

PROTOCOL FOR DIGITAL PHD CEREMONIES

Below is a summary of the protocol.

- 1.** PhD ceremonies take place in public, in the physical presence of the Chair of the PhD Examining Committee and with the members of the PhD Examining Committee attending the ceremony digitally, at a time that is determined when the candidate is admitted to the PhD ceremony.
- 2.** PhD ceremonies are held in the University of Groningen's auditorium at Broerstraat 5 in Groningen. In unforeseen circumstances, PhD ceremonies may be held elsewhere. PhD ceremonies for UMCG students can be held in a room at the UMCG.
- 3.** The discussion is a dispassionate academic discussion. No disturbances from other than opposition are permitted.
- 4.** During the PhD ceremony the Chair, the supervisor(s), the members and guests of the PhD Examining Committee must wear the clothing prescribed by protocol:
 - Professors: gown and cap; women must wear sober clothing and black shoes and men a dark suit, white shirt with a sober tie and black shoes.
 - Other committee members:
women: sober clothing and black shoes
men: dark suit, white shirt with sober tie and black shoes
 - External professors are invited to wear their own gowns and caps. The university also makes a limited number of gowns and caps available for professors.
 - PhD students should also wear appropriate ceremonial clothing. For men, preferably a dress suit with white shirt and white bow-tie and for women, clothing in subdued colours; a long skirt is not compulsory.

If this is not possible, any other suitably sober clothing will also suffice.

5. Before the PhD ceremony, the Doctorate Board, chaired by the Rector Magnificus or his deputy, meet in a video conference. The Rector Magnificus attends this meeting from the auditorium. The attendees are asked to log on 20 minutes before the start of the meeting to check whether all IT equipment and media are working properly. In this meeting, the Rector Magnificus draws up a list of the opponents, agrees after consulting with them on an order in which they will speak and divides the speaking time. The secretary has been appointed in advance. After the meeting the Rector Magnificus leaves the auditorium.

6. The PhD student must be present about 30 minutes before the beginning of the ceremony. The beadle waits for the PhD student in the foyer of the Academy Building and takes them to one of the Faculty Rooms. The beadle then gives a short introduction to the protocol to the PhD ceremony. If necessary they can change in this room, which is locked during the ceremony.

In the event of a fully digital PhD ceremony, the PhD student will be expected to log in to the video conference 20 minutes before the start of the ceremony to check whether all IT equipment and media are working properly. The link to the video conference will be supplied by the person who monitors the technical aspects. The time for the public defence will be kept by the secretary; after exactly 45 minutes he says in a clear voice: 'Hora finita'.

7. At the start of the public ceremony, the Chair is escorted into the auditorium by the beadle. The other members of the PhD Examining Committee are 'present' in the video conference. The live stream is switched on just before the Chair enters the auditorium so that any interested parties can follow the ceremony.

If the supervisor is present during the ceremony in the auditorium, he or she shall follow the Chair at a considerable distance when entering and leaving the auditorium. The supervisor will sit on the right side of the Chair at the same table while keeping a considerable distance. Upon entering the auditorium the Chair shall make room for the supervisor to take his/her place

8. The Rector Magnificus is behind the left-hand table, and a monitor showing the other members of the PhD Examining Committee and the supervisor(s) is where the right-hand table would normally be. Caps are taken off.

9. The beadle goes to fetch the PhD student and escorts them to the auditorium. The PhD student may bring their PhD thesis, a writing pad and pen to make notes and possibly some literature that they may wish to consult during the discussion.

10. Upon entering the auditorium, the PhD student stands opposite the Rector Magnificus and bows subtly, once to the left, then once to the right.

11. Then the Rector Magnificus (wearing the cap) stands up and says:
'Dear candidate, the Doctorate Board of this University, represented by us, has read your PhD thesis and the propositions that go with it and we are ready to hear you defend it. Please take your seat.'

The Rector Magnificus sits down and takes off his cap.

12. The PhD student takes a seat behind the small table.

13. Then the defence takes its place, with the Rector Magnificus or his deputy acting as chair.

Rector Magnificus:

'I now call upon Professor ...' (etc.)

'Dear candidate, I call upon you to answer the question asked concisely'.

A few minutes before time runs out, the beadle enters the auditorium and stands in the doorway. After exactly 45 minutes he says in a clear voice:

'Hora finita'.

The discussion then taking place is concluded as quickly as possible. Then the Rector Magnificus says:

'The Doctorate Board will withdraw for some time to consider its decision'.

14. The Rector Magnificus will then suspend the ceremony so that the Doctorate Board can consider its verdict. The Chair, escorted by the beadle, leaves the auditorium. The PhD student is escorted back to the Faculty Room by a member of staff of the Porter's Office. The live stream is switched off.

15. In the course of the deliberations, a decision is made regarding the awarding of the PhD. The Chair attends the deliberations from the auditorium; the other members of the Doctorate Committee attend the deliberations through the video conference. If a proposal has been made to award the PhD with the *cum laude* distinction, votes will be taken orally – in deviation of the written ballot that is held in regular PhD ceremonies. Only the official members of PhD Examining Committee may vote. The Chair, the supervisor(s) and co-supervisor(s) and the experts may not vote. The proposal is rejected if more than one member votes against it. Members must vote either in favour of or against the proposal. Abstentions are not permitted. At the end of the deliberations the certificate is signed by the Rector. All other signatures have already been placed on the certificate digitally.

16. After the deliberations, which must be as brief as possible, the Chair leaves the auditorium. The live stream is then switched on again and the beadle escorts the Chair and the PhD student back in. The PhD student approaches the Rector's table.

17. As soon as the student has taken their place, the Rector Magnificus stands up, puts his cap on and says:

'Dear candidate, the Doctorate Board of this University, represented by us, after reading your PhD thesis and the accompanying propositions and after hearing you defend it, has decided to award you the doctorate at the University of Groningen which you desire.'

If the *cum laude* distinction has been awarded, the Rector Magnificus adds:
'And because of ... (for example, your exceptionally meritorious PhD thesis (and your excellent defence)), the highest distinction from the faculty for your studies, namely *cum laude*.'

18. The Rector Magnificus continues:

'Your (primary) supervisor, Professor, is authorized to award you this honour in the customary fashion.'

The Rector Magnificus sits down and takes his cap off.

19. The supervisor puts their cap on and says:

If the supervisor is present during the ceremony in the auditorium, he or she will also stand up.

'I am happy to accept the task assigned to me by the Rector Magnificus.'

After these words, the supervisor takes off their cap to speak to the PhD student, starting as follows:

'However, before performing this task, I would like to address a few personal words to you.'

This is followed by the laudatory speech (maximum of six minutes), given by the supervisor or day-to-day supervisor.

When this is finished, the supervisor puts their cap back on. The Chair stands up and says the following:

'Supervisor, please proceed and promote the PhD student to Doctor.'

The supervisor then says the following.

‘By virtue of the powers vested in us by law, in accordance with the decision of the Doctorate Board of this University, I, promote you,, to the title of Doctor and grant you all the rights associated by law or custom with a doctorate at the University of Groningen.’ Do you, as a Doctor, promise to act in accordance with the Netherlands Code of Conduct for Scientific Practice both now and in the future?’

The PhD student replies: ‘I promise.’

The Chair sits down and takes off his cap.

The supervisor continues:

‘Now that I have performed the task assigned to me, let me be the first to congratulate you on your PhD (with distinction) and to address you as “Doctor”.’

After congratulating the new Doctor, the supervisor takes off their cap.
If the supervisor is present during the ceremony in the auditorium, he or she will also sit down.

The Rector Magnificus stands up, puts on his cap and says:

‘As proof of this PhD, (awarded with distinction), I will present you with this certificate, signed by the Rector Magnificus, secretary and supervisor(s) and sealed with the Grand Seal of the University. But before doing so, learned Sir/Madam, it is my pleasant duty to congratulate you, also on behalf of the Doctorate Board of this University, on the degree you have been awarded.’

(Rector places the certificate on the table and steps back; graduate picks up the certificate).

Rector Magnificus: ‘I now declare this ceremony closed.’ (Taps the gavel).

The beadle now escorts the Chair and the graduate out of the auditorium.

20.In principle, the ceremony is conducted in Dutch. However, if one or more members of the PhD Examining Committee do not speak Dutch, the majority of the ceremony takes place in English. At the supervisor’s request, the ceremony may be conducted completely in English. This request must be submitted to the Dean.

During the PhD ceremony, the following forms of address will be used:

Chair	: ‘Honourable Rector’ ‘Honourable Rector Magnificus’
Supervisor	: ‘Highly learned supervisor’
Co-supervisor	: ‘Very learned opponent’
Professors	: ‘Highly learned opponent’
Other members of the committee and experts	: ‘Very learned opponent’
PhD student	: ‘Dear candidate’