THE AMSTERDAM UMC DOCTORAL SCHOOL 2020

ADVICE IN FIGURES

A 2020 OVERVIEW OF OUR ADVICE & SUPPORT FINDINGS

DEMOGRAPHICS

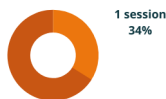- Female (62%)
- Male (38%)
- Medicine (53%)
- Other (47%)
- Dutch (80%)
- Other (20%)

1817 PHD CANDIDATES REGISTERED

ADVISORY CONVERSATIONS

145 ADVISORY CONVERSATIONS WITH **87** PHD CANDIDATES

- 1 session 34%
- ≥2 sessions 66%

TOP 3 TOPICS

1. Problems with supervision
2. Personal problems
3. Interference work-life balance

DISCONTINUED PHD

44 PHD TRAJECTORIES WERE DISCONTINUED

Median duration of a discontinued PhD is **21 months**

Top 3 reasons

1. Dissatisfaction research project
2. Problems with supervision
3. Personal problems

MONITORING IN FIGURES

A 2020 OVERVIEW OF OUR MONITORING FINDINGS

PHD PLAN

In an open and honest conversation, PhD candidates and their supervisors compile a PhD Plan to ensure proper training and supervision and to specify mutual expectations and goals.

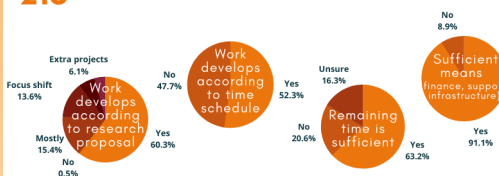**332** PHD CANDIDATES STARTED THEIR TRAJECTORY

73% Compiled a phd plan & had an intake meeting with PhD advisor

58% Did so within the first 6 months

PHD PROGRESS & CONSULTATION

An opportunity to reflect on the PhD trajectory halfway with supervisory team and independent PhD counsellor (professor/PI outside the research group).

215 PHD CANDIDATES DID PHD PROGRESS & CONSULTATION

Work develops according to research proposal
- Extra projects 6.1%
- Focus shift 13.6%
- Mostly 15.4%
- Yes 60.3%
- No 0.5%

Work develops according to time schedule
- No 47.7%
- Yes 52.3%

Remaining time is sufficient
- Unsure 16.3%
- No 20.6%
- Yes 63.2%

Sufficient means (finance, support, infrastructure)
- No 8.9%
- Yes 91.1%

TOP 3 NEGATIVE FACTORS

PhD candidate:
1. COVID-19
2. Delays
3. Unpredictable research

PhD counsellor:
1. Time/project management
2. COVID-19
3. Personal development

PHD CONCLUSION

After graduating, the young doctors fill in a survey about supervision, infrastructure, research climate, thesis examination, clear goals & expectations, and gained skills.

600 SURVEYS RECEIVED (2014-2020)

8.7 PhD satisfaction score

PhD candidates scored higher on PhD satisfaction when:
- They regularly discussed their PhD Plan with supervisors (64% did so).
- They discussed (78%), and prepared (54%) for their career during their PhD.
- They worked within a team (71%).

PhD candidates scored lower on PhD satisfaction when:
- They were unemployed (7%) or had a job outside academia (10%) when they filled in the survey.
- Their PhD took more than 4 years (72%).

Top 3 to be improved: 1. Supervision 2. Infrastructure 3. Financial support

HOW TO IMPROVE PHD LIFE?

BASED ON TRUE STORIES FROM OUR PHD CANDIDATES

STRIVE FOR STATE-OF-THE-ART SUPERVISION

1. The training Superb Supervision helps to improve supervision.
2. Well-being and output of PhD candidates increase by tending to communication needs: realistic planning and priorities, clear bidirectional expectations, personal development/support, and regular evaluations.
3. Evaluation of supervision skills enhances the quality of supervision.

CONCUR ON CONTRACT

Contractual requirements to start a PhD, or at least requiring that PhD candidates are fully aware of any deviating current and future contractual arrangements in writing, avoids misconceptions.

TUCK IN A TEAM

1. A buddy system helps beginning PhD candidates with a great start.
2. Regular group meetings make PhD candidates feel socially connected at work.
3. Social events and workshops connect PhD candidates with each other.

COACH ON CAREER

1. Regular conversations with the supervisor are useful to prepare PhD candidates for their future career.
2. A PhD should be designed to enhance competences that support future career perspectives.
3. Career courses/workshops for PhD candidates help to guide career choices.

DREAMS OF THE DOCTORAL SCHOOL

1. We aim to improve supervision by strongly recommending the training Superb Supervision and by attending to communication needs of the PhD candidates in our evaluation procedures and social media channels.
2. In case of a deviating contract, we advise PhD candidates to agree on current and future contractual arrangements in writing.
3. We aim to enhance sense of team by organizing activities (peer-to-peer group coaching, workshops, and social events).
4. We plan to organize career courses and workshops.
5. We provide personal, mental, and emotional support by increasing visibility and accessibility of the PhD advisors.

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