



Monitoring Committee Guide

Information and recommendations for members of individual PhD candidate monitoring committees

université
PARIS-SACLAY

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REFERENCES

- Articles 3 (relating to the missions of doctoral schools), 11 (re-registrations), 12 (doctoral charter and individual education agreement), 13 (monitoring committees) and 14 (extension) of the Ministerial Decree of 25 May 2016 setting the national framework for education and the procedures leading to the awarding of the national doctoral degree (*),
- PhD charter of Université Paris-Saclay, the individual monitoring committee (°),
- Article 11-4-4 of the internal regulations of doctoral studies of Université Paris-Saclay (+),
- Le doctorat en France Regards croisés sur la formation doctorale, S. Pommier, M. Talby, M. Auffray-Seguette, M. Dalaut, H. Eijsberg, P. Elshawish, H. Muller, HAL Id : hal-03494721, pages 57 to 61.

To simplify the reading, three symbols have been used to identify the portions of the text taken from the ministerial decree of 25 May 2016 (*), the doctoral charter (°) and the PhD internal regulations of Université Paris-Saclay (+).

WHY THIS GUIDE?

Individual PhD candidate monitoring committees were introduced into national regulations in 2016, at the request of PhD candidate representatives.

After a five-year observation period, the national network of Doctoral Colleges conducted a national survey of PhD candidate and their supervisors in 2021. The survey included a section on monitoring committees (pages 57-61 of the report). This survey showed that these committees were very much appreciated by PhD candidates and led to the identification of a series of recommendations to



improve them. In 2022, when the 2016 decree was revised, the national regulations were revised and the resulting new national framework for monitoring committees now incorporates a large portion of the recommended changes.

The responses to this survey also emphasised the importance of supporting the members of the monitoring committees in their mission. One of the recommendations of the survey report was to provide an individual monitoring committee guide to committee members to clearly explain what is expected of them, reiterate the rules that apply to the organisation and operation of these committees, and provide resources and answers to frequently asked questions.

This guide was prepared jointly by the assembly of directors of doctoral schools and the assembly of representatives of PhD candidates of Université Paris-Saclay.

THE MONITORING COMMITTEE AND ITS MISSIONS

1. The regulatory framework

A MISSION ENTRUSTED TO DOCTORAL SCHOOLS

Until 2016, PhD candidates were monitored by various provisions (thesis committees, monitoring committees, thesis sponsors, mid-term defence, etc.) at the initiative of local stakeholders (enrolment institution, employer, laboratory, etc.). Some PhD candidates had no monitoring committee during their doctoral programme, while others had several in the same year.

The Decree of 25 May 2016 translated several European recommendations into French law and thus put an end to this period of experimentation on individual PhD candidate monitoring committees, by **entrusting this mission to the doctoral schools**.

After an observation period of five years and feedback from PhD candidates and supervisors, the Decree of 25 May 2016 was amended to strengthen and expand the missions of the monitoring committees and specify their operation.

Article 3 of the Ministerial Decree of 25 May 2016, which defines the missions of doctoral schools, provides in particular that "doctoral schools [...] ensure a **quality approach to education** by setting up **individual PhD candidate** monitoring committees." *

AN ESSENTIAL ELEMENT OF AN INSTITUTION'S DOCTORAL POLICY



The **doctoral charter** specifies the main orientations of an institution's doctoral policy and the commitments, roles and responsibilities of each party involved in a doctoral project. The **monitoring and supervision conditions** * for PhD candidates must be defined in this charter, in accordance with national regulations. An **individual education agreement**, made in application of the charter, specifies, in particular, for each PhD candidate "the terms and conditions of supervision, and the monitoring of education and progress of the PhD candidate's research" *. At Université Paris-Saclay, it was decided to establish common procedures in the university's doctoral internal regulations, with possible individual adaptations for PhD candidates preparing their theses in lifelong learning and, if necessary, specific procedures for each doctoral school in their internal regulations.

SUPPORT FROM THE BEGINNING TO THE END OF THE DOCTORAL PROGRAMME

"The PhD candidate's individual monitoring committee provides support for the student **throughout the doctoral programme**. It must meet before registration in the second year and then **before each new registration** until the end of the doctoral programme." *.

Registration is renewed **after consultation with the monitoring committee**. Article 11 of the Ministerial Decree of 25 May 2016 specifies that "Registration is renewed at the beginning of each academic year by the head of the institution, on the proposal of the director of the doctoral school, after receiving the opinion of the thesis director **and the PhD candidate's individual monitoring committee**." *.

Article 14 also states that: "Annual extensions may be granted on an exceptional basis by the head of the institution, on the proposal of the thesis director and **after receiving the opinion of the monitoring committee** and the director of the doctoral school, upon a reasoned request from the PhD candidate." *.

2. The missions of the individual monitoring committee

Article 13 of the Ministerial Decree of 25 May 2016 specifies the missions of individual monitoring committees. Université Paris-Saclay's doctoral charter supplements this national framework by specifying the roles, responsibilities and missions of the various doctoral parties. The individual monitoring committee has **assessment, detection, alert** and **advisory** missions.

A CONSULTING MISSION

"The PhD candidate's individual monitoring committee ensures that the course of study runs smoothly, based on the doctoral charter and the education agreement." *. The doctoral charter specifies in particular that "the individual monitoring committee monitors and **makes recommendations** to the director of the doctoral school, the PhD candidate and the thesis director. It provides a new and external point of view on the work and the progress of the doctoral project that everyone can use constructively." *.



■ A MISSION TO DETECT MALFUNCTIONS AND RAISE THE ALARM

"During the interview with the PhD candidate, they are particularly **vigilant in identifying** any form of conflict, discrimination, moral or sexual harassment or sexist behaviour." * . "In the event of difficulty, the PhD candidate's individual monitoring committee **alerts** the doctoral school, which takes any necessary measures concerning the situation of the PhD candidate and the progress of their doctoral programme." * .

- "In the event of acts of violence, discrimination, moral or sexual harassment or sexist behaviour, the doctoral school **reports** the situation to the institution's anti-discrimination and anti-sexist violence unit as soon as it becomes aware of it;
- If a conflict situation is identified, the monitoring committee may recommend that the director of the doctoral school proposes mediation or convenes a conflict resolution commission"°.

■ AN EVALUATION MISSION

"During the interview with the PhD candidate, the committee **evaluates** the **conditions of their education** and the **progress of their research**."* .

- "The monitoring committee follows the progress of the PhD candidate in their ability to present their research work, show its quality and innovative character, and situate it in its international scientific context; In particular, the monitoring committee encourages the PhD candidate to clearly explain and defend the research approach and the scientific directions being followed;
- The monitoring committee also leads the PhD candidate to show their mastery of the time frame of their project and its completion within the planned deadline;
- The monitoring committee helps the PhD candidate to take stock of the progress of their work, the development of their scientific culture and international outlook, the development of their expertise and skills, and their preparation for their professional future;
- The monitoring committee ensures that the PhD candidate receives collective education and is trained in research ethics and scientific integrity, the issues of open science and the dissemination of research work in society to strengthen relations between scientists and citizens, and the issues of sustainable development." ° .

■ COMMITMENTS

The members of the monitoring committee, by agreeing to participate:



- commit to confidentiality and discretion. When the work is of a proven confidential nature, the commitment to confidentiality regarding the work must be formalised (a template is provided below).
- undertake to prevent conflicts, not be the origin of discrimination, moral or sexual harassment or sexist behaviour, not breach research ethics or scientific integrity, and put an immediate end to or anticipate conflict of interest situations in which they might find themselves,
- agree to be vigilant in identifying any form of conflict, discrimination, moral or sexual harassment or sexist behaviour, any breach of research ethics or scientific integrity, and any conflict of interest,
- alert the doctoral school if such a situation is identified, taking care to ensure the confidentiality of what may have been exchanged during the interviews, with the exception of the director of the doctoral school to whom the alert is reported.

ORGANISATION AND PROCESS

Article 13 of the Ministerial Decree of 25 May 2016 and Article 11-4-4 of the internal regulations for doctoral studies at Université Paris-Saclay specify the operating procedures of the monitoring committees. In the following text, what is derived from the regulations is identified by a symbol (* or *) and applies. The rest should be seen as recommendations.

1. Designation and composition

Except in special cases, the individual monitoring committee for each PhD candidate is set up when the student first registers as a PhD candidate and at the latest one month before the first meeting of the committee. *

The doctoral school ensures that, as far as possible, the composition of the PhD candidate's individual monitoring committee remains constant throughout the doctoral programme. *

The members of the individual monitoring committee are appointed by the doctoral school, after consultation with the PhD candidate and the thesis director. Where necessary, the monitoring committee can be organised in consultation with the employer, to share, if possible, the monitoring carried out by the employer and that carried out by the doctoral school. * Each doctoral school may define additional rules and recommendations to those specified below, on the proposal of the doctoral school council and subject to adoption in the doctoral school's internal regulations.



The individual monitoring committee consists of **at least two members**.⁺

Whenever possible, the PhD candidate's individual monitoring committee includes a member from outside the institution.*

It includes **at least one member who is a specialist** in the discipline or connected to the field of the thesis*. This person is **accredited to supervise research** or equivalent.⁺ This member must have sufficient expertise in the PhD candidate's field of research to ensure, in particular, that they are able to situate their work in the international scientific context, present the research process, the original nature of their work, etc. They may intervene during the defence as an examiner or President of the Jury.

The committee also includes a **non-specialist member from outside the research field** of the thesis. *This member can be a representative of the doctoral school, a representative of the PhD candidate's employer or any other person prepared to assess the conditions of the education, detect dysfunctions and raise an alert. For practical reasons, it is recommended that this member be internal to Université Paris-Saclay and act as President of the monitoring committee.

Members of this committee do not participate in the management of the PhD candidate's work. *

The doctoral school ensures that **the PhD candidate is consulted on the composition** of their individual monitoring committee, before it meets⁺.

The members of the individual monitoring committee **cannot be the rapporteur of the thesis**⁺. They can be examiners or President of the defence Jury.

The composition of the monitoring committee is entered into Adum preferably at the time of the first registration on the doctoral programme and otherwise before the first meeting of the monitoring committee.

It is recommended that the composition of the monitoring committee allow for the following characteristics to be present in the committee, collectively, through its various members:

- be **open and kind**, encouraging PhD candidates to express themselves freely regarding difficulties or questions concerning the progress of their doctoral programme. The monitoring committees can include members without accreditation to supervise research, who can facilitate the expression of PhD candidates by a certain proximity in age.
- be **independent** and without any particular *preconceived* ideas about the thesis management and the PhD candidate. Monitoring committee members are committed to providing an outside, unbiased perspective. A self-assessment questionnaire is provided at the end of this document to help each prospective committee member take stock.
- be **experienced** in doctoral supervision and education. The monitoring committee includes a referent for the doctoral school (the director of the doctoral school or an assistant or a

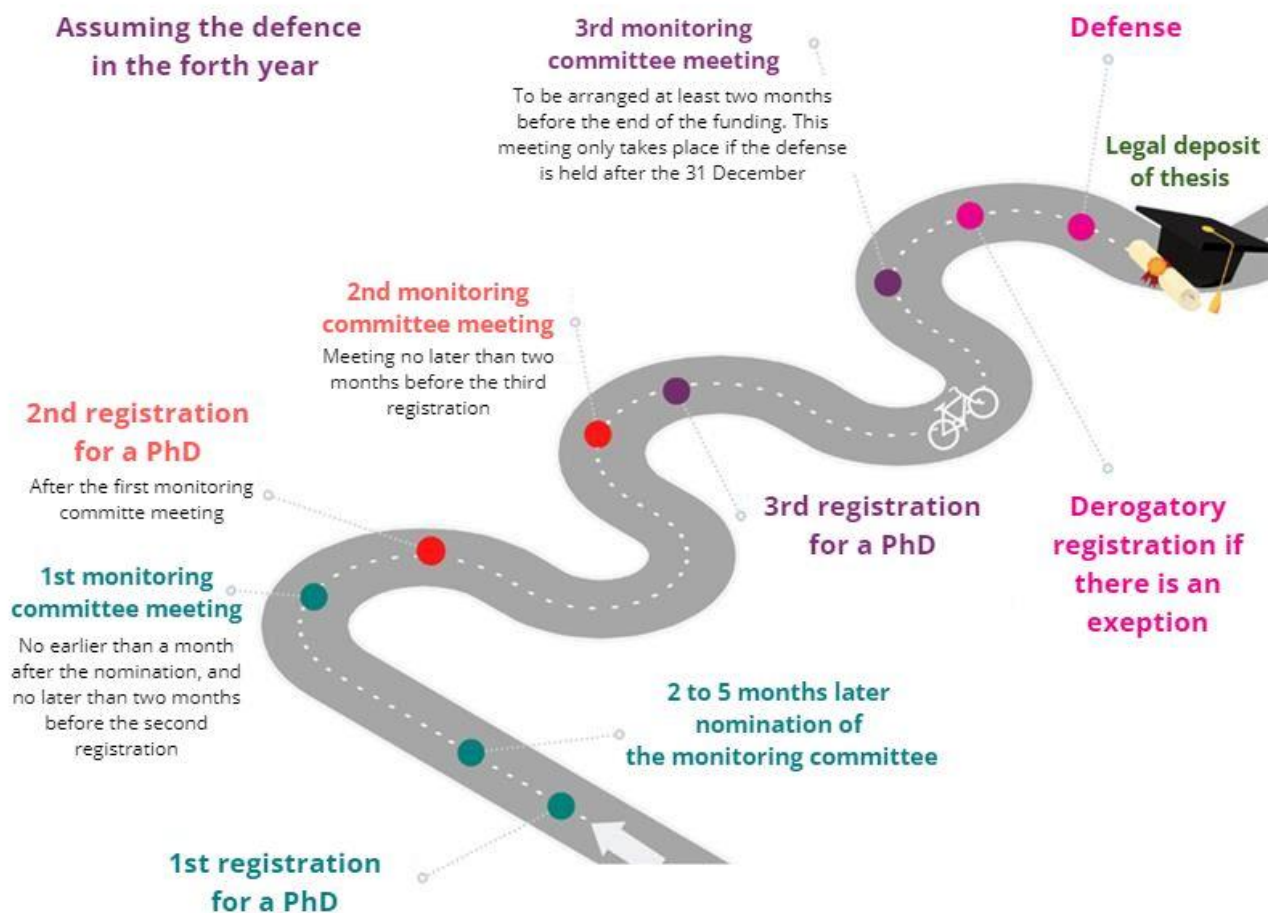


member of the doctoral school council or a referent of the doctoral school or any other format chosen by the doctoral school to ensure this representation). Note that emeritus professors and researchers may be members of monitoring committees.

2. Committee meetings

THE SCHEDULE

"The PhD candidate's individual monitoring committee provides support to the student **throughout the doctoral programme***.



and how they can contact them. It is also recommended, particularly for the member with expertise in the PhD candidate's field of research, that they reiterate that they will remain independent and external to the thesis management and the work throughout the doctoral programme.



The monitoring committee must meet before registration in the second year and then **before each new registration** until the end of the doctoral programme.*. Whenever possible, this meeting should be held before **1 June** of the current academic year⁺.

BEFORE EACH MEETING

If the work is of a **confidential nature**, the members of the monitoring committee sign a confidentiality agreement which is given to the thesis director before the work is examined.

The PhD candidate writes and sends to the individual monitoring committee a **written abstract** of all or part of their work and the scientific context before each meeting with the individual monitoring committee. The format of this abstract is defined by the doctoral school.⁺

The PhD candidate provides the committee members with their updated **portfolio of skills** and **education plan** at least three days before the meeting.

The methods of transmission (deposit in Adum, sending by email, etc.) are communicated by the doctoral school.

It is recommended that PhD candidates consult the resources provided in the appendix to this document to help the committee in its mission to detect possible dysfunctions.

The members of a monitoring committee read the monitoring committee guide before the meeting and ensure that they address all the points in the guide.⁺ In particular, they read the **reference guide to the questions to be asked**.

It is also recommended that the committee consult the doctoral charter, in particular the sections on the rights and duties of each of party involved in the doctoral programme.

ANNUAL MEETINGS

The interviews are organised in **three distinct stages**: presentation of the work progress and discussions, interview with the PhD candidate without the thesis director, interview with the thesis director without the PhD candidate.*

These three stages of an individual monitoring committee may occur at different times or on different days. Unless otherwise instructed by the doctoral school, the PhD candidate is responsible for organising these annual interviews. It is recommended that doctoral schools send regular collective emails to all their PhD candidates to remind them of the need to organise annual meetings of their committees and of the general or specific procedures of the doctoral school, with a view to annual re-registration.

Unless otherwise instructed by the doctoral school, the presentation to the monitoring committee of the scientific work carried out by the PhD candidate and the scientific questions about this work may take place in a public setting (doctoral school days, laboratory seminar, etc.).⁺



The committee's meetings with the PhD candidate without the thesis director and with the thesis director without the PhD candidate are held behind closed doors. Everyone should be able to express themselves very freely during the meetings. Everyone is required to maintain discretion about what has been discussed during the meeting and to show goodwill. ⁺

During an interview, each monitoring committee should spend a few minutes before the meeting begins explaining the framework and objectives and the points that will be discussed. ⁺

During the interview with the PhD candidate, the committee evaluates the conditions of their education and the progress of their research. "During this same interview, they are particularly vigilant in identifying any form of conflict, discrimination, moral or sexual harassment or sexist behaviour. ^{*}

■ AT THE END OF THE MEETING

At the end of its meeting, the individual monitoring committee makes recommendations and sends a **report of the interview** to the director of the doctoral school^{*} who may, if necessary, request revisions or additions. Once the report has been validated by the doctoral school, it is kept by the doctoral school and sent to the thesis director and the PhD candidate.

- The report includes an evaluation of the conditions of their education and the progress of their research, and may highlight strengths and areas for improvement.
- It provides recommendations and advice.
- In its report, the monitoring committee **gives an opinion on re-registration**, and if necessary, on a request for an extension of the thesis duration.
- In lifelong learning (excluding full-time academic programmes) or LL, the individual monitoring committee checks, in particular, whether the adjustments to the course provided for doctoral education in LL are appropriate. In its report, the committee may, if necessary, propose a revision of the conditions for the preparation of the thesis.
- In the event of difficulty, the PhD candidate's individual monitoring committee alerts the doctoral school, which takes all necessary measures concerning the PhD candidate's situation and the progress of their doctorate^{*}. In this case, the report of the interview, given to the director of the doctoral school, the PhD candidate and the thesis director, mentions that the committee has alerted the doctoral school. However, the report does not mention the nature or details of the difficulties encountered, nor who made it aware of them. The alert is raised by a direct exchange between the member of the monitoring committee who is the reference for the school and the director of the doctoral school.
 - In the event of conflict, the monitoring committee may ask the doctoral school to organise a conflict resolution committee.



- In the event of acts of violence, discrimination, moral or sexual harassment or sexist behaviour, the doctoral school reports the situation to the institution's anti-discrimination and anti-sexist violence unit as soon as it becomes aware of it. *

THE ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED, THE BENCHMARK

Not all of the **questions** listed below need to be explicitly asked in the interviews, but they are questions that the committee should be able to answer. After reading the monitoring committee's booklet, which includes the updated portfolio and an annual progress report, after the presentation of the work by the PhD candidate, the scientific exchanges that follow, and after the individual interviews, the monitoring committee should have answers to the various questions in this reference framework.

ADVANCES IN THEIR RESEARCH

- Has the question of research been properly addressed? Is the PhD candidate able to situate their work in the international scientific context, identify what their work can contribute to the field of knowledge, where the original nature of the thesis lies?
- Does the PhD candidate have a clear vision of the research process and of the research work to be carried out before the defence?
- Is the research progressing satisfactorily? Can the doctoral project be completed within the time frame initially planned for preparing the thesis?
 - If not, would an extension of the thesis preparation time allow its defence and if so, how many months of extension would be necessary?
 - Otherwise, has the termination of the doctoral project been considered by the PhD candidate or the thesis director?

CONDITIONS OF THEIR EDUCATION

- Are the scientific, material and financial conditions necessary for the successful completion of the doctoral project present?
- If the PhD candidate is preparing their thesis in a lifelong learning programme, in parallel with another professional activity, is the division of time between their various activities appropriate? Should a revision of the conditions of the doctorate be planned?



- If the PhD candidate is preparing their thesis in a partnership framework (interdisciplinary, international or with a company), are the conditions of this partnership satisfactory? Is there real collaboration between the different parties?
- How are the responsibilities of the thesis director and the possible co-supervisors carried out? Are the supervision methods appropriate or should they be revised? If the scientific management is shared, is the management team operating satisfactorily? Is the role of each person well understood by the PhD candidate?
- Is the dialogue between PhD candidates and supervisors satisfactory? Is the PhD candidate well integrated in the research team or unit, in a scientific community? Do they feel isolated?
- Is their motivation and determination to advance in their work good? Do they show signs of demotivation or discouragement?
- Are they exposed to psychosocial risks? Are they experiencing harassment, discrimination, violence and in particular sexist or gender-based violence?

DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR SKILLS AND PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

- Does the PhD candidate have a substantial written output (progress report, bibliography review, article, thesis chapters, etc.)? In this case, how did the PhD candidate and supervisor work together to write and proofread the written work? Are the principles of scientific integrity related to publication, signature and copyright on scientific productions known to the PhD candidate?
- Are the PhD candidate's presentation skills satisfactory? Clarity, synthesis, quality of the supports, oral fluency, didactic skills?
- Does the PhD candidate have opportunities to develop their scientific culture in their field of research in the broadest sense of the term and their international outlook (seminar programmes, thematic schools, etc.)? Is the development of their general knowledge and expertise in their field satisfactory?
- How is the preparation of their professional future? Have they reflected on their skills, education plan and complementary activities (see skills portfolio). Do they have any professional activities other than research (teaching assignments, for example)?
- Has the PhD candidate been made aware of research ethics and scientific integrity, the issues of open science and the dissemination of research work in society to strengthen relations between scientists and citizens, and the issues of sustainable development?



ANSWERS TO FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Why can ISC members not be rapporteurs?

Authorisation to defend a thesis is granted by the head of the institution, after consultation with the director of the doctoral school, on the proposal of the thesis director, **based on the rapporteurs' reports**.

The PhD candidate and their supervisors receive advice and recommendations from the monitoring committee and make the best possible use of them. However, they must also retain their freedom of research and be able, if necessary, to choose scientific directions other than those recommended by the monitoring committee, without this being able to subsequently influence the authorisation to defend, through the report of a member of the monitoring committee who is also a rapporteur.

This provision had been included in Université Paris-Saclay's doctoral rules of procedure, before the 2022 revision, following feedback from concrete examples and difficulties encountered by PhD candidate. It is important for limiting the risk of confusion of roles between the thesis director and the members of the monitoring committee.

It also allows the rapporteurs to take a fresh look at the thesis and not rely on the monitoring during the PhD, at the risk of being less attentive to the thesis manuscript.

2. What does "non-specialist outside the field [...]" mean?

According to national regulations, the monitoring committee must include a member who is "not a specialist outside the field of research of the thesis". This term raises questions and calls for interpretation because it does not refer to an official nomenclature, such as "disciplinary section" or "doctoral major".

To satisfy the intent of the text, we must return to the objectives expressed by the student organisations represented at the CNESER who proposed this amendment: since scientific communities collaborate closely over the long term, far beyond their institutional boundaries, the mere fact that they are outside the institution (at the research unit, doctoral school or institution) would not provide sufficient guarantees of independence for the members of the monitoring committee to alert them in the event of a dysfunction.



For this reason, it is recommended that each member of the committee assess their links of interest with the supervisors and the PhD candidate being monitored, and only commit themselves if they are in a position to make a report without hesitation, in the event of a dysfunction.

3. How can we ensure that PhD candidates are consulted?

The method used to compose the monitoring committee must ensure that PhD candidates can trust their monitoring committee, on the one hand, and that the committee can fulfil all its missions, on the other.

At least one member of the monitoring committee, the one who is a specialist in the discipline or connected to the field of the thesis, must be identified with the help of the supervisors, ensuring that they have the independence and freedom of judgment necessary in their function.

For the choice of the non-specialist member outside the research field of the thesis, the doctoral school can, for example, leave it up to the PhD candidates to organise their monitoring committees, based on a list of people who are referents for the doctoral school, subject to verification and validation of the composition by the doctoral school. The reverse is also possible, as the doctoral school can take charge of proposing the members of the committee, provided that the PhD candidates are able to make a motivated request to modify the composition if it does not suit them. If the request is justified, the doctoral school may then change the composition of the committee.

4. What is the appropriate length of a monitoring committee meeting?

The time devoted to the presentation of the PhD candidate's research work to the members of the committee must be long enough for the committee to be able to assess the progress of the work and the PhD candidate's capacity for presentation, but significantly shorter than the time devoted to the presentation of the work during the doctoral defence.

A duration of 15 to 30 minutes is recommended for the presentation of the work, not including the time devoted to the scientific discussion.

The time devoted to private interviews with the PhD candidate and with the thesis director must also be sufficient to address all other aspects. A minimum of 15 minutes is recommended for addressing all the questions, but the minimum duration may vary according to the doctoral school.

Together, the three stages of the monitoring committee may take about an hour.

5. Is videoconferencing recommended?



The monitoring committee can of course be held by videoconference. This facilitates the participation of external members and limits travel time. But the conditions must not be opposed to free speech and the human exchanges that facilitate it. For example, it is usually necessary to turn cameras on during private interviews. It is important to ensure that the interviews can be held within the planned framework (interview with the PhD candidate and the committee without the supervisors and vice versa), even by videoconference, and it may be reassuring to specify that the interviews are not recorded.

6. Who organises the meeting?

Doctoral students are generally asked to organise the meetings of their monitoring committees, within a framework set by the doctoral school (for example: start and end dates of the period in which the committee meetings are held, documents to be sent in advance).

7. Assessment or advice?

The monitoring committee does not assess the PhD candidate or the thesis director. It evaluates the **conditions of their education** and the **progress of their research**. It provides recommendations.

The monitoring committee must be an important moment, in the sense that it is an opportunity for each party involved in a doctoral project to take stock, where the committee brings an external and independent viewpoint and can take a step back, but without generating excessive pressure on the PhD candidates and their supervisors.

It is advisable to clearly highlight areas of improvement or possible shortcomings and to **also** highlight strengths, visibly acquired skills or significant achievements.

8. What if the progress of the work is insufficient?

If the progress of the work is judged insufficient and the monitoring committee considers that it will be impossible or very difficult to go as far as the defence, it is important that the committee explain where the insufficiencies are found in order to clarify, if necessary, an unfavourable or reserved opinion on re-registration.

In this case, it is important that the committee also identify what, in the course of the PhD candidate's work, could constitute strong points, what skills may have been acquired and could, if the doctoral school proposed not registering, be valued by a professional certification, issued by the university, which attests to the acquisition of one or more blocks of skills defined by the Decree of 22 February 2019.

Registration is renewed at the beginning of each academic year by the presidency of the university, on the proposal of the director of the doctoral school, after receiving the opinion of the thesis



director and the PhD candidate's **individual monitoring committee**. If the doctoral school considers non-renewal and notifies the PhD candidate, the PhD candidate may request a second opinion from the Academic Council's Research Commission. The final decision is made by the presidency of the university, which will take account of all these opinions.

9. What to do in the event of a problem?

If you notice dysfunctions or points of attention of another nature (e.g. insufficient progress of the work), which presage an unfavourable evolution and/or call for rapid intervention, the committee must alert the doctoral school and/or the competent referent. **But it is not the role of the committee to resolve these difficulties.**

As the report of the monitoring committee is given to the doctoral school, as well as to the PhD candidate and the thesis director, it is strongly recommended that when a dysfunction is identified, the doctoral school is contacted to discuss what can or should be included in the report (to explain the recommendations, encourage improvement and follow the evolution of the situation from one year to the next) and what should not be included and what should be **reported separately** to the doctoral school.

In the event of an alert, the report of the interview, given to the director of the doctoral school, the PhD candidate and the thesis director, mentions that **the committee has alerted the doctoral school**. However, the report does not mention the nature or details of the difficulties, nor who made it aware of them.

If the monitoring committee notes that there is a conflict situation, it must ask the doctoral school to organise a conflict resolution committee. The committee must alert the doctoral school if other difficulties are encountered.

It is recommended that PhD candidates and their supervisors be informed of the various existing mechanisms. Lastly, the committee can also make a report directly to the relevant unit or referent in view of the difficulty encountered. A web page "What to do in the event of a problem?" provides information and guidance on how to deal with specific problems that may be encountered, such as the harassment unit and the scientific integrity contact.

10. Can we contact members of the monitoring committee separately?

The monitoring committee meets at least once before each re-registration and provides an annual report to the doctoral school and an opinion on re-registration.



But Article 13 of the Ministerial Decree of 25 May 2016 also states that "the PhD candidate's individual monitoring committee provides support for the student throughout the doctoral programme." It is therefore entirely possible to contact a member of the monitoring committee outside the annual meeting, particularly in the event of a dysfunction.



RESOURCES

1. Connected persons self-assessment questionnaire

A situation in which there is interference between various interests of such a nature as to **influence or appear to influence** the **independent, impartial and objective exercise of a function** constitutes a **conflict of interest**. The notion of a link of interest is broader and covers all professional, financial, institutional, family, intellectual or moral links between two people. **Links of interest do not mean conflicts of interest**.

A self-assessment questionnaire on links of interest is provided on the link below to allow each member of a monitoring committee and in particular external members to take stock of this issue. PhD candidates are also invited to take note of this questionnaire.

[Download the self-assessment questionnaire on links of interest for a member of an individual monitoring committee](#)

2. Confidentiality undertaking

By agreeing to participate in the committee, the members of the individual monitoring committee undertake a commitment of confidentiality and discretion regarding the research work in progress and the conditions of the thesis and are bound by professional secrecy regarding the personal information of which they have knowledge within the framework of their functions. The obligation of professional secrecy concerns information relating to the health, behaviour and family situation of PhD candidates and their supervisors heard by the committee.

When the work is of a proven confidential nature, the commitment to confidentiality regarding the work must be formalised (template provided at the link below) and returned, dated and signed, to the thesis director. Doctoral students are asked to send their pre-filled confidentiality agreements to their committee members for them to just date and sign.

[Download the confidentiality agreement template for research of a proven confidential nature.](#)

3. Gender-based and sexual violence assessment questionnaire



The individual monitoring committees have a mission to detect and raise an alert in the event of gender-based violence and sexual violence. To facilitate the detection of this type of situation, it is recommended that PhD candidates take note of the situations they experience before their annual meeting. For example, you can use a tool developed by the association Nous Toutes Upec, with the support of Upec and the city of Paris.

[Download the tool](#)

4. Psychosocial risks, moral harassment

The French National Research and Safety Institute (INRS) plays a key role in the prevention system in France. This institute offers numerous tools for identifying psychosocial risks, including a risk factor evaluation grid. These tools have not been adapted for the academic sector, but are well suited to identifying at risk situations.

[Download the evaluation grid](#)

5. Sample monitoring committee report in a booklet

An individual monitoring committee booklet is available to facilitate the work of each person. This booklet includes sample monitoring committee reports that are structured to ensure that none of the committee's tasks are overlooked. This booklet should be completed progressively and allows the annual progress reports and the recommendations and opinions of the monitoring committee to be brought together. This booklet was inspired by practices already in place in several doctoral schools and adapted to the new national regulations so that it can be generalised for everyone.

[Download the booklet](#)

Doctoral students are asked to complete their booklet at least one week before the annual meeting of their monitoring committee and to send it to them. The booklet includes a portfolio to be completed as you go along.

Monitoring committees are asked to send their signed report to the doctoral school quickly after each meeting, so as not to delay the re-registration process (the opinion of the follow-up committee is required for re-registration).

