

WGS Conversation about Expectations¹

Supervisors and PhD candidates may have different expectations about the process leading to the PhD degree. The Wageningen Graduate Schools stimulate PhD candidates and supervisors to discuss expectations at the start. This worksheet may help with this. Supervisors and PhD candidates complete this scale independently and then compare their responses. It is not about the answers, but about the discussion afterwards. Also, both the supervisor and PhD candidate, please feel free to add your own statements to make the conversation even more relevant and fit for your project.

Read each pair of statements on the next page and then estimate your position on each. For example, with statement 1, if you believe very strongly that the goal of the PhD programme is to write a thesis, you would put a ring around '1'. If you think that the goals to write a thesis and to become a competent independent researcher are equally important, you put a ring around '3' and if you think the goal is to become a competent independent researcher, put a ring around '5'.

¹ Wageningen Graduate Schools has adapted an example of the Graduate Centre, University of Adelaide, Australia

GENERAL							
1	The goal of the PhD programme is to write a thesis.	1	2	3	4	5	The goal of the PhD programme is to become an independent practitioner of science.
2	The PhD candidate should complete their PhD programme within four years.	1	2	3	4	5	Four years is a general indication of the length of the PhD programme.
3	Working more than standard hours or outside normal working hours is a normal practice in academia.	1	2	3	4	5	Working more than standard hours or outside normal working hours should not be the norm.
SUPERVISION							
4	The supervisor is the team leader.	1	2	3	4	5	The PhD candidate is the team leader.
5	The supervisor has a fixed number of supervision hours and meetings per week/month.	1	2	3	4	5	The intensity of supervision is flexible during the PhD trajectory.
6	The responsibility for organising good supervisory meetings lies with the supervisor.	1	2	3	4	5	The PhD candidate prepares the supervisory meetings and guides the discussion.
7	The supervisor has a duty of care for the PhD candidate.	1	2	3	4	5	The supervisor is only responsible for supervising the content of the research project.
RESEARCH AND THESIS							
8	The supervisor leads the PhD candidate from the topic to the research results.	1	2	3	4	5	The PhD candidate makes choices and decides on research questions, methods and results.
9	The supervisor determines the content and chapters.	1	2	3	4	5	The PhD candidate determines the content and chapters.
LEARNING							
10	The supervisor is the co-author of the PhD candidate's publications.	1	2	3	4	5	The supervisor can be a co-author, but not necessarily.
11	The TSP is an administrative requirement.	1	2	3	4	5	The TSP is a tool to safeguard attention to personal development and suitable supervision.
12	The supervisor decides what courses and training the PhD candidate will take.	1	2	3	4	5	The PhD candidate actively searches for courses and activities to the benefit of their development.
13	Supervisors make explicit how often they are willing to give written and/or oral feedback on a paper.	1	2	3	4	5	Supervisors give as much feedback on a paper as the PhD candidate needs.
TEACHING AND SUPERVISION (if applicable)							
14	The PhD candidate is expected to teach and supervise students as part of the job.	1	2	3	4	5	The PhD candidate may voluntarily be involved in teaching and supervising students.
15	Teaching by the PhD candidate is connected with the content of the PhD research.	1	2	3	4	5	Teaching by the PhD candidate is in a wider field than the research