

**Amsterdam Public Health research institute**  
VUmc, Van der Boechorststraat 7  
1081 BT Amsterdam, The Netherlands

**Date:** May 25, 2022  
**Subject:** Announcement for APH PhD candidates regarding the mandatory educational requirements

Dear APH PhD candidates (VU/VUmc) and involved (co)supervisors,

The Amsterdam Public Health research institute (APH) has made an adaptation regarding the mandatory research institute specific educational requirements of the 30 ECTS Training Plan for VU/VUmc PhD candidates. This adaptation concerns a reduction of the minimum required ECTS for courses focused on ‘advanced (methodological) research skills’.

#### **Background**

According to the VU Doctorate regulations every VU/VUmc PhD candidate must complete mandatory and elective courses for the amount of at least 30 ECTS. Besides mandatory VU/VUmc educational requirements, additional mandatory research institute specific requirements are set. The APH Board of Directors and the APH PhD Education Committee have jointly decided to adapt one of these mandatory educational requirements.

#### **Adaptation in advanced (methodological) research skills**

From now on every VU/VUmc APH PhD candidate must complete a minimum of 4 ECTS instead of 6 ECTS from courses focused on ‘advanced (methodological) research skills’. This applies to both current and new PhD trajectories. Be noticed that the total of a minimum of 30 ECTS, as well as the remaining mandatory educational requirements, must still be met.

By lowering the minimum of ECTS for this specific requirement, PhD candidates have more flexibility in setting up a Training Plan that meets the needs of the individual PhD candidate, their research and their contextual circumstances. Moreover, APH thrives to reduce the workload of PhD candidates in the upcoming years. This small change is one of the ways the research institute wants to support its PhD candidates.

Be aware that APH still strongly recommends all PhD candidates to obtain 6 ECTS from ‘advanced (methodological) research skills’ courses since this is a highly acknowledged asset of educated public health researchers.

#### **Further steps**

In case your Training Plan has already been approved by the APH PhD Education Committee (and uploaded in Hora Finita) and you will obtain the minimum of 4-6 ECTS from ‘advanced (methodological) research



skills' courses, no further action is needed. Just fill in the completed courses in your Hora Finita Portfolio and the APH PhD Education Committee will review it upon your request at the end of your PhD trajectory.

In case your Training Plan has not yet been approved by the APH PhD Education Committee, discuss this adaptation with your (co)supervisors and decide whether you will obtain 4-6 ECTS from 'advanced (methodological) research skills' courses. You are encouraged to obtain 6 ECTS.

### **More information**

For more information about the mandatory and elective (APH) education requirements, the Training Plan, Hora Finita, or other PhD trajectory related information, please read the [APH website](#) and our [APH PhD Handbook](#). We encourage you to consult the APH PhD Handbook regularly for the latest version with small updates and newest information and links.

For questions please contact [aph.phdcommittee@amsterdamumc.nl](mailto:aph.phdcommittee@amsterdamumc.nl)

Kind regards,

APH Board of Directors & APH PhD Education Committee  
*Amsterdam Public Health research institute*