

PROTOCOL FOR THE PHD CEREMONY

Below is a summary of the protocol.

1. The PhD ceremony takes place in public, in the presence of the College of Deans and/or the PhD Examining Committee, at a time fixed when the candidate is given permission to proceed 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.

3. The discussion is a dispassionate academic discussion. No disturbances from the audience other than opposition are permitted.

4. During the PhD ceremony the chair, the supervisors (*promotores*), the members and guests of the PhD Examining Committee will wear the clothing prescribed by protocol:

- Professors: gown and cap; the women must wear sober clothing and black shoes and the men a dark suit, white shirt and sober tie, and black shoes
- Other committee members:
women: sober clothing and black shoes
men: dark suit, white shirt and sober tie, 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 candidates and their two assistants ('paranymphs') should also wear appropriate festive clothing. For men, preferably a dress suit with white shirt and white bowtie and for women, clothing in subdued colours; a long skirt is not compulsory.

5. Before the PhD ceremony the College of Deans, chaired by the Rector Magnificus or his deputy, meet in the Faculty Room in question. At 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, divides the speaking time and designates a secretary for the Committee.

6. The PhD student and the paranymphs must be present about 30 minutes before the beginning of the ceremony. The beadle (*pedel*) waits for the PhD student and both paranymphs in the foyer of the Academy Building and takes them to one of the Faculty Rooms. Subsequently, the beadle introduces them to the ceremony protocol. If necessary the PhD student and the paranymphs can change in the Faculty Room, which is locked during the ceremony.

7. A few minutes before the ceremony begins, the beadle takes the chair and members of the PhD Examining Committee to the auditorium, followed by any other professors attending, who are wearing their gowns. The primary supervisor walks on the right side of the Rector Magnificus.

8. The beadle announces the arrival of the Board in the customary way at the entrance to the auditorium:

'The College of Deans'.

9. The members of the College of Deans, the retired professors and the guests take their seats, the Rector Magnificus and the secretary behind the left-hand table, the primary supervisor behind the right-hand table, the opponents as much as possible directly behind

those tables in the other seats, the other individuals in the second and subsequent rows behind the two tables. Caps are taken off.

10. Then the beadle goes to fetch the PhD candidate and the paranymphs and brings them to the auditorium. Order: beadle, first paranymph, PhD candidate, second paranymph. One of the paranymphs may carry the PhD thesis, a writing pad and pen to make notes and possibly some literature the PhD candidate may wish to consult during the discussion.

11. In the auditorium they stand together (with the PhD candidate in the middle) opposite the Rector Magnificus and the College of Deans and bow simultaneously, once to the left, then once to the right.

12. Then the Rector Magnificus (wearing his cap) stands up and says:

‘Esteemed PhD candidate, the College of Deans 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 or her cap.

13. The PhD candidate takes a seat behind the small table. The documents brought by one of the paranymphs for the PhD candidate are placed on the table. The paranymphs take their seats on the chairs reserved for them, the first to the left and to the right of the centre aisle.

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

Rector Magnificus:

‘Does anyone in the audience wish to exchange ideas with the PhD candidate? ... If so, please take your seat behind the blue table and speak’.

After the opponent has asked their question and explained it briefly if necessary, the Rector Magnificus says:

‘Esteemed PhD candidate, I call upon you to answer the question asked concisely’.

If no-one in the audience wants to ask a question or after the question asked by the member of the audience has been answered, the Rector Magnificus says:

‘I now call upon Professor ...’ (etc.).

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

‘Hora finita’.

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

‘The College of Deans will withdraw for some time to consider its decision’.

15. The Rector Magnificus will then suspend the ceremony so that the College of Deans can consider their verdict. Escorted by the beadle, the PhD Examining Committee and the other members of the procession leave the auditorium. These other members attend the deliberations of the PhD Examining Committee as observers, unless the Rector Magnificus decides then and there that the deliberations will be closed.

The candidate and paranymphs will be taken to the faculty chamber by one of the porters.

16. In the course of the deliberations, a decision is made regarding the PhD degree. If a proposal has been made to award the PhD degree with the *cum laude* distinction, a written ballot is held. Only the official members of PhD Examining Committee may vote. The chair, the (co-)supervisors 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 Rector Magnificus, secretary and supervisor(s).

17. After the deliberations, which must be as brief as possible, the beadle escorts the College of Deans back to the auditorium. When all have taken their seats, the beadle also escorts the PhD candidate and the paranymphs back into the auditorium.

18. As soon as they are standing before the Board, the Rector Magnificus puts his cap on and says, standing:

‘Esteemed PhD candidate, the College of Deans 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 PhD degree 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)), with the highest distinction from the faculty for your studies, namely *cum laude*.

19. 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.

20. The primary supervisor puts his cap on, stands up and says:

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

After these words, the primary supervisor takes off his cap to speak to the PhD candidate, starting as follows:

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

This is followed by the *laudatio* , a short speech praising the candidate (maximum of six minutes) by the primary supervisor only .

When this is finished, the primary supervisor puts his cap back on, invites everyone to stand and, when everyone has risen, speaks the following words:

‘By virtue of the powers vested in us by Dutch law, in accordance with the decision of the College of Deans of this University, I, confer on you,, the title of doctor and all the rights associated by Dutch law or custom with a PhD degree at the University of Groningen. Do you as a Doctor promise to act in accordance with the Netherlands Code of Conduct for Scientific Practice?’

The PhD candidate replies: ‘I promise.’

After the primary supervisor has asked those present to take their seats again, the primary supervisor remains standing and continues:

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

After congratulating the new doctor, the primary supervisor returns to his seat, sits down and takes off his cap. The Rector Magnificus stands up, puts on his cap and says:

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

(Shakes hands with the new doctor, is given the certificate by the secretary, hands it to the new doctor and returns to his seat). Rector Magnificus:

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

Then the beadle escorts the College of Deans to the reception area or, if the reception is not being held in the Academy Building, back to the Faculty Room. A staff member of the Porter’s Office will then escort the new doctor, the paranymphs and the family to the reception area or to the Faculty Room, if the reception is being held elsewhere.

21. In principle the ceremony is conducted in Dutch. However, if one or more members of the PhD Examining Committee do not know Dutch, English is used to a large extent. At the primary supervisor’s request, the ceremony may be conducted completely in English. The request must be submitted to the Dean.

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

Chair:	‘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 candidate:	‘Esteemed candidate’

Publicity

At least three weeks before the intended date of the ceremony, the PhD candidate must deliver the abstracts for non-experts in Dutch and English of his PhD thesis to the Communication Office through Hora Finita. The Communication Office will use this information as the basis of a possible press release.

Reception

It is possible to hold a reception after the PhD ceremony.