

Policy *ius promovendi* for associate professors at Maastricht University

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Adopted by the Board of Deans on 4 September 2019 and approved by the Executive Board on 30 September 2019.

Comes into force on 1 January 2020, replacing the policy document 'Guidelines on the *ius promovendi* for associate professors' adopted by the Board of Deans on 24 January 2018.

This document sets out Maastricht University's policy on the *ius promovendi* (i.e. right to supervise doctoral candidates) for associate professors (UHD's).

A. Introduction

On 6 June 2017 the Senate of the Dutch Parliament adopted the bill 'Promoting internationalisation of higher education and scientific research'. Part of this bill was the amendment of Section 7.18(4) of the Dutch Higher Education and Research Act (WHW), under which the right to supervise doctoral candidates (i.e. *ius promovendi*) has been extended. The effect of this extension is that from now on, in addition to full professors, other members of staff with a Doctor or Doctor of Philosophy degree who the Board of Deans considers sufficiently competent may also be appointed as a supervisor. The change in the law took effect on 1 September 2017 (see box 1 for Section 7.18(4) of the WHW).

Box 1. Section 7.18(4) of the WHW

Section 7.18. Awarding the degrees of Doctor or Doctor of Philosophy; admission and system

4. The doctoral degree board shall appoint a supervisor for each doctoral degree ceremony. The person appointed as supervisor may be a professor or, in so far as he has been awarded the degree of Doctor or Doctor of Philosophy, another member of the staff of a university, a university based on religious or philosophical principles or the Open University who, in the opinion of the doctoral degree board, has sufficient competence to act a supervisor. [...]

On 19 February 2016 the General Board of the Association of Universities in the Netherlands (VSNU) adopted a guideline for doctorate boards (at Maastricht University: the Board of Deans) on how Dutch universities can implement this change in the law in a uniform manner.¹ In this guideline it is advised to only allowing associate professors with a doctoral degree to act as supervisors in addition to full professors. On 24 January 2018, following on from the guideline, the Board of Deans adopted guidelines for granting the *ius promovendi* to associate professors at Maastricht University. Under these guidelines, the *ius promovendi* is granted to associate professors for each PhD track following a positive assessment by the Board of Deans on the recommendation of the Dean.

At its meeting on 4 September 2019 the Board of Deans resolved to amend these guidelines and adopted the present policy. On 30 September 2019, the Executive Board has approved this policy. Under this policy, all associate professors with a doctoral degree and an appointment at Maastricht University as of 1 January 2020 will have the *ius promovendi* indefinitely, which will allow them to act as a supervisor (i.e. promotor). A number of additional policy measures have been included, for example that 'proven experience of the supervision of doctoral candidates' is a requirement for promotion from assistant to associate professor (i.e. appointment criterion for associate professors).

¹ See: <https://www.vsnu.nl/files/documenten/RC%20Guidelines%20on%20granting%20ius%20promovendi.pdf>

B. Policy on the *ius promovendi* for associate professors at Maastricht University

This part sets out Maastricht University's policy on the *ius promovendi* for associate professors. This policy was adopted by the Board of Deans on 4 September 2019 and approved by the Executive Board on 30 September 2019. The policy comes into force on 1 January 2020.

- From 1 January 2020 all associate professors with a doctoral degree and an appointment at Maastricht University will have the *ius promovendi* indefinitely. Under this policy, the associate professors concerned may be appointed as a supervisor (promotor) on PhD tracks starting from 1 January 2020.
- For PhD tracks starting before 1 January 2020 in principle nothing changes in the composition of the supervision team if the supervisor(s) and co-supervisor(s) have already been appointed. However, with the consent of the previously appointed supervisor(s) and co-supervisor(s), associate professors may still be appointed as supervisors, on condition that the composition of the supervision team conforms to the guidelines of Maastricht University's Regulations for obtaining the doctoral degree.
- Every associate professor with an appointment at Maastricht University must be sufficiently competent to act as a supervisor, in other words have:
 - 1) demonstrably relevant academic research experience, and
 - 2) proven experience of the supervision of doctoral candidates (e.g. as a co-supervisor).
- All faculties will include 'proven experience of the supervision of doctoral candidates' as a requirement for promotion from assistant to associate professor in the faculty career policy plans for academic staff.
- The Dean will ensure that the supervision team has sufficient 'proven experience of the supervision of doctoral candidates'.
- Consideration will be given at central and faculty level to the supervision of doctoral candidates, for example, in annual appraisals and the provision of training for supervisors aimed at the supervision of doctoral candidates.
- Associate professors will only have the *ius promovendi* if they have a doctoral degree (i.e. the degree of Doctor or Doctor of Philosophy)² and an appointment at Maastricht University. Their hours of work per week are unimportant; they may even have a zero-hours appointment.
- Both grade 1 associate professors and grade 2 associate professors with an appointment at Maastricht University will have the *ius promovendi*.

² A doctoral degree obtained from abroad must be equivalent to the Dutch degree of Doctor or Doctor of Philosophy.

- Just like full professors, associate professors will retain the *ius promovendi* for five years after their (honourable) discharge, so that ongoing projects can be supervised to the end with them as supervisor.
- Associate professors with a doctoral degree and no appointment at Maastricht University will not automatically have the *ius promovendi* at Maastricht University (irrespective of whether they have the *ius promovendi* at another Dutch or foreign university). To gain the *ius promovendi* at Maastricht University, they will have to go through the procedure in Annex 1.
- Professors of practice with an appointment at Maastricht University can gain the *ius promovendi* by going through the procedure in Annex 1.
- By definition the *ius promovendi* is not granted to assistant professors.
- The wearing of a gown is reserved to full professors. An associate professor acting as a supervisor does not wear a gown at the defence ceremony (i.e. defence of the doctoral thesis).
- The *ius promovendi* may be withdrawn by the Board of Deans under certain circumstances. Such a decision will only be taken after careful balancing of interests.

Annex 1. Procedure for gaining the *ius promovendi* at Maastricht University for professors of practice and external associate professors

Professors of practice with an appointment at Maastricht University and associate professors with a doctoral degree and with no appointment at Maastricht University (external associate professors) can gain the *ius promovendi* on the basis of the following procedure:

1. The candidate must submit an application to the Dean of the faculty where the doctoral candidate has been appointed and whose supervisor he/she wishes to be appointed. This application will include a motivation letter and CV.
NB. In principle an application for the *ius promovendi* must always be submitted at the beginning of the PhD track. In exceptional cases this may be done later, but in any event before the supervisor is appointed in accordance with Article 8 of Maastricht University's Regulations for obtaining the doctoral degree.
2. The Dean will assess the application.
3. The Dean may consult a full professor in the discipline concerned.
4. The Dean will make a positive or negative assessment of the application.
5. In the event of a positive assessment, the Dean will propose the application to the Board of Deans.
6. The Board of Deans will review the proposed application.