their research as an external PhD candidate (9%) or on an UvA employee in a PhD (3%). Differences in distribution of types of contracts was assessed in two ways. First, by distinguishing between PhD candidates with an UvA employment contract (PID; 40%) and those without an employment contract at the UvA (PNID; 60%). Second, by distinguishing between types of PhD: Employed PhD candidate (34%), scholarship PhD candidate (47%), externally financed PhD candidate (9%), and other (11%).

The percentages of types of PhD contracts differed hugely across faculties. At both ACTA (83%) and AMC (72%) a vast majority of the respondents was a PNID, compared to a slight majority at FGW (60%) and FMG (56%), and a slight minority at FNWI (45%), LAW (40%) and FEB (41%). A scholarship PhD was quite common
among respondents from most faculties, ACTA (46%), AMC (64%), FEB (41%), FMG (49%), FNWI (45%), but less common at FGW (21%) and LAW (26%). External PhD candidates were common in ACTA (38%) and FGW (40%) but rare at the other faculties.

Because the overall number of external PhD candidates was rather low, we only distinguish between PID and PNID in further analyses. The percentage of PID was comparable across Dutch and non-Dutch respondents (39% and 41%). This slightly differed across faculties, and the difference was most profound at ACTA, where all non-Dutch PhD candidates were PNID, compared to 67% of Dutch PhD candidates.

![Number of respondents per faculty](image1)

![Type of contract](image2)

**Figure 4.1.1 A and B. A. Number of respondents, total and per faculty. B. Type of PhD, in percentage of total.**

**Official Duration of the PhD project**

We asked PhD candidates for the official duration of their PhD project as agreed upon at the start of the project. The duration of most projects was 3-4 years (68%), followed by 3 years or less (24%), 4 to 5 years (7%), and more than 5 years (1%). These percentages differed largely across faculties, and only slightly between PID and PNID or between Dutch and non-Dutch PhD candidates.

Figure 4.1.2 shows the differing percentages of project duration per faculty. Short project durations of 3 or less years were quite common at ACTA (43%), AMC (37%), FEB (55%) and LAW (30%), less common at FGW (21%) and FMG (14%), and rare at FNWI (3%). Long project durations of more than 4 years (4-5 and 5 years or more) were rare at any faculty (3-15%). For both PID and PNID a small percentage of respondents reported short project durations (19% and 27%, respectively), the majority reported project durations between 3 and 4 years (74% and 64%, respectively), and a minority reported long project durations of more than 4 years (7% and 9%, respectively). A similar difference in the number of short contracts can be seen between Dutch PhD candidates (27%) and to non-Dutch PhD candidates (20%), as well as in long contracts (Dutch: 9%, non-Dutch 5%), whereas 3 to 4-year contracts were less common among Dutch PhD candidates (64%) compared to non-Dutch PhD candidates (75%).
Figure 4.1.2. Official duration of the PhD project, in percentage of total and percentage of total per faculty.
4.2 Starting and finishing a PhD project

The topic Starting a and finishing a PhD project contained questions on the design of the project, employment conditions, receiving help with practical issues related to the PhD position before and during the PhD, scientific requirements of the PhD thesis, and defending and printing the PhD thesis.

**Highlights**

- Who is responsible for the project design differs largely between faculties?
  - In traditional beta-faculties (ACTA, AMC, FNWI), supervisors take more responsibilities for the project design.
  - In LAW and FGW, PhD candidates take most responsibility for the project design.
- PhD candidates received most information on employment or scholarship conditions through their daily supervisor (46%), followed by an HR appointment (38%) and a job interview (34%).
  - A substantial portion of PhD candidates did not feel properly informed about their employment/scholarship conditions (28%).
  - A substantial portion of PhD candidates experienced problems because they were not properly informed about their employment/scholarship conditions (15%).
  - The percentage of PhD candidates that felt properly informed is lower in faculties where HR appointments are less common (LAW, FMG, and FGW).
- A substantial portion of international PhD candidates did not receive assistance in finding housing (13%) or other formalities as insurances and bank matters (26%), but would have liked such assistance.
- A majority of PhD candidates considered the requirements of the PhD thesis to be clear (72%).
- A majority (57%) of PhD candidates does not know whether funding is available for printing the PhD thesis.

**Project design**

We asked PhD candidates who designed their PhD project. Almost half (48%) answered that the supervisor mostly designed the project (figure 4.2.1). About a third (31%) answered that the PhD candidate and supervisor collaboratively designed the project. A minority (17%) answered that the PhD candidate mostly designed the project. The percentage of projects in which the PhD candidates were mostly responsible for the design was relatively high at FGW (60%) and LAW (69%), and relatively low at the traditional beta-science faculties like ACTA (12%), AMC (7%) and FNWI (6%). The percentage of projects in which either the PhD candidate or the supervisors were mostly responsible were comparable across PID and PNID.
Figure 4.2.1 A, B and C. A. Responses to the question “Who designed the PhD project?” in percentage of total and percentage of total per faculty, including legend. B. Responses in percentage of total and percentage of total of PID and PNID. For legend, see A. C. Responses in percentage of total and percentage of total per type of employment. For legend, see A.

Information about employment and/or scholarship conditions
First, we asked PhD candidates how they received information on their employment conditions. Candidates received most information on employment or scholarship conditions through their daily supervisor (46%), an HR appointment (38%), or a job interview (34%). Another source of information is an intake with the graduate school (11%, particularly at AMC and FGW). Indirect information channels such as the university website (20%, most faculties except ACTA and AMC), an info package (16%) or a PhD guide (15%, particularly FGW and FMG) were also regularly mentioned. 7% of the PhD candidates answered that they did not receive any information about their contract or scholarship conditions. The sources of information were quite diverse across faculties. PID and PNID did not show substantial differences in their sources of information about employment and/or scholarship conditions, apart from lower percentages of PNID reporting HR appointments (33%) compared to PID (47%).

Second, we asked PhD candidates whether they felt properly informed about their PhD contract. Most PhD candidates (72%) answered that they were properly informed about the employment or scholarship conditions, though a substantial percentage (28%) indicated that they did not feel properly informed (figure 4.2.2). Compared to other faculties, the percentage of PhD candidates who felt properly informed was
substantially lower at LAW (50%), FMG (60%) and FGW (64%). Interesting differences in information sources could be observed between faculties with a high rate or low rate of not-properly informed candidates. For instance, at LAW the university website was the most frequent source of information (29%), whereas at FNWI relatively twice as many PhD candidates indicated the daily supervisor and an HR appointment as a source of information (50% and 50% at FNWI and 26% and 20% at LAW respectively). We noticed that the faculties with low percentages of HR appointments, LAW (20%), FMG (18%), FGW (25%) and ACTA (25%) highly overlapped with the faculties in which higher numbers of PhD candidates did not feel properly informed about their contract or scholarship conditions (LAW, FMG, and FGW). Therefore, we checked whether these variables were related. We found that, overall, PhD candidates who had an HR appointment about their employment or scholarship conditions were more likely to indicate that they felt properly informed about these conditions. The percentage of PhD candidates that felt properly informed about their employment or scholarship conditions did not differ substantially across PID and PNID, or between Dutch and non-Dutch PhD candidates.

Third, we asked PhD candidates whether they experienced problems due to the university’s information provision regarding their employment or scholarship conditions. A small, but noteworthy number of PhD candidates (15%) indicated that they experienced problems, with higher numbers within FGW (25%), FMG (24%), LAW (18%) and ACTA (17%) (figure 4.2.2). Similarly, to the responses for the question on ‘feeling properly informed’, these were mostly faculties with little mentions of HR appointments as a source of information. The percentage of PhD candidates that experienced problems due to the university’s information provision regarding their employment or scholarship conditions did not differ substantially across PID and PNID, or between Dutch and non-Dutch PhD candidates.

Receiving assistance
We asked non-Dutch PhD candidates whether they received assistance in applying for a visa, finding housing, or other formalities (e.g., insurance, bank, etc.). Most non-Dutch who needed assistance received assistance (95%), as was the case for housing (81%), but a lot less for other formalities (37%) (figure 4.2.3). They most often received assistance with housing, more than they received help with applying for a visa or other formalities (e.g., insurances, bank). The non-Dutch PhD candidates also indicated that they did not need help with ‘other formalities’ (46%), but when they did, they often did not receive such help (26%).

We also asked PhD candidates to whom they turned for help. For all three topics—applying for a visa, finding housing, and other formalities—they most often turned to the international office, followed by someone else (not related to their graduate school or research group), and then someone from their graduate school or research group.
Figure 4.2.2 A and B. A. Responses to the question “Do you feel you were properly informed about your employment or scholarship conditions?” in percentage of total and percentage of total per faculty. B. Responses to the question “Do you experience problems because you were not properly informed about your employment or scholarship conditions?” in percentage of total and percentage of total per faculty.

Figure 4.2.3. Responses to the question “Did you receive assistance in applying for a visa, finding housing, and other formalities, e.g., insurances, bank?” in percentage of total. This question was only asked to non-Dutch respondents.

Scientific requirements of the PhD thesis

First, we asked whether PhD candidates considered the requirements of the PhD thesis to be clear. The majority of PhD candidates considered this very or rather clear (72%), followed by a substantial percentage considering them a bit clear (20%), and a small percentage considering these requirements rather or very unclear (8%).

Second, we asked whether PhD candidates discussed the scientific requirements of the PhD thesis, which the majority did (64%) though a substantial portion of PhD candidates did not (35%). Most the PhD candidates that had discussed these requirements did discuss this with their promotor (80%) and/or daily supervisor (70%). PhD candidates that had not yet discussed these requirements planned to discuss this with their promotor (69%) and/or daily supervisor (63%), and only a few (7%, n = 7) did not know with whom they would discuss this.
Defending and printing the PhD thesis

First, we asked whether any funding was available for printing the PhD thesis. This was unknown to the majority of PhD candidates (57%), though a small percentage indicated that no funding was available (12%), and a substantial portion of PhD candidates had funding available for printing the PhD thesis (31%).

Second, we asked whether PhD candidates had searched for information about the procedures and requirements for the thesis defence. Most respondents did not consider this relevant yet (46%), whereas 30% indicated that they searched for such information, and 24% that they will soon do so.

As a follow-up, we asked PhD candidates that had searched for information whether these procedures and requirements were clear to them and where they searched for such information, and we asked PhD candidates that had not yet searched for information whether they knew where to find this information. PhD candidates that had searched for information considered it very clear (19%), rather clear (48%) or a bit clear (27%), and a small percentage (6%) considered the information about procedures and requirements of the PhD defence unclear. The most mentioned sources for information about the thesis defence were the doctoral degree regulation on the UvA website (58%), a PhD guide (51%), fellow PhD candidates (49%), and the graduate school website (44%). Only a few PhD candidates asked the office of the Beadle for information (11%). Half of the PhD candidates that had not yet searched for information, did not know where to find information about the procedures and requirements of the thesis defence (52%).

Responses about finishing a PhD varied negligibly across faculties, between PID and PNID, and between Dutch and non-Dutch PhD candidates. We therefore do not report results for subgroups of PhD candidates.
4.3 Research environment

Questions on the research environment of PhD candidates considered the physical research environment and the social research environment. The physical research environment includes the access to and the adequacy of facilities, the (knowledge of) availability of travel and training budget, and monthly net income. The social research environment includes the introduction to and relations within the research institute, the frequency of contact, and the openness in discussing research integrity issues.

**Highlights**

- Most PhD candidates indicate that the offered research facilities are adequate (88%).
  - Even though PhD candidates indicate that facilities are adequate, not all PhD candidates have access to a computer or software.
- Travel or training budget are often insufficient (15% and 11% for travel and training, respectively), not available (7% and 8%), or are unknown to the PhD candidate (15% and 19%).
- A substantial percentage of PhD candidates received a monthly net income lower than €1500 (13%).
  - This is more common across non-Dutch PhD candidates (22%) compared to Dutch PhD candidates (7%), and across PNID (17%) compared to PID (5%).
- Contact and satisfaction with the research community differs across faculties, types of PhD candidates, and nationalities:
  - Most PhD candidates meet other researchers daily (36%) or regularly (35%), though a substantial group of PhD candidates rarely meets other researchers (21%).
  - At FGW, a substantial percentage of PhD candidates rarely meets other researchers and is dissatisfied with their social contacts at work.
  - PID and Dutch PhD candidates are more often satisfied with the social contacts at work compared to PNID and non-Dutch PhD candidates.
  - Dutch PhD candidates less often disagree with the research community providing opportunities to become involved in a broader research culture compared to non-Dutch PhD candidates.
- Most (70%) PhD candidates answer that their research group openly discusses research integrity issues.
  - This percentage was substantially lower at LAW compared to other faculties.

**Physical research environment**

First, we asked PhD candidates whether they had access to the following facilities: workplace, computer and software, other research facilities (e.g., lab, instruments, field work, databases), and the library. Nearly all PhD candidates had access to a workplace (90%), computer and software (90%), and the library (94%), and a smaller majority had access to other research facilities (66%) (figure 4.3.1). The access to these other research facilities differed large between faculties, with reported access ranging from 83% (FNWI) to 25% (FGW) and 26% (LAW). The type of PhD research (e.g., lab work versus literature studies) could probably explain these large differences, although this category also includes access to databases. The reported access to a computer and software also differed slightly across faculties, ranging from 77% (FGW) and 81% (ACTA) to 97% (FNWI). There were no noteworthy differences in access to facilities between PID and PNID, and between Dutch and non-Dutch PhD candidates.
Second, we asked PhD candidates whether they considered the facilities adequate, to which 88% of all PhD candidates agreed, and only 4% disagreed (figure 4.3.1). These percentages did not differ substantially across faculties, apart from ACTA and FGW, where a substantial portion of PhD candidates neither agreed nor disagreed with the facilities being adequate (24% and 19%, respectively), whereas these percentages were below 10% for all other faculties.

Third, we asked PhD candidates whether sufficient travel or a training budget was available. A majority of respondents considered their travel and training budget to be sufficient (64% and 62%), though substantial portions of PhD candidates considered this budget insufficient (15% and 11%), had no budget available (7% and 8%), or did not know whether there was any budget available (15% and 18%) (figure 4.3.2). These percentages varied substantially across faculties, slightly between PID and PNID, but negligibly between Dutch and non-Dutch PhD candidates.

Travel budget was considered insufficient by a substantial portion of PhD candidates at ACTA (21%), FGW (32%) and LAW (17%), was not available to a substantial portion of PhD candidates at ACTA (21%) and LAW (17%), and the availability of such a budget was unknown to substantial portions of PhD candidates at ACTA (21%), AMC (15%), FNWI (18%), and LAW (26%). At LAW, less than half of the PhD candidates considered

![Access to facilities](image1)

![Agreement with the statement “facilities are adequate”](image2)

Figure 4.3.1. A and B. A. Reported access to facilities, in percentage of total and percentage of total per faculty. B. Reported agreement by PhD candidates with the statements that the facilities to which PhD candidates have access are adequate, in percentage of total and percentage of total per faculty.
the travel budget sufficient (40%). Travel budget was more often considered sufficient by PID (72%) compared to PNID (59), and more often not available to PNID (10%) than to PID (2%).

Training budget was considered insufficient by a substantial portion of PhD candidates at FGW (17%) and LAW (20%), was not available to a substantial portion of PhD candidates at LAW (23%), and the availability of such a budget was unknown to substantial portions of PhD candidates at all faculties (17% to 29%). Especially at LAW, only a small percentage of PhD candidates considered the training budget sufficient (29%). Training budget was more often considered sufficient by PID (67%) compared to PNID (58%), and more often not available to PNID (11%) than to PID (3%).

![Availability of travel budget](image)

![Availability of training budget](image)

Figure 4.3.2 A and B. A. Responses to the question on the availability of travel budget, in percentage of total and percentage of total per faculty. B. Responses to the question on the availability of training budget, in percentage of total and percentage of total per faculty.

Fourth, we asked PhD candidates about their monthly net income. A substantial minority received a monthly net income lower than €1500 (13%), about a quarter of the PhD candidates received an income between €1500 and €2000 (22%), about half of the PhD candidates received an income of €2000 to €2500 (49%), and a substantial minority received an income over €2500 (12%). The monthly net income was comparable across faculties, apart from ACTA and FGW, where a large group of PhD candidates (45% and 32%, respectively) received less than €1500 net per month, and at FEB, where almost all PhD candidates (83%) reported an income of more than €2000 net per month and no PhD candidate reported an income of less than €1500 per month. The monthly net income differed slightly across PID and PNID. A monthly net income
below €1500 was more common across PNID (17%) compared to PID (5%). A monthly net income above €2000 was more common across PID (59%) compared to PNID (42%). The difference between Dutch and non-Dutch PhD candidates showed similar results. A monthly net income below €1500 was more common across non-Dutch PhD candidates (22%) compared to Dutch PhD candidates (7%). A monthly net income above €2000 was more common across Dutch PhD candidates (66%) compared to non-Dutch PhD candidates (51%).

**Social research environment**
First, we asked how PhD candidates had been introduced to their research institutes, by providing a list of options from which they could select all options that applied. Most PhD were introduced to the research institute by either their supervisor (59%) or colleagues and other PhD candidates (55%), but a substantial portion had not been introduced to the research institute (13%). These percentages differed slightly across faculties. The percentage of PhD candidates that indicated to not have been introduced to the research institute was largest at LAW (23%), FEB (17%), and AMC (16%). PhD guides often served as introduction to the research institute at FGW (36%) and FMG (40%). An information of the HR department was more common at AMC (18%) and FNWI (25%), and a letter from the research institute was more common at ACTA (25%) and FGW (26%), compared to other institutes.

Second, we asked PhD candidates whether they agreed with statements about different aspects of their research community (i.e., their department, research group, and graduate school). PhD candidates mostly agreed with all statements (figure 4.3.3). Namely, that their research community provides opportunities to become involved in a broader research culture (68%), has a simulating research ambiance (70%), provides a good seminar program (51%), and offers an inspiring training program (57%). Also, most PhD candidates feel integrated into the research community (72%), and are satisfied with social relations at work (65%), with contact with other PhD candidates (70%), and with contact with other staff members (76%). PhD candidates disagreed most with the research community offering a good seminar program (21%) and training program (16%), and the being satisfied with social relations at work (18%). Figures 4.3.2 A and B show the distribution of responses to each of these statements. These percentages differed slightly between faculties, and for some topics between PID and PNID, and between Dutch and non-Dutch PhD candidates.

Disagreement with the research community providing opportunities to become involved in the broader research culture was most common at FGW (20%) and LAW (24%), and varied between 0% (ACTA) and 16% (FMG) at other faculties. Disagreement with the research community having a simulating research ambiance was most common at LAW (25%), and varied between 0% (ACTA) and 14% (FGW) at other faculties. Disagreement with feeling integrated into the research community quite was most common at FGW (30%), and only rare at ACTA (5%). Disagreement with a good seminar program being available was most common LAW (39%) and FMG (28%), and varied between 11% (FNWI) and 21% (FEB) at other faculties. Disagreement with an inspiring training program being available was most common FMG (49%) and LAW (38%), and varied between 14% (FGW) and 28% (FEB) at other faculties. Disagreement on being satisfied with social relationships at work was most common FGW (28%), and varied between 9% (LAW) and 20% (FEB) at other faculties. Disagreement on being satisfied with contact with other PhD candidates was most common LAW (24%) and FGW (22%), and varied between 5% (ACTA) and 13% (AMC and FEB) at other faculties. Disagreement on being satisfied with contact with other staff members was most common FGW (32%), and varied between 9% (LAW) and 20% (FEB) at other faculties.
Figure 4.3.3. Reported agreement by PhD candidates with the statements related to their research environment, in percentage of total.

PID more often agreed to be satisfied with the contact with other PhD candidates compared to PNID (79% versus 66%), as with the contact with other staff members (75% versus 66%). PID more often disagreed with the research community providing a good seminar program compared to PNID (21% versus 15%), as was the case for an inspiring training program (30% versus 18%).

Dutch PhD candidates more often agreed to be satisfied with their social relations at work compared to non-Dutch PhD candidates (79% versus 63%). Non-Dutch PhD candidates more often disagreed with the research community providing opportunities to become involved in a broader research culture compared to Dutch PhD candidates (16% versus 9%), and slightly more often disagreed with being satisfied with social relationships at work (18% versus 11%) and contact with other PhD candidates (17% versus 12%).

Third, we asked PhD candidates how often they meet other researchers. Most PhD candidates meet other researchers daily (36%) or regularly (35%). However, a substantial group of PhD candidates rarely meets other researchers (21%) and a small group only meets other researchers when they meet with their supervisors (5%). These numbers differed somewhat across faculties, though negligibly between PID and PNID or between Dutch and non-Dutch PhD candidates. At FGW, about half (45%) of the responding PhD candidates indicated to rarely meet with other researchers. whereas this percentage varied between 16% (AMC) and 29% (LAW) at other faculties. The percentage of PhD candidates that only meets other researchers when meeting with their supervisors was highest at FEB (17%), and varied from 3% (AMC) and 9% (ACTA and LAW) at other faculties.

Fourth, we asked PhD candidates whether research integrity issues are openly discussed in their research group. A vast majority of the PhD candidates agreed with this statement (70%), and a small but substantial minority disagreed to this statement (11%). These numbers differed somewhat across faculties, though negligibly between PID and PNID or between Dutch and non-Dutch PhD candidates. At LAW, 24% of the responding PhD candidates disagreed with research integrity issues being discussed openly, whereas this percentage varied between 5% (ACTA) to 14% (FNWI) at other faculties.
4.4 Supervision

The topic of supervision covered questions on the composition of the supervision team, satisfaction with supervision, and frequency of appointments with supervisors.

Highlights

- Most PhD candidates are supervised by one promotor and one co-promotor, two promotors, or one promotor and two co-promotors.
  - PhD candidates at ACTA and AMC most often have large supervisory teams.
  - Substantial portions of PhD candidates at FEB (14%) and FNWI (17%) reported to have only one supervisor.
- Most PhD candidates meet their supervisor once a week, but this differed largely between faculties.
  - At the traditional beta faculties (ACTA, AMC, FNWI) the majority of PhD candidates meets their supervisor at least once a week.
  - At FEB and FMG about half of the PhD candidates meet their supervisor at least once a week.
  - At FGW and LAW most PhD candidates meet their supervisor less than once a month.
- The satisfaction with the number of supervision appointments did not differ substantially between faculties.
- A majority of PhD candidates (ranging from 72 to 90% between faculties) are satisfied with supervision.
- A substantial percentage of PhD candidates (12%) is extremely dissatisfied with the supervision they receive.
- Substantial percentages of PhD candidates disagreed with the statement that supervisors self-evaluate their behaviour and viewpoints (21%).

Supervision structure, general satisfaction, and frequency

First, we asked PhD candidates how their supervisory team is composed. Most PhD candidates at the UvA are supervised by one promotor and one co-promotor (30%), followed by two promotors (19%) or one promotor and two or more co-promotors (16%) (figure 4.4.1). A substantial portion reported a supervision team with at least two promotors and two co-promotors (11%) or at least two promotors and one co-promotor (9%). A remarkable 8% of respondents reported to have only one supervisor (either a promotor or co-promotor), and 4% reported to only be supervised by two co-promotors. These numbers varied substantially across faculties, but negligibly between PID and PNID or between Dutch and non-Dutch PhD candidates. Large supervisory teams with at least three supervisors were very common at ACTA (46%) and AMC (56%), less common at FMG (43%), FNWI (25%), and LAW (20%), and rare at FEB (7%) and FGW (4%). Supervisory teams with only one supervisor (mostly one promotor) were most common at FEB (14%) and FNWI (17%).

Second, we asked who supervises the PhD candidate most of the time. The percentage of PhD candidates that received most supervision from the promotor (42%) was comparable to the percentage of PhD candidates that received most supervision from the co-promotor (47%). These percentages differed somewhat between faculties and between Dutch and non-Dutch PhD candidates, but negligibly between PID and PNID. At AMC, the primary supervisor was substantially less often the promotor compared to the co-promotor, which was reversed at FEB, FGW, FNWI, and LAW. At ACTA and FMG the primary supervisor was just as often the promotor as the co-promotor. Dutch PhD candidates less often indicated their promotor as the primary supervisor compared to non-Dutch PhD candidates.
Third, we asked PhD candidates whether they were, in general, satisfied with the supervision they received. A large majority of PhD candidates was satisfied with the supervision they received (85%) and a small but substantial portion of PhD candidates was dissatisfied with the supervision they received (12%). We also asked this question about supervision by promotors and co-promotors separately, but these percentages did not differ substantially and are therefore not reported. The general satisfaction with the supervision ranged from 72% at ACTA to 90% at FMG, and did not substantially differ between PID and PNID or between Dutch and non-Dutch PhD candidates.

Fourth, we asked often PhD candidates meet with their primary supervisor. Most PhD candidates meet their supervisor once a week (42%), followed by several times a month (22%), about once a month (13%), several times a week (10%), and less than once a month (9%) (figure 4.4.2). These number varied strongly between faculties, but not between PID and PNID or between Dutch and non-Dutch PhD candidates.
At the traditional beta faculties (ACTA, AMC, FNWI) the majority of PhD candidates meet their supervisor at least once a week. At FEB and FMG, just below half of the PhD candidates meet their supervisor at least once a week, which is rare at FGW and LAW, where most PhD candidates meet their supervisor less than once a month.

**Satisfaction with specific aspects of the supervision**
We asked PhD candidates about their satisfaction with several aspects of the supervision they received, namely with the number of appointments, motivation and support, commitment of supervisors, freedom given by the supervisors, feedback from supervisors, and supervisors’ knowledge and expertise. PhD candidates mostly agreed to be satisfied with these topics, ranging from 71% (satisfied with supervisor’s knowledge and expertise) to 85% (satisfied with the freedom supervisors give) across topics. Few candidates disagreed to be satisfied with these topics, ranging from 7% (satisfied with supervisor’s knowledge and expertise) to 15% (satisfied with motivation and support), across topics. These percentages varied negligibly between faculties, even for the satisfaction with the number of appointments although the frequency of supervision appointments differed substantially across faculties.

Also, we asked if PhD candidates know what their supervisors expect form them, if supervisors know what the PhD candidate expects from them, and whether the PhD candidates thinks the supervisors self-evaluate their behaviour and viewpoints. A majority of the PhD candidates agreed with these statements, though substantial percentages disagreed with the statement that supervisors self-evaluate their behaviour and viewpoints (21%). These responses were comparable across faculties.
### 4.5 Education

The topic of education included questions about graduate school enrolled, familiarity with the graduate school and its role, the relevancy of these roles to the PhD project, satisfaction with the graduate school, discipline specific courses, general skills activities, teacher-training activities, and career orientation activities. We first discuss the graduate schools, then the accessibility to and the overall satisfaction with all types of courses and activities. Thereafter, we discuss each of the types of courses and activities in a separate section. For each, we discuss the satisfaction with the number of activities, the diversity of provided activities, the information received about such activities, and the number of activities PhD candidates participated in.

**Highlights**

- Not every PhD candidate is enrolled in a graduate school and/or familiar with its role.
  - A third of PhD candidates does not know if they are enrolled in a graduate school.
  - At the AMC, almost all PhD candidates indicate that they are enrolled.
  - Of PhD candidates that are enrolled, a substantial portion (22%) is not familiar with (the role of) the graduate school.
  - 73% of PhD candidates that are enrolled are satisfied with the graduate school.
  - PhD candidates find offering courses, symposia, workshops etc. the most relevant role of the graduate school.
- Most PhD candidates have access to seminars and conferences (89%).
- Most PhD candidates have access to general skills courses and workshops (86%).
  - Most PhD candidates are satisfied with the number and the diversity of general-skills activities available at the UvA and the information they receive about such activities.
  - Especially at LAW and FMG, quite some PhD candidates are dissatisfied with the number and variety of, and the information provision about general-skills activities.
- Most PhD candidates have access to discipline specific courses and workshops (72%).
  - Most PhD candidates are satisfied with the number and diversity of discipline-specific courses available at the UvA, and the information they receive about such activities.
  - At LAW, FGW, and FNWI a large portion of PhD candidates was dissatisfied with the number and diversity of discipline-specific courses.
  - At LAW, FNWI, and FMG a large portion of PhD candidates was dissatisfied with the information provision about discipline-specific courses.
- Only half of the PhD candidates reported to have access to teacher-training activities and career orientation activities (50%).
  - Most PhD candidates are satisfied with the number of teacher-training activities available at the UvA.
  - About half of the PhD candidates is satisfied with the diversity of and the information they receive about teacher-training activities.
  - Especially at FGW, FMG, and LAW, substantial percentages of PhD candidates are dissatisfied with the number and variety of, and the information provision about teacher-training activities.
- Less than half of the PhD candidates reported to have access to career orientation activities (44%).
  - About half of the PhD candidates are satisfied with the number and the diversity of career-orientation activities available at the UvA and the information they receive about such activities.
A substantial percentage was dissatisfied with the number and the diversity of career-orientation activities available at the UvA and the information they receive about such activities.

- A substantial percentage of PhD candidates (21%) does not have sufficient time to participate in education activities.
  - Especially at ACTA, FMG, and FGW, PhD candidates had too little time to participate in education activities.

**Graduate school enrolment**

We asked PhD candidates whether they were enrolled in a graduate school, and which graduate school they were enrolled in. The majority of PhD candidates (64%) was enrolled in a graduate school, and a small but substantial portion was not enrolled in a graduate school (17%) or did not know whether they were enrolled in a graduate school (19%) (figure 4.5.1). These percentages differed substantially across faculties and between Dutch and non-Dutch PhD candidates, but negligibly between PID and PNID.

Graduate school enrolment was highest at AMC and FGW, and lowest at LAW, unclarity about graduate school enrolment was substantial at all faculties apart from AMC and highest at LAW. Dutch PhD candidates were more often enrolled to a graduate school compared to non-Dutch PhD candidates (72% versus 51%), and less often unaware of graduate school enrolment compared to non-Dutch PhD candidates (15% versus 26%).

![Figure 4.5.1. Reported enrolment in a graduate school by PhD candidates, in percentage of total and percentage of total per faculty.](image)

**Support from the Graduate School**

The following questions are only asked from PhD candidates that indicated to be enrolled in a graduate school. First, we asked whether PhD candidates were familiar with the graduate school and its role, to which a majority agreed (78%) but also a substantial portion disagreed (22%). These percentages differed highly across faculties, not between PID and PNID, and slightly between Dutch and non-Dutch PhD candidates. At ACTA (100%) and AMC (87%) all or almost all PhD candidates were familiar with the role of their graduate school, whereas at FEB (44%) a minority of PhD candidates was familiar with the role of their graduate school. Dutch PhD candidates were more often familiar with the role of their graduate school compared to non-Dutch PhD candidates (84% versus 65%).

Second, we asked PhD candidates whether they agreed with their graduate school being satisfactory, to which a majority (73%) agreed, and a small minority (8%) disagreed (figure 4.5.2). These percentages...
differed slightly across faculties but only negligibly between PID and PNID, and between Dutch and non-Dutch PhD candidates. At ACTA (24%), LAW (17%), and FMG (14%), substantial percentages of PhD candidates disagree with the graduate school being satisfactory, though only small percentages of PhD candidates answered this question for ACTA (n = 8) and LAW (n = 6) because (knowledge of) graduate school enrolment was low in these faculties.

Roles of the Graduate School
We asked PhD candidates which roles of the graduate school were relevant to their PhD project. An overwhelming majority (88%) state that the Graduate School’s role in offering courses, symposia, workshops etc. is most relevant, followed by keeping track of progress and support in case of problems (68%), and keeping track of progress (55%). These percentages were comparable across faculties (given the low responses at ACTA and LAW), though support in case of problems was less often mentioned at FEB (50%) and FMG (50%), and keeping track of progress was less often mentioned at FGW (35%) and FNWI (43%).

Access to education activities
First, we asked PhD candidates to which education activities they have access: seminars and conferences, general skills courses and workshops, discipline specific courses and workshops, teacher-training activities, career orientation activities, and other courses (the latter not shown in this report). Most PhD candidates had access to seminars and conferences (89%), followed by general skills courses (86%), and discipline-specific courses (72%) (see figure 4.5.3 A). Only half of the PhD candidates had access to teacher-training activities (50%) and career-orientation activities (44%). These percentages varied slightly across faculties (see Figure xx), and between PID and PNID, but negligibly between Dutch and non-Dutch PhD candidates. Especially ACTA showed low percentages access to discipline-specific course (36%), teacher-training activities (14%), and career orientation (5%). Teacher-training activities were a lot less often mentioned at AMC (30%), as was the case for career orientation at LAW (14%). PID more often reported access to teacher-training activities compared to PNID (63% versus 42%), as was the case for career orientation (51% versus 40%).

Figure 4.5.2. Reported satisfaction with graduate schools by PhD candidates, in percentage of total and percentage of total per faculty. This question was only asked to PhD candidates who answered yes to the question whether they were enrolled in a graduate school (see figure 4.5.1).
Second, we asked whether PhD candidates had sufficient time to participate in the aforementioned activities. Most PhD candidates (63%) reported having sufficient time to participate, though a large percentage (21%) disagreed to have sufficient time to participate in such education activities (figure 4.5.3 B). These percentages differed substantially across faculties (see figure 4.5.3 B), though only negligibly between PID and PNID, and between Dutch and non-Dutch PhD candidates. Sufficient time to participate in education activities was most common at AMC (69%), FEB (87%), FNWI (66%), and LAW (64%). Whereas many PhD candidates at ACTA (33%), FGW (27%), and FMG (32%) disagreed to have sufficient time to participate in education activities.

Third, we asked whether the PhD candidate was in general satisfied with the offered education activities—by both the UvA and national graduate schools—in which they are allowed to participate. Most PhD candidates (66%) are satisfied with these activities, and a small but substantial minority is dissatisfied (15%) (figure 4.5.4). These percentages differed substantially across faculties (see figure 4.5.4), though only negligibly between PID and PNID, and between Dutch and non-Dutch PhD candidates. Especially at LAW (27%) and FMG (27%), a substantial percentage of PhD candidates is dissatisfied with the available education activities.
Fourth, we asked whether the education activities that PhD candidates participated in contributed to the completion of their PhD project. The majority of the PhD candidates agreed to this (64%), though a substantial percentage did not (19%). These percentages differed only slightly across faculties, between PID and PNID, and between Dutch and non-Dutch PhD candidates.

Fifth, we asked PhD candidates whether their supervisor encouraged them to participate in education activities. The majority of PhD candidates (62%) agreed that their supervisors encouraged them to participate in education activities. However, a substantial percentage of PhD candidates (18%) that their supervisors encouraged them to participate in education activities. These percentages differed only slightly across faculties, between PID and PNID, and between Dutch and non-Dutch PhD candidates.

**Discipline-specific courses at the UvA**

First, we asked how strongly PhD candidates agreed or disagreed to be satisfied with (1) the number of discipline-specific courses, (2) the diversity of these courses, and (3) the information they received about such courses. Most PhD candidates agreed to be satisfied (62 to 64% across questions), though substantial percentages of PhD candidates disagreed (22 to 23% across questions).

The satisfaction with the number of discipline-specific courses differed largely across faculties, though negligibly between PID and PNID, and between Dutch and non-Dutch PhD candidates. Especially at LAW (53%), FGW (36%) and FNWI (32%), a large to substantial percentage of PhD candidates was dissatisfied with the number of discipline-specific courses. The satisfaction with the diversity of discipline-specific courses also differed largely across faculties. As for the number of courses, especially at LAW (53%), FGW (30%) and FNWI (31%), a large percentage of PhD candidates was dissatisfied with the diversity of discipline-specific courses. The satisfaction with the information about discipline-specific courses also differed largely across faculties, and slightly between PID and PNID. Especially LAW (56%), FNWI (33%), and FMG (28%), showed large percentages of PhD candidates that were dissatisfied with the information they received about discipline-specific courses. Also, PID (47%) were less often satisfied with this information compared to PNID (58%).

Second, we asked PhD candidates who had access to discipline-specific courses in how many of such courses they had participated. These numbers varied largely across PhD candidates. About a quarter (23%) of PhD candidates did not yet participate in any discipline-specific courses, whereas 19% participated in
four or more discipline-specific courses. This varied slightly across faculties, and was comparable between PID and PNID, and between Dutch and non-Dutch PhD candidates. Especially at FGW (34%) and FNWI (36%) a large percentage of PhD candidates had not yet participated in discipline-specific courses.

Third, we asked PhD candidates who took part in discipline-specific courses whether they agreed to be satisfied with the quality of the discipline-specific courses, to which a large majority agreed (90%). This was comparable across faculties, between PID and PNID, and between Dutch and non-Dutch PhD candidates.

**General-skills activities at the UvA**
First, we asked how strongly PhD candidates agreed or disagreed to be satisfied with (1) the number of general-skills activities, (2) the diversity of these activities, and (3) the information they received about such activities. Most PhD candidates agreed to be satisfied (89%, 71%, and 69%, respectively), though substantial percentages of PhD candidates disagreed (10%, 10%, and 15%, respectively).

These percentages differed substantially across faculties, and negligibly between PID and PNID, and between Dutch and non-Dutch PhD candidates. Especially at LAW (27%, 23%, and 23% across questions) and FMG (18%, 22%, and 24% across questions), quite some PhD candidates are dissatisfied with the number and variety of, and the information about general-skills activities.

Second, we asked PhD candidates who had access to general-skills courses in how many of such courses they had participated. Most PhD candidates took part in one or two courses (46%) followed by three or four courses (24%). A substantial portion of PhD candidates did not yet take part in such activities (16%). This differed slightly across faculties, and was comparable between PID and PNID, and between Dutch and non-Dutch PhD candidates. Especially at FMG, a substantial portion (31%) of PhD candidates had not yet participated in general-skills courses.

Third, we asked PhD candidates who took part in general-skills activities whether they agreed to be satisfied with the quality of the general-skills activities, to which a large majority agreed (82%). This was comparable across faculties, between PID and PNID, and between Dutch and non-Dutch PhD candidates.

**Teacher-training activities at the UvA**
First, we asked how strongly PhD candidates agreed or disagreed to be satisfied with (1) the number of teacher-training activities, (2) the diversity of these activities, and (3) the information they received about such activities. Most PhD candidates agreed to be satisfied (78%, 54%, and 57%, respectively), though substantial percentages of PhD candidates disagreed (12%, 18%, and 22%, respectively). The percentage of PhD candidates that was satisfied with the diversity of activities (54%) and information about these activities (57%) was substantially lower than the percentage of PhD candidates that was satisfied with the number of activities (78%).

These percentages also differed substantially across faculties\(^\text{16}\), but negligibly between PID and PNID and between Dutch and non-Dutch PhD candidates. Especially at FGW (19%, 31%, and 48% across questions), FMG (21%, 25%, and 23% across questions), and LAW (13%, 23%, 31%) substantial percentages of PhD candidates are dissatisfied with the number and variety of, and the information about teacher-training activities.

\(^{16}\) Only 2 PhD candidates from ACTA responded to this question, therefore ACTA is not considered in the analyses in this section.
Second, we asked PhD candidates who had access to teacher-training activities in how many of such courses they had participated. Most PhD candidates had participated in a single teacher training activity (43%) or had not participated in any teacher training activity (39%). This differed largely across faculties, and slightly between PID and PNID, and between Dutch non-Dutch PhD candidates. Especially at FEB (78%) and LAW (75%), a large part of PhD candidates had participated in teacher-training activities, whereas at AMC (63%) and FGW (55%), the majority of PhD candidates had not yet participated in teacher-training activities. PNID more often had not yet participated in teacher-training activities compared to PID (47% versus 33%), as was the case for Dutch PhD candidates compared to non-Dutch PhD candidates (42% versus 34%).

Third, we asked PhD candidates who took part in teacher-training activities whether they agreed to be satisfied with the quality of the teacher-training activities, to which a majority agreed (77%) and a small percentage of PhD candidates disagreed (10%). This differed negligibly across faculties, between PID and PNID, and between Dutch and non-Dutch PhD candidates.

**Career-orientation activities at the UvA**

First, we asked how strongly PhD candidates agreed or disagreed to be satisfied with (1) the number of career-orientation activities, (2) the diversity of these activities, and (3) the information they received about such activities. About half of the PhD candidates agreed to be satisfied (57%, 45%, and 50%, respectively), though substantial percentages of PhD candidates disagreed (16%, 22%, and 19%, respectively).

Second, we asked PhD candidates who had access to career-orientation activities in how many of such activities they had participated. A large majority of PhD candidates had not yet participated in career-orientation activities (54%), and a substantial group had participated in one career-orientation activity (27%).

Third, we asked PhD candidates who took part in career-orientation services whether they agreed to be satisfied with the quality of the teacher-training activities, to which a majority agreed (77%) and a small percentage of PhD candidates disagreed (11%).

Fourth, we asked how strongly they agreed or disagreed that the career-orientation services contributed to the preparation for their future career, to which a majority agreed (61%) and a substantial percentage of PhD candidates disagreed (21%).

All responses to the questions about career-orientation services discussed so far yielded similar results between PID and PNID, and between Dutch and non-Dutch PhD candidates. We observed some differences between faculties, but these are not noteworthy given that for some faculties only a small number of PhD candidates responded to the questions about the satisfaction with career-orientation services.
4.6 Teaching

The survey section on teaching contained questions on whether or not PhD candidates teach students, how many hours they spent per week on average on teaching, and how many hours they spent per week on average on supervision.

**Highlights**
- 71% of PhD candidates teaches or supervises students.
  - 38% of the PhD candidates has a teaching obligation.
  - 33% of the PhD candidates teach voluntarily.
- The teaching load varies across PhD candidates.
  - Most teaching PhD candidates teach and supervise up to 4 hours a week.
  - At FEB, most teaching PhD candidates teach and supervise 4 to 8 hours a week.
  - A substantial percentage of PhD candidates (19%) spends more than 8 hours per week teaching and supervising students.
- Not all PhD candidates feel prepared to teach.
  - 50% agrees that teacher-training activities prepare them well for teaching and supervision.
    - This percentage was higher at ACTA and FNWI.
  - 23% disagrees that teacher-training activities prepare them well for teaching and supervision.
    - This percentage was higher at LAW, FEB, and FGW.

**Teaching and Supervision**
First, we asked PhD candidates whether they teach and/or supervise students. Most PhD candidates (71%) teach and supervise students. Of all PhD candidates, 38% indicate that they teach obligatory and 33% indicate that they teach voluntarily (figure 4.6.1). About 3% state that they are not allowed to teach. The percentage of PhD candidates that does not teach and/or supervise students varies strongly between faculties, and between PID and PNID, but negligibly between Dutch and non-Dutch PhD candidates.

Not teaching or supervising is most common at FGW, followed by LAW (38%), AMC (33%), FMG (29%), and ACTA (27%), and least common at FEB (7%) and FNWI (11%). A teaching obligation is very common at FEB (86%), FNWI (69%), FMG (55%), and LAW (44%), and least common at AMC (11%), FGW (18%), and ACTA (27%). PID more often have teaching obligations compared to PNID (54% versus 27%), and not teaching is more common across PNID compared to PID (13% and 35%). Not being allowed to teach is rare across all faculties and both PID and PNID.

Second, we asked PhD candidates how many hours they spent on teaching and how many hours they spent on supervision of students per week, which we combined for this report (figure 4.6.1). Of teaching PhD candidates, most spend less than half a day per week on teaching, followed by substantial percentages that teach 4–8 hours, or even over 8 hours per week. A small percentage spends more than 2 days per week on teaching. Apart from the large differences across faculties and between PID and PNID in the percentages of PhD candidates that do not teach at all, these percentages differed only slightly across faculties, between PID and PNID, and between Dutch a non-Dutch PhD candidate. However, at FEB, teaching 4–8 hours a week is more common than teaching up to half a day per week. See figure 4.6.1 C for the differences across faculties.
A. Responses to the question “do you teach and/or supervise students?” in percentage of total. B. Reported hours per week spend on teaching, supervision, or both, by PhD candidates, in percentage of total. C. Reported hours per week spend on both teaching and supervision by PhD candidates, in percentage of total and percentage of total per faculty.

Figure 4.6.1 A, B and C. A. Responses to the question “do you teach and/or supervise students?” in percentage of total. B. Reported hours per week spend on teaching, supervision, or both, by PhD candidates, in percentage of total. C. Reported hours per week spend on both teaching and supervision by PhD candidates, in percentage of total and percentage of total per faculty.

Teaching Support

We asked PhD candidates on how strongly they agreed or disagreed with the statement “Support for teaching activities prepares me well for teaching and supervision”. Only half (50%) of the PhD candidates agreed with this statement, and about a quarter (23%) of PhD candidates disagreed with this statement (see figure 4.6.2). These percentages differed somewhat across faculties, and negligibly between PID and PNID, and between Dutch and non-Dutch PhD candidates. Especially at FEB (32%), where many PhD candidates teach a substantial number of hours per week, large portions of PhD candidates disagreed with support for teaching preparing well for teaching and supervision. This was similar for PhD candidates at LAW (30%), but even more at FGW (38%), noteworthy the faculty where only few PhD candidates teach.
Figure 4.6.2. Reported agreement by PhD candidates with the statement “support for teaching activities prepares me well for teaching and supervision”, in percentage of total and percentage of total per faculty.
4.7 Progress and wellbeing

The topic of progress and wellbeing covered questions on the progress of PhD projects, how this progress was monitored, and PhD candidates’ wellbeing. We did not only ask for the progress and wellbeing itself, but also how these topics were affected by other facets of the PhD (work) environment.

**Highlights**

- A large percentage of PhD candidates did not have a go/no-go meeting (45%).
  - At AMC and ACTA, the majority of PhD candidates did not have a go/no-go meeting.
  - The majority of PNID did not have a go/no-go meeting.
- One third (34%) of PhD candidates did not have any (annual) progress reviews.
- Approximately equally large percentages of PhD candidates were on schedule (47%) or had fallen behind schedule (42%).
  - Two thirds (67%) of PhD candidates expect a delay within a range of 3-12 months.
  - Most of the PhD candidates that faced delays (76%) had not made any arrangement yet or did not know whether arrangements had been made.
  - Most PhD candidates named problems with their experiment or data collection (41%), followed by the original plans being too ambitious (38%), bad time management (23%), and (mental) illness (19%) as reason for delays.
- More than half of all PhD candidates (51%) indicates the workload as high, with 10% describing it as too high, and 38% describing it as normal.
  - Work interruptions, the pressure to publish, the difficulty of the work, and the amount of work stand out as reasons for high work pressure.
- Less than half of all PhD candidates (46%) rates their wellbeing as good, 45% rates it as fair and 6% as poor.
  - Interaction with colleagues is the most important positive factor for wellbeing. Especially at FEB (41%) and FMG (43%), the contact with the daily supervisor was often mentioned as positive impact on wellbeing.
  - Teaching is often mentioned as having a negative impact on wellbeing at FEB (25%), as is employment after the PhD trajectory at FEB (38%), FGW (30%), and FMG (28%).

**Progress reviews**

First, we asked PhD candidates whether they had a go/no-go meeting. About half of the PhD candidates had such a meeting (48%), whereas about half did not (45%). These percentages varied highly across faculties and between PID and PNID, and slightly between Dutch and non-Dutch PhD candidates.

Not having a go/no-go meeting was common at almost all faculties, and the case for the majority of PhD candidates at AMC (64%) and ACTA (52%) (see figure 4.7.1). PID often had such a meeting, contrary to PNID which much less often had such a meeting (63% versus 37%).

Second, we asked PhD candidates whether they had one or more (annual) progress reviews. A majority of PhD candidates (61%) had had such a review, though a substantial percentage did not (34%) (figure 4.7.2). These percentages varied highly across faculties, slightly between PID and PNID, and negligibly between Dutch and non-Dutch PhD candidates. Not having an annual progress review was rare at FEB (11%), but quite common at other faculties, ranging from 27% (FNWI) to 44% (LAW). PID more often had such a review compared to PNID (67% versus 57%).
Figure 4.7.1 A and B. A. Responses to the question whether PhD candidates had a go/no go meeting, in percentage of total and percentage of total per faculty. B. Responses to the question whether PhD candidates had a go/no go meeting, in percentage of total and percentage of total PID, PNID, Dutch, and non-Dutch.

Figure 4.7.2 A and B. A. Responses to the question whether PhD candidates had an (annual) progress meeting, in percentage of total and percentage of total per faculty. B. Responses to the question whether PhD candidates had an (annual) progress meeting, in percentage of total and percentage of total PID, PNID, Dutch, and non-Dutch.

**Progress and delays**

First, we asked whether PhD candidates were on schedule with your planning. Approximately equally large percentages were on schedule (47%) or had fallen behind schedule (42%), and a small but substantial percentage had no planning at all (8%). These percentages differed negligibly between faculties, or between PID and PNID, and between Dutch and non-Dutch PhD candidates.

Second, we asked the PhD candidates who had fallen behind schedule what the expected delay was. A small percentage of PhD candidates expected less than 2 months delay (12%), about half of the PhD candidates expected 2 to 6 months delay (50%), about a quarter expect between 6 to 12 months delay (25%), and a small percentage expected a delay of more than a year (13%). These percentages differed somewhat between faculties (see figure 4.7.3). The expected delays were least severe at FNWI, where only 16% expected a delay of more than 6 months, and most severe at ACTA, where 62% of the PhD candidates expected a delay of more than 6 months.
Third, we asked the PhD candidates who had fallen behind schedule whether agreements had been made about possible extension of your PhD project and how this will be financed. This was most often not the case or unknown to the PhD candidate (76%). These percentages differed only slightly across faculties. At ACTA, agreements were made in half of the cases (50%), whereas this was the case for a very small portion of PhD candidates at FGW (5%).
Fourth, we asked PhD candidates who had fallen behind what the main reasons were for their delay, for which they could tick all options that applied. See figure 4.7.4 for an overview of all options and the distribution of these responses across faculties. Most PhD candidates named problems with their experiment or data collection (41%), followed by the original plans being too ambitious (38%), bad time management (23%), and (mental) illness (19%). The reasons for delay differed somewhat across faculties. For example, problems with experiments or data collection were less often mentioned at FEB, FGW and LAW, compared to other faculties. Plans being too ambitious was mentioned quite often at AMC, FMG and FNWI, compared to other faculties. (Mental) illness was often mentioned at FEB, FGW, and FMG, though rarely at ACTA, AMC, and LAW.

**Workload and time pressure**
First, we asked PhD candidates how they would describe the workload or time pressure in their PhD project. More than half (51%) indicates the workload as high, with 10% describing it as too high, and 38% describing it as normal. These percentages differed slightly across faculties, but only negligibly between PID and PNID, and between Dutch and non-Dutch PhD candidates. Especially at ACTA (15%), AMC (13%), FNWI (12%) and FMG (9%), substantial portions of PhD candidates described the workload as too high, compared to low percentages at FEB (0%) and FGW (4%). At FEB, a high percentage described the workload as high (71%) compared to other faculties.

Second, we asked PhD candidates who described their workload as to which degree this workload bothered them. Almost all indicated that this bothers them, ranging from not at all (8%), to somewhat (52%), considerably (33%), and extremely (7%).

Third, we asked the PhD candidates who were considerably or extremely bothered by their workload, what they considered the reasons for their high workload and/or time pressure. Figure 4.7.4 clearly shows that work interruptions, the pressure to publish, the difficulty of the work, and the amount of work stand out as reasons for high work pressure. These percentages did not differ noteworthy across faculties.

**Wellbeing**
First, we asked PhD candidates to rate their wellbeing. Less than half (46%) rates their wellbeing as good, 45% rates it as fair and 6% as poor. These percentages did not differ noteworthy across faculties or between PID and PNID, or between Dutch and non-Dutch PhD candidates.

Second, we asked PhD candidates how their PhD project affected their wellbeing. Substantial percentages of PhD candidates considered this effect to be positive (31%) or negative (24%). These percentages also did not differ noteworthy across faculties or between PID and PNID, or between Dutch and non-Dutch PhD candidates.

Third, to shed light on what positively and negatively impacts PhD candidates in their wellbeing, they were asked to tick all items that had a positive effect on their wellbeing. In figure 4.7.5 below, we see that interaction with colleagues is the highest positive contributor (45%) to wellbeing. Next is the research itself, which is rated by 39% of respondents and after that is the work life balance with 29%. Interestingly, it is again the work life balance that stands out with 26% of the respondents indicating it has a negative effect on their wellbeing. Next is the practical, technical and financial (PTF) aspects (24%). These percentages differed slightly across faculties, and negligibly between PID and PNID, and between Dutch and non-Dutch PhD candidates. Additionally, to the university-wide trends, especially at FEB (41%) and FMG (43%), the contact with the daily supervisor was often mentioned as positive impact on wellbeing. Teaching is often
mentioned as having a negative impact on wellbeing at FEB (25%), as is employment after the PhD trajectory at FEB (38%), FGW (30%), and FMG (28%).

Figure 4.7.5. Selected factors that positively or negatively impact wellbeing, in frequency expressed as percentage of total respondents.

Fourth, we asked whether PhD candidates had talked to anyone about their wellbeing. Most PhD candidates did not discuss wellbeing with anyone at the university (33%), followed by the daily supervisor (27%), promotor (21%), and someone else (16%). Conversations with a mentor (2%), a physician affiliated to the UvA (4%) or a confidential advisor (8%) were scarce. These percentages differed slightly across faculties, though not noteworthy between PID and PNID, and between Dutch and non-Dutch PhD candidates. Uni physicians were more often consulted at FEB (12%) and FGW (11%) compared to other faculties, ranging from 0% (ACTA and LAW) to 7% (FNWI).

Finally, we asked PhD candidates about their knowledge of the availability of counsellors at the UvA, and whether they ever consulted a counsellor. A majority of PhD candidates (64%) was aware of the availability of counsellors, though a substantial percentage was unaware of this (36%). Among those who knew about PhD counsellors, 21% has consulted a counsellor, and a large percentage of these candidates agreed that this consult was positive for their progress and wellbeing (72%), whereas a small percentage disagreed (9%).
4.8 Social safety

The topic of social safety covered questions on the occurrence and frequency of undesirable social conduct towards the PhD candidate, what type of undesirable social conduct took place, and how PhD candidates responded to this undesirable social conduct.

**Highlights**
- Most PhD candidates (70%) have not experienced any undesirable social conduct in the past year.
- A large portion of PhD candidates (24%) sporadically experienced undesirable social conduct in the past year.
- A small but substantial percentage of PhD candidates (6%) experienced undesirable social conduct on a regular basis (monthly-daily).
- 64 PhD candidates described the experienced social misconduct.
  - Reported cases included bullying, gossip or exclusion by co-workers, sexist jokes and inappropriate physical contact.
  - The perpetrator was mostly the supervisor (38%).
  - The reported behaviour was mostly systemic (66%).
  - To resolve these cases, most PhD candidates (25%) turned to their supervisor (if this was not the perpetrator), followed by doing nothing (23%), and speaking with the perpetrator (16%).
  - Only in few of these cases, the PhD candidate to an official office as a confidential advisor (3%), ARBO (5%), or HR (2%).
  - 37% of the PhD candidates that had acted to resolve the reported incidents indicated that the action had resolved the social misconduct. 30% of the candidates were satisfied with the undertaken action.

**Undesirable social conduct**

First, we asked PhD candidates whether they had experienced any undesirable social conduct in the past year. A majority (70%) didn’t experience any undesirable social conduct, whereas a substantial portion (24%) sporadically experienced undesirable social conduct (figure 4.8.1). Small percentages of PhD candidates experienced this monthly (4%), weekly (1%), or daily (1%). These percentages differed negligibly across faculties, between PID and PNID, and between Dutch and non-Dutch PhD candidates.
Second, we asked PhD candidates who had experienced undesirable social conduct to describe the event that had the biggest impact on them. In total, 64 PhD candidates described such an event. We coded these questions to find out what the type of misconduct was, what the relation was to the perpetrator, and whether the misconduct could be categorized as a single incident, regular incidents, or systemic misconduct (the same issue persisting over time) (see figure 4.8.2 A, B and C). The most frequently reported behaviour was sexual intimidation (25%), followed by physical or verbal intimidation (23%), exclusion (17%), gossip (9%), or discrimination (5%). 19% of the responses could not be categorized into any of these categories. The perpetrator was mostly the supervisor (38%), followed by other colleagues\(^\text{17}\) (19%), fellow PhD candidates (12%), a higher ranked colleague (11%), students (2%), or patients (2%). The reported behaviour was mostly systemic (66%), followed by a one-time incident (31%), and regular (2%). Especially social misconduct by the PhD supervisor was mostly systemic.

Third, we asked these PhD candidates how they responded to the social misconduct. Most PhD candidates (25%) turned to their supervisor (if this was not the perpetrator), followed by doing nothing (23%), speaking with the perpetrator (16%), someone else (14%), or their superior (12%) (figure 4.8.3). Only few PhD candidates turned to someone other than the perpetrator.

\(^{17}\) That is, a colleague who was not the supervisor, nor a higher ranked colleague, nor a fellow PhD candidate.
candidates that reported to have faced social misconduct turned to a confidential advisor (3%), ARBO (5%) or HR (2%).

Fourth, we coded whether the action had resolved the undesirable situation and whether PhD candidates were happy with the action. 37% of the PhD candidates that had acted to resolve the reported incidents indicated that the action had resolved the social misconduct, and 30% of the candidates were satisfied with the undertaken action (figure 4.8.4).

Figure 4.8.3 A and B. A. Responses to the question “to whom did you turn?” expressed as percentage of total respondents. This question was asked if respondents indicated that action was taken after experiencing social misconduct. B. Responses to the question “why not?” expressed as percentage of total respondents. This question was asked if respondents indicated that no action was taken after experiencing social misconduct.

Figure 4.8.4 A and B. A. Responses to the question “was the situation resolved?” expressed as frequency per perpetrator. B. Responses to the question “was the situation resolved?” expressed as frequency per type of action taken.
4.9 Career perspectives

The topic career development included questions about PhD candidates’ career perspectives and envisioned career paths after completing their PhD trajectories.

**Highlights**

- Most PhD candidates aspire a research career: within academia (44%) and/or outside academia (36%).
  - AMC had the largest percentage (42%) of PhD candidates aspire a non-research career.
  - Dutch PhD candidates aspired a non-research career (36%) more often compared to non-Dutch PhD candidates (16%).
- Most PhD candidates that indicated to aspire another career than research inside academia, aspired a career in a university (29%), followed by government (23%), industry (19%), or an NGO (19%). These percentages varied largely across faculties.
- The feeling to be encouraged by supervisors to think about a future career differed across PhD candidates.
  - A majority (59%) of the PhD candidates felt encouraged by their supervisors.
  - Though a substantial (20%) group did not feel encouraged.
  - Especially at ACTA (81%), FEB (70%), and LAW (67%), many PhD candidates felt encouraged to think about their future career, compared to FGW (51%) and FMG (51%).

**Career**

First, we asked what career perspectives PhD candidates see for themselves after graduation. They were allowed to pick more than one answer from a preselected list (see Figure 4.9.1). Most PhD candidates want to continue doing research, either within academia (44%) and/or outside academia (36%). These percentages differed only slightly across faculties, between PID and PNID, and between Dutch and non-Dutch PhD candidates. Among the faculties, AMC had the largest percentage (42%) that did not aspire a research career, which is explainable by the fact that PhD candidates at AMC are physicians. Also, Dutch PhD candidates were much more often indicated to aspire a non-research career (36%) compared to non-Dutch PhD candidates (16%).

![Figure 4.9.1. Career perspectives after graduation as perceived by PhD candidates, in frequency expressed as percentage of total respondents and percentage of total respondents per faculty. Multiple answers were possible.](image-url)
Second, we asked PhD candidates that envisioned a research career outside academic or no research at all, what type of career path they aspired. Most of these PhD candidates aspire a career in a university (29%), followed by government (23%), industry (19%), or an NGO (19%). A small percentage of PhD candidates (6%) aspire their own enterprise, and a small but substantial portion aspired another career than these listed options (10%). These numbers varied largely across faculties (see figure 4.9.2). An aspiration for a university career was less common at AMC and FNWI, compared to the other faculties. An aspiration for a government career was very common at FEB, FMG, and LAW, and a lot less popular at ACTA and AMC. An aspiration for an industry career was very common at FEB and FNWI, as was an aspiration for a non-profit career at FMG.

Third, we asked PhD candidates whether they agreed or disagreed with their supervisors encouraging them to think about a future career, to which a majority agreed (59) and a substantial percentage of PhD candidates disagreed (20). These percentages differed somewhat between faculties (see Figure 4.9.3), though not noteworthy between PID and PNID, and between Dutch and non-Dutch PhD candidates. Especially at ACTA (81%), FEB (70), and LAW (67%), many PhD candidates felt encouraged to think about their future career, compared to lower percentages at FGW (51%) and FMG (51%).

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**Figure 4.9.2.** Career aspirations of PhD candidates who responded with “research outside of academia” or “no research” as a perceived career perspective, in frequency expressed as percentage of total respondents and percentage of total respondents per faculty. Multiple answers were possible.

**Figure 4.9.3.** Reported agreement of PhD candidates with the statement that their supervisor encourages them to think about their future career, in percentage of total and percentage of total per faculty.

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[Subject:] Fill in the PhD survey from the Central PhD Council

Dear PhD candidate,

Let your voice be heard by participating in the 2020 UvA-wide PhD survey by the Central PhD Council! This survey will be open from May 7th through May 28th.

Why participate?
The Central PhD Council would like to take stock of issues and needs among the UvA PhD community. The results of this survey will be processed anonymously in a report, which will be used to address issues experienced by the PhD community. This report will also be available to everyone involved in PhD programs at the UvA.

The survey includes questions on topics such as supervision, training, teaching tasks, research, progress, and career guidance. Answering these questions will take about 10 minutes of your time, but your contribution is vital for us to obtain a good picture of the current challenges faced by PhD candidates at the UvA.

How to participate?
Click on this link to the survey.

Due to the current situation regarding COVID-19 your answers might be different to what they would have been in normal circumstances. We therefore ask you to respond to this survey keeping your situation prior to March 2020 in mind. Towards the end of the survey, a set of questions will address the COVID-19 situation specifically.

By filling in this survey, you agree that your anonymized data may be stored and used. Any results that we will share will not be traceable to individuals.
Did one of your PhD colleagues at the UvA did not receive this email? Ask them to send an email to cpc@uva.nl

How will I receive the results of the survey?
If you leave your email address at the end of the survey, you will receive the survey report per email in September of this year. Your email address will be used solely for this purpose. The results will also be communicated via the UvA website and internal newsletters.

Questions?
Contact us at cpc@uva.nl

Many thanks in advance!
The Central PhD Council
Ioana Neamtu (FEB), David Gardenier (FNWI), Lisa Teichmann (FNWI), Wiebe Hommes (LAW), Debby ten Hove (FMG, chair), Wouter van Elburg (FGW), Danuta Mazurel (ACTA), and Tijmen Münker (ACTA, former chair)
Appendix II - Highlights

**General characteristics**
- 743 PhD candidates responded to the survey, of which 605 completed the survey.
- The percentage of respondents across faculties resembled the distribution of PhD candidates across faculties (apart from FGW, which was slightly underrepresented in the survey).
- A slight majority of the respondents had a Dutch nationality (62%).
- A slight majority of the respondents did not have an employment contract at the UvA (PNID; 60%).
  - The percentage of PNID was high at ACTA and AMC, and low at FGW and LAW.
- Most responding PhD candidates had a >3 years and ≤4 years project (68%), followed by a project duration of ≤3 years (24%).
  - Short projects (>3 years and ≤4 years) were quite common at ACTA, AMC, FEB, and LAW, less common at FGW and FMG, and rare at FNWI.

**Starting and finishing a PhD project**
- Who is responsible for the project design differs largely between faculties?
  - In traditional beta-faculties (ACTA, AMC, FNWI), supervisors take more responsibilities for the project design.
  - In LAW and FGW, PhD candidates take most responsibility for the project design.
- PhD candidates received most information on employment or scholarship conditions through their daily supervisor (46%), followed by an HR appointment (38%) and a job interview (34%).
  - A substantial portion of PhD candidates did not feel properly informed about their employment/scholarship conditions (28%).
  - A substantial portion of PhD candidates experienced problems because they were not properly informed about their employment/scholarship conditions (15%).
  - The percentage of PhD candidates that felt properly informed is lower in faculties where HR appointments are less common (LAW, FMG, and FGW).
- A substantial portion of international PhD candidates did not receive assistance in finding housing (13%) or other formalities as insurances and bank matters (26%), but would have liked such assistance.
- A majority of PhD candidates considered the requirements of the PhD thesis to be clear (72%).
- A majority (57%) of PhD candidates does not know whether funding is available for printing the PhD thesis.

**Research environment**
- Most PhD candidates indicate that the offered research facilities are adequate (88%).
  - Even though PhD candidates indicate that facilities are adequate, not all PhD candidates have access to a computer or software.
- Travel or training budget are often insufficient (15% and 11% for travel and training, respectively), not available (7% and 8%), or are unknown to the PhD candidate (15% and 19%).
- A substantial percentage of PhD candidates received a monthly net income lower than €1500 (13%).
  - This is more common across non-Dutch PhD candidates (22%) compared to Dutch PhD candidates (7%), and across PNID (17%) compared to PID (5%).
- Contact and satisfaction with the research community differs across faculties, types of PhD candidates, and nationalities:
○ Most PhD candidates meet other researchers daily (36%) or regularly (35%), though a substantial group of PhD candidates rarely meets other researchers (21%),

○ At FGW, a substantial percentage of PhD candidates rarely meets other researchers and is dissatisfied with their social contacts at work.

○ PID and Dutch PhD candidates are more often satisfied with the social contacts at work compared to PNID and non-Dutch PhD candidates.

○ Dutch PhD candidates less often disagree with the research community providing opportunities to become involved in a broader research culture compared to non-Dutch PhD candidates.

□ Most (70%) PhD candidates answer that their research group openly discusses research integrity issues

□ This percentage was substantially lower at LAW compared to other faculties.

**Supervision**

□ Most PhD candidates are supervised by one promotor and one co-promotor, two promotors, or one promotor and two co-promotors.

○ PhD candidates at ACTA and AMC most often have large supervisory teams.

○ Substantial portions of PhD candidates at FEB (14%) and FNWI (17%) reported to have only one supervisor.

□ Most PhD candidates meet their supervisor once a week, but this differed largely between faculties.

○ At the traditional beta faculties (ACTA, AMC, FNWI) the majority of PhD candidates meets their supervisor at least once a week.

○ At FEB and FMG, about half of the PhD candidates meet their supervisor at least once a week.

○ At FGW and LAW, most PhD candidates meet their supervisor less than once a month.

○ The satisfaction with the number of supervision appointments did not differ substantially between faculties.

□ A majority of PhD candidates (ranging from 72 to 90% between faculties) are satisfied with supervision.

□ A substantial percentage of PhD candidates (12%) is extremely dissatisfied with the supervision they receive.

□ Substantial percentages of PhD candidates disagreed with the statement that supervisors self-evaluate their behaviour and viewpoints (21%).

**Education**

□ Not every PhD candidate is enrolled in a graduate school and/or familiar with its role.

○ A third of PhD candidates does not know if they are enrolled in a graduate school.

○ At the AMC, almost all PhD candidates indicate that they are enrolled.

○ Of PhD candidates that are enrolled, a substantial portion (22%) is not familiar with (the role of) the graduate school.

○ But 73% of PhD candidates that are enrolled are satisfied with the graduate school.

○ PhD candidates find offering courses, symposia, workshops etc. the most relevant role of the graduate school.

□ Most PhD candidates have access to seminars and conferences (89%)

□ Most PhD candidates have access to general skills courses and workshops (86%)

○ Most PhD candidates are satisfied with the number and the diversity of general-skills activities available at the UvA and the information they receive about such activities.

○ Especially at LAW and FMG, quite some PhD candidates are dissatisfied with the number and variety of, and the information provision about general-skills activities.
- Most PhD candidates have access to discipline specific courses and workshops (72%)
  o Most PhD candidates are satisfied with the number and the diversity of discipline-specific courses available at the UvA and the information they receive about such activities.
  o At LAW, FGW, and FNWI a large portion of PhD candidates was dissatisfied with the number and diversity of discipline-specific courses.
  o At LAW, FNWI, and FMG information provision about discipline-specific courses.
- Only half of the PhD candidates reported to have access to teacher-training activities and career orientation activities (50%)
  o Most PhD candidates are satisfied with the number of teacher-training activities available at the UvA.
  o About half of the PhD candidates is satisfied with the diversity of and the information they receive about teacher-training activities.
  o Especially at FGW, FMG, and LAW, substantial percentages of PhD candidates are dissatisfied with the number and variety of, and the information provision about teacher-training activities.
- Less than half of the PhD candidates reported to have access to career orientation activities (44%)
  o About half of the PhD candidates are satisfied with the number of career-orientation activities available at the UvA and the information they receive about such activities.
  o A substantial percentage was dissatisfied with the number and the diversity of career-orientation activities available at the UvA and the information they receive about such activities.
- A substantial percentage of PhD candidates (21%) does not have sufficient time to participate in education activities.
  o Especially at ACTA, FMG, and FGW, PhD candidates had too little time to participate in education activities.

**Teaching**
- 71% of PhD candidates teaches or supervises students.
  o 38% of the PhD candidates has a teaching obligation.
  o 33% of the PhD candidates teach voluntarily.
- The teaching load varies across PhD candidates.
  o Most teaching PhD candidates teach and supervise up to 4 hours a week.
  o At FEB, most teaching PhD candidates teach and supervise 4 to 8 hours a week.
  o A substantial percentage of PhD candidates (19%) spends more than 8 hours per week teaching and supervising students.
- Not all PhD candidates feel prepared to teach.
  o 50% agrees that teacher-training activities prepare them well for teaching and supervision.
    - This percentage was higher at ACTA and FNWI.
  o 23% disagrees that teacher-training activities prepare them well for teaching and supervision.
    - This percentage was higher at LAW, FEB, and FGW.

**Progress and wellbeing**
- A large percentage of PhD candidates did not have a go/no-go meeting (45%).
  o At AMC and ACTA, the majority of PhD candidates did not have a go/no-go meeting.
  o The majority of PNID did not have a go/no-go meeting.
- One third (34%) of PhD candidates did not have any (annual) progress reviews.
Approximately equally large percentages of PhD candidates were on schedule (47%) or had fallen behind schedule (42%).

- Two thirds (67%) of PhD candidates expect a delay within a range of 3-12 months
- Most of the PhD candidates that faced delays (76%) had not made any arrangement yet or did not know whether arrangements had been made.
- Most PhD candidates named problems with their experiment or data collection (41%), followed by the original plans being too ambitious (38%), bad time management (23%), and (mental) illness (19%) as reason for delays.

More than half of all PhD candidates (51%) indicates the workload as high, with 10% describing it as too high, and 38% describing it as normal.

- Work interruptions, the pressure to publish, the difficulty of the work, and the amount of work stand out as reasons for high work pressure.

Less than half of all PhD candidates (46%) rates their wellbeing as good, 45% rates it as fair and 6% as poor.

- Interaction with colleagues is the most important positive factor for wellbeing. Especially at FEB (41%) and FMG (43%), the contact with the daily supervisor was often mentioned as positive impact on wellbeing.
- Teaching is often mentioned as having a negative impact on wellbeing at FEB (25%), as is employment after the PhD trajectory at FEB (38%), FGW (30%), and FMG (28%).

Social safety

- Most PhD candidates (70%) have not experienced any undesirable social conduct in the past year.
- A large portion of PhD candidates (24%) sporadically experienced undesirable social conduct in the past year.
- A small but substantial percentage of PhD candidates (6%) experienced undesirable social conduct on a regular basis (monthly-daily).
- 64 PhD candidates described the experienced social misconduct.
  - Reported cases included bullying, gossip or exclusion by co-workers, sexist jokes and inappropriate physical contact.
  - The perpetrator was mostly the supervisor (38%).
  - The reported behaviour was mostly systemic (66%).
  - To resolve these cases, most PhD candidates (25%) turned to their supervisor (if this was not the perpetrator), followed by doing nothing (23%), and speaking with the perpetrator (16%).
  - Only in few of these cases, the PhD candidate to an official office as a confidential advisor (3%), ARBO (5%), or HR (2%).
  - 37% of the PhD candidates that had acted to resolve the reported incidents indicated that the action had resolved the social misconduct. 30% of the candidates were satisfied with the undertaken action.

Career perspectives

- Most PhD candidates aspire a research career: within academia (44%) and/or outside academia (36%).
  - AMC had the largest percentage (42%) of PhD candidates aspire a non-research career.
  - Dutch PhD candidates aspired a non-research career (36%) more often compared to non-Dutch PhD candidates (16%).
Most PhD candidates that indicated to aspire another career than research inside academia, aspired a career in a university (29%), followed by government (23%), industry (19%), or an NGO (19%). These percentages varied largely across faculties.

The feeling to be encouraged by supervisors to think about a future career differed across PhD candidates.

- A majority (59%) of the PhD candidates felt encouraged by their supervisors.
- Though a substantial (20%) group did not feel encouraged.
- Especially at ACTA (81%), FEB (70%), and LAW (67%), many PhD candidates felt encouraged to think about their future career, compared to FGW (51%) and FMG (51%).
Appendix III - Responses COVID-19 questions

On the 11th of March 2020 COVID-19 was declared a pandemic by the WHO, and in the following days measures were taken both at national level as well as at the university and faculties that had a high impact on daily life. The first invitation for the PhD survey was send on May 7, 2020, and the survey closed on May 21, 2020. To limit the influence of the unique and unpredictable working conditions during the preventive measures of COVID-19 (e.g., the intelligent lockdown) on the survey responses, candidates were asked to reply based on their experience throughout the year but before the start of the COVID-19 preventive measures.

However, in a separate section, all respondents were asked to indicate the effect of COVID-19 on a selection of topics. Therefore, the following results are an indication of only the first 2-4 weeks that COVID-19 related measures were in effect.

Total responses

The following graphs show the responses to the question "How have the COVID-19 regulations affected the following factors". Responses are shown in percentage of total.

Responses per faculty

The following graphs show the responses to the question "How have the COVID-19 regulations affected the following factors". Responses are shown in percentage of total and percental of total per faculty.

Availability of facilities and resources

Feeling part of a research community

Access to education activities
Satisfaction with supervision

Career orientation

Teaching load