



# University of Groningen Graduation Fund Regulations 2017-2018

## Part F Financial support for PhD scholarship students

### Introduction

The Decree on a PhD Scholarship Programme Experiment of 23 December 2015 (Order in Council) contains a number of stipulations on financial support for PhD scholarship students. The institutional board must make provision for financial support for PhD scholarship students through the Graduation Fund.

The Board of the University approved the regulations set out below concerning the granting of financial support on the basis of these legal regulations after approval by the University Council on 29<sup>th</sup> of June 2017.

### Article 1 Definitions

Board of the University: The Board of the University of Groningen.

DUO: *Dienst Uitvoering Onderwijs*, the Dutch Education Executive Agency.

Degree programme: A Bachelor's or Master's degree programme.

PhD scholarship programme: Teaching in the context of the PhD training programme experiment that does not take the form of a degree programme and is geared to the acquisition of research skills and generic skills by PhD candidates in order to benefit their PhD studies and improve their position in the labour market.

PhD scholarship student: A PhD candidate who began a PhD programme after this decree entered into force and who has been admitted to the PhD training programme.

UG: University of Groningen.

WSF 2000: *Wet studiefinanciering 2000* (Student Finance Act 2000).

All other terms used in these regulations will have the meaning that the Act ascribes to them.

### Article 2. Conditions

1. The University of Groningen provides financial support to PhD scholarship students who satisfy the following conditions:
  - a. They must have been admitted to the PhD programme by a recognized University of Groningen Graduate School.
  - b. While following the PhD scholarship programme, they may not simultaneously follow another degree programme for which they are entitled to student finance under the Student Finance Act 2000.
2. If the conditions set out in Article 2.1 are satisfied, the financial support will start in the month in which the PhD scholarship student in question started the PhD programme.

### **Article 3. Amount of financial support**

1. PhD scholarship students are entitled to financial support of € 1,700 per month. This amount will be adjusted annually to account for inflation.
2. The financial support is awarded in the form of a non-repayable grant, which will be terminated four years after the start of the PhD programme or upon premature termination of the PhD programme

### **Article 4. Delay due to extraordinary circumstances**

1. PhD scholarship students who incur study delay due to extraordinary circumstances as listed in Articles 4.2 and 4.3 can apply for an extension of their financial support with the Graduate School.
2. The following may constitute grounds for financial assistance:
  - a) illness of the claimant
  - b) pregnancy and childbirth of the claimant
  - c) physical, sensory or other functional impairments on the part of the claimant
  - d) extraordinary family circumstances
3. In addition to the circumstances referred to in Article 4.2, the following situations also qualify as extraordinary circumstances:
  - a) a valid complaint about the quality of the PhD programme.
  - b) circumstances to be assessed by the Director of the Graduate School.
4. The extraordinary circumstances referred to in Articles 3.2 and 3.3 must have occurred in the period in which the PhD scholarship student qualified for financial support based on these Regulations.
5. As soon as a PhD scholarship student incurs study delay or expects to incur study delay due to extraordinary circumstances, he or she must report as soon as possible, and in any case within four weeks, to the Graduate School if it becomes clear that the extraordinary circumstance will last more than a month.
6. PhD scholarship students must satisfy all written agreements made with the Graduate School in order to qualify for extension of the financial support. These agreements aim to help prevent or limit further delays in the PhD programme.

### **Article 5. Request for extension of financial support**

1. A request for extension of financial support must be submitted to the Graduate School three months before the end of the PhD programme.
2. The request must be supported by relevant documentary evidence of the extraordinary circumstances and a statement from the supervisor confirming the need for an extension.
3. The Graduate School will make a decision with regard to the request as soon as possible but within a maximum of 8 weeks of receipt of the completed request. The possibility of and deadline for lodging an objection will be stated in the written decision.

### **Article 6. Documentary evidence**

The following documents must be submitted with requests for financial support:

- a. If the request is based on circumstances referred to in Article 4.2 under a and b, a declaration from a specialist (e.g. a physician or psychologist) specifying the period during which the circumstances occurred, or, in the case of a request for definitive awarding of provisional support, the statement of provisional approval issued previously.
- b. In the event of a structural functional impairment or chronic illness as referred to in Article 4.2 under c, a declaration by a specialist must be presented stating that there is a structural functional impairment or chronic illness. This declaration only has to be submitted once.
- c. If the request is based on extraordinary family circumstances as referred to in Article 4.2 under d, written proof of the extraordinary family circumstances.

**Article 7. Determining the duration of the extension**

1. The amount of delay will be determined on the basis of the nature of the extraordinary circumstances referred to in Articles 4.2 and 4.3, the study programme, the actual delay incurred and the time within which the delay can be remedied. The resulting amount of study delay, expressed in months, is the maximum period with which the financial support can be extended.
2. Financial support is only granted per full month.
3. No financial support will be granted for delays of less than one month.

**Article 8. Possibility of appeal**

Students can lodge an appeal with the Central Portal for the Legal Protection of Student Rights (CLRS), via the website [www.rug.nl/clrs](http://www.rug.nl/clrs) or P.O. Box 72, 9700 AB Groningen, against a decision taken by or on behalf of the Board of the University on the grounds of these Regulations within six weeks of the date of the decision.

**Article 9. Hardship clause**

In some cases a request for financial support may be granted if rejection would result in a situation of unfairness of overriding nature.

**Article 10. Deviation from the regulations**

In exceptional cases the Board of the University may deviate from the provisions of these Regulations.

**Article 11. Date of commencement and validity**

These regulations will take effect on 1 September 2017 and will remain in force until 1 September 2018.

**Article 12. Citation and publication of these regulations**

1. These regulations may be cited as: 'University of Groningen Graduation Fund Regulations 2017-2018', possibly with the addition of 'Part F: Financial support for PhD scholarship students'.
2. These regulations have been sent to the Faculty Boards for reference, published on the internet and included as an appendix in the Students' Charter.

Groningen, 17<sup>th</sup> of July 2017, the Board of the University