

Professional Doctorate Leisure Tourism & Hospitality

Program Document



Colofon

Professional Doctorate Leisure Tourism & Hospitality Program Document

Taskforce Professional Doctorate Leisure Tourism & Hospitality

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DISCLAIMER: The Pilot Professional Doctorate is under development. The information contained in this document is provided on an “as is” in December 2023 basis; changes and adaptations can still take place.

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1 Introduction

The domain of leisure, tourism and hospitality is increasingly important for the Netherlands. In 2019, the year before the Covid-19 pandemic started, business activities in the domain generated revenues of EUR 91,2 billion, and employed around 813.000 people (NRIT, Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, NBTC Holland Marketing en CELTH, Centre of Expertise Leisure, Tourism & Hospitality, 2019). Tourism growth (pre-Covid) pushes investments in infrastructure (transport and mobility, accommodation, amenities, events, and travel services). The resource use, complexity and extended scope of the domain is visible in a large variety of development strategies, investment vehicles and business models.

Because of its increased impact on society, the *Raad voor de leefomgeving en infrastructuur* (2019) mentions the need for a paradigm shift within leisure, tourism and hospitality. The new coalition agreement recognises that tourism should receive full attention in public policy (VVD, D66, CDA en ChristenUnie, 2021). The effects of the Covid-19 pandemic have demonstrated the need for flexibility and resilience to shocks and crises. In the near future, businesses, industry associations and other actors in leisure, tourism and hospitality will continue to face serious challenges, as it needs to adapt to increased impacts of climate change (Gerlings, 2022). As a result, there is an urgent need for developing, testing and evaluation of new models, systems and processes of interaction in leisure, tourism and hospitality.

Seven Universities of Applied Sciences (UAS) have decided to join forces in response to these challenges, and develop a tailored Professional Doctorate (PD) degree program in leisure, tourism hospitality (PD-LTH). These are: NHL Stenden UAS, Breda University of Applied Sciences (BUas), Saxion UAS, Zuyd UAS, Inholland UAS, Hotelschool The Hague UAS, and Hogeschool Zeeland UAS. The current PD program proposal is a follow up to the proposition approved by the *Vereniging Hogescholen* (VH, Netherlands Association of Universities of Applied Sciences) in 2020 (CELTH, 2020).

The proposal is developed as a collaboration between the key professors in the domain of these UAS, supported by the Centre of Expertise Leisure, Tourism, Hospitality (CELTH). It follows the generic framework developed by the VH (*Vereniging Hogescholen*, 2021a). We are convinced that a PD degree program tailored to the domain of leisure, tourism and

hospitality will contribute to the sustainable transition of the domain and strengthen its positive impacts on the Dutch economy and society as a whole.

The PD program will offer a new career perspective for researchers and practitioners and allow the domain to professionalise and respond to society challenges. By using practice-oriented research, based on interventions and short-cyclical research output, PD candidates are enabled to develop applied solutions. Because of this, the seven UAS see the PD as a natural addition to their educational portfolio.

The PD-LTH is a degree program composed of courses and the successful completion of an individual research portfolio. The program will be implemented in the framework of a joint pilot by the VH and is foreseen to start in January 2023. During the 4 years pilot phase from 2023 to 2027, an initial number of 17 candidates will be allowed to start their PD trajectory in one of the seven participating UAS. This document describes the profile of the program, its structure and method of assessment.



Program Profile

2.1 Summary

Features	Application to Tourism, Leisure and Hospitality
Definition	The Professional Doctorate (PD) is a Post Graduate Degree program for research professionals, who learn to design and implement interventions in response to complex problems in the domain of leisure, tourism and hospitality.
End result	Creation of new knowledge, processes and products, leading to design and validation of industry interventions.
End qualification	The PD program will allow research professionals to “learn to intervene in complex practices” at level EQF 8 (VH 2021).
Dominant learning strategy	Learning-in-practice: the candidate: Addresses a complex issue in LTH; Develops (an) intervention(s) to address it; Tests, implements, evaluates the intervention.
Supportive courses	Personalised course program, based on experience and background, supporting the process of learning-in-practice. All candidates need to show evidence of 30 ECTS, completed in participating Universities: Compulsory: 15 ECTS ‘Advanced studies in LTH’/‘Research ethics, data management and academic integrity’ Electives: 15 ECTS ‘Research and Transferable Skills’

2.2 Focus: domain leisure, tourism & hospitality

The domain of LTH focusses on the *interaction* between business and leisure visitors (guests), residents, businesses and public organisations, and how it creates meaningful products, services, experiences and places. It offers complex and composite products and services originating in a series of subsectors. Demand in the LTH domain has been growing very fast globally and is seen by local and national governments in many countries as a key 'driver' to develop urban, rural as well as natural areas (destinations) in their economic as well as social dimensions. Increasingly this driver is supposed to lead to *regenerative* leisure, tourism, and hospitality concepts.

LTH products and services share several features: they are largely *intangible* and made of personal or collective *experiences* that are meaningful and *composed or packaged*. This includes services from a whole subset of businesses: the journey to a place by car, boat or plane, the accommodation service in a hotel, campsite as well as all activities related to business or leisure, such as meetings, conferences or a visit to a concert or museum. Services are consumed at the moment when they are produced and cannot be *stored*. These features make the domain vulnerable and sensitive to shocks.

Because of the complex and intertwined nature of its services, the LTH domain is strongly interrelated and connected to other domains in society. Interventions in LTH automatically generate impact on the physical and social infrastructure, embodied in the destination areas where the domain operates.

Future growth of the LTH domain will increase the complexity of governance and described social, economic and other impacts. The consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic and limitations for LTH businesses to operate, the closure of attractions, events, cultural venues, sports, and other activities have made the impact all the more clear: people want to meet each other, the LTH domain contributes to physical and mental health, it allows people to relax and contributes to self-esteem. In short, the LTH domain has a unique value to society (CELTH en Gastvrij Nederland, 2021). The key challenge to all related actors is to understand the forces in this complex domain and optimise its value to society.

Societies as a whole, including actors in the LTH domain, face an enormous challenge: to assure the effective transition towards more sustainable modes of interaction, production, and consumption (European Commission, Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs, 2022). Innovations in digitalisation, communication and robotics should be supportive to this overarching transition process. The LTH domain is responsible for high levels of CO2 emissions, high levels of non-regenerative resource use, and socio-cultural erosion. At the same time, it allows societies to connect, trade, and to learn from each other. The increased complexity and dynamics of the context in which LTH actors develop, are challenging but also offer opportunities. These can only be addressed in an interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary manner.

2.3 Added value: enhancing value of LTH to society

In line with the proposition developed by seven Dutch UAS and the Centre of Expertise Leisure, Tourism and Hospitality (CELTH), the following eight cross-sectoral themes have

been identified for development of new knowledge and interventions by PDs (CELTH, 2020):

1. **Sustainability:** First and foremost, PD-trajectories contribute to innovation of the domain of LTH towards sustainable and circular development or implementation of UN Social Development Goals. The complexity of sustainable development in LTH lies in its multi-dimensionality and in the specific features of the domain (*intangible products, experiences that cannot be stored, et cetera*). In addition, the domain's supply chains are complex (e.g. ownership structures) and sustainability needs to be integrated at multiple levels (individual choice behaviour; business strategy design, and implementation; regional, and national policies, laws, and regulations). Improved levels of sustainability can only be achieved in co-creation with all stakeholders and by designing new business and management models and matching legislation and regulations. PD processes should contribute to the analysis, conceptualisation, design, implementation, and/or acceleration of these sustainability transition processes.
2. **Optimising the contribution of LTH to major society challenges:** Actors in the LTH domain need support in their *transition process* towards playing a more active role in addressing societal challenges. PD trajectories provide insight into how different (social, economic, societal and ecological) impacts interact with each other and on choices made by LTH business or public actors. PD trajectories seek solutions that allow the domain to function as a regenerative force or to strengthen its value for society.
3. **Resilience:** The resilience of the LTH domain and the interaction between LTH actors at destination level, should be better understood and strengthened. A resilient LTH domain that is capable of learning and bouncing forward, based on new paradigms of interaction, can increase society's earning capacity. It enables the domain to better anticipate and respond to future disruptions (health risks/pandemics, ecological issues, geopolitical disruptions, terror, etc.) or, preferably, to help prevent them. PD trajectories can contribute to strengthening the responsiveness and resilience of society as a whole.
4. **Meaningful experiences:** Actors in the LTH domain should respond to changing demands and needs of consumers for experiences. At the same time, business and public actors increasingly have their own responsibility in determining what is "valuable". This dilemma calls for reflections on what quality and positive relationships should be as part of the guest experience. PD trajectories can provide expertise, design, and implement methodologies to define, measure, analyse and improve experiences that are not exclusively meaningful to guests but also to society.
5. **Key technologies and data:** Developments of key (digital) technologies and effective use in decision making processes, play a crucial role in designing experiences and facilitating consumer choice processes¹. PD trajectories in the applicability and usability of technologies may help to measure and positively influence the impact of LTH on society. They may especially enhance the use of open access data and help organisations and consumers to make better decisions based on these data.
6. **Governance:** the increased interdependence of different LTH actors and the complexity of the domain have led to issues of governance. PD trajectories can contribute to research, design, testing to develop new models of governance, stakeholder collaboration, and management. This not only concerns the direct public and private

¹ With this theme, the PD-LTH program explicitly addresses the KIA "Key technologies" of the Kennis- en Innovatieagenda 2018-2021

- actors in hospitality, but also the development of the necessary enabling environment, physical and social infrastructure.
7. **Financing:** The complexity of the LTH domain leads to new research fields related to financing and development of alternative business models. In view of the huge potential that the domain has for society and potential multiple positive impacts it may generate, this area requires new thinking that goes beyond the concept of creating shareholder value. PD projects can contribute to design, testing, and innovation of financing mechanisms that enables and empowers all stakeholders involved (for example, the application of green and social bonds, but also blockchain technology).
 8. **Human Capital:** The complexity of the LTH domain requires highly educated and trained personnel. This demands optimisation of existing LTH degree program curricula. PD pathways can contribute to this as well as to the development of meaningful and sustainable careers and work experiences within the LTH domain. The complex and dynamic developments discussed above also require (new) skills and knowledge from employees and employers, also for continuous monitoring and preparation of future skills as the industry develops, e.g. due to introduction of technologies.

These research themes require applied practice-based research approaches based on testing and validation of interventions in collaboration with LTH industry stakeholders. There is currently no independent research degree program in the Netherlands that allows for this research to take place (CELTH, 2020).

In addition to societal value, the introduction of a PD will contribute to the improvement of quality, and innovation of the education, offered at Bachelor and Master level in the seven participating UAS since it offers a clear career opportunity to UAS faculty staff and a possibility to retain junior researchers, who can combine research with teaching in the leisure, tourism and hospitality Bachelor and Master degree programs.

The increasing importance of the LTH domain in general, is also recognised by the VH which included tourism and hospitality as one of the twelve designated research themes in their *Strategic Research Agenda 2022-2025* (Vereniging Hogescholen, 2021b). In this Agenda, tourism and hospitality are seen as contributing to *KIA Energietransitie en Duurzaamheid* ("Knowledge & Innovation Agenda" Energy Transition & Sustainability) and *KIA Maatschappelijk Verdienvermogen* ("Knowledge & Innovation Agenda" Social Earning Capacity) as well as to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), numbers 8 (decent work and economic growth), 11 (sustainable cities and communities) and 13 (climate action).

2.4 Program level

2.4.1 Entry requirements

Based on the added value of LTH for society, the following entry requirements for candidates for the PD program in Leisure, Tourism & Hospitality (PD-LTH) have been defined:

- The candidate is in possession of a relevant Master's degree (*HBO* [= UAS], Master or *WO* [= university] Master) or equivalent title;

- The candidate shows proof of a substantiated vision on the LTH sector. Ideally, this is supported by relevant working experience at a private or public LTH organization, or based on a collaboration agreement with and/or declaration of intent from one or more sector stakeholders, and/or a role in a (research) consortium in which LTH industry partners participate;
- The candidate shows excellent motivation to be able to complete the trajectory successfully and within the set time frame;
- The candidate shows knowledge and experience at Master level (by practice and/or training) with relevant quantitative and/or qualitative methods for data collection and analysis and/or relevant design methods, and willingness to develop this further;
- The candidate possesses the level of English needed for completing a PD trajectory. This will be assessed before acceptance by a combination of a formal English proficiency test and a viva to assess English verbal communication proficiency and subject affiliation.

In general terms, the PD-LTH degree program focusses on three types of candidates:

- Executives and senior professionals working in private/public organisations in tourism, leisure & hospitality;
- Academic staff working at Universities (of Applied Sciences) looking for the next step in their research career;
- Recent graduates from a domain-related Master's program (such as tourism, leisure, and events, hospitality) of participating Dutch or international Universities (of Applied Sciences).

2.4.2 Qualifications descriptors

A PD candidate in the LTH domain will achieve the doctorate level (EQF 8 'learning to intervene in complex practices') as described in The Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area (QF-EHEA, EHEA 2018) – also known as the Dublin descriptors – and the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning (EQF). Both frameworks are compatible (European Union, 2008). The emphasis in the development of end products of the PD is more on the development, testing and learning of interventions. The required final level is that of EQF 8, as described in the table below.

EQF8	QF-EHEA <i>Qualifications that signify completion of the third cycle are awarded to students who ...</i>
Knowledge at the most advanced frontier of the LTH domain and at the interface between these fields	Have demonstrated a systematic understanding of the LTH domain and mastery of skills and methods of research associated with this field;

The most advanced and specialised skills and techniques, including synthesis and evaluation, required to solve critical problems in research and/or innovation and to extend and redefine existing knowledge or professional practice	Have demonstrated the ability to conceive, design, implement, and adapt a substantial process of research with scholarly integrity in the LTH domain;
Demonstrate substantial authority, innovation, autonomy, scholarly, and professional integrity, and sustained commitment to the development of new ideas or processes at the forefront of work or study contexts including research	Have made a contribution through original research that extends the frontier of knowledge in the LTH domain by developing <i>a substantial body of work</i> , some of which merits national or international refereed publication;
	Are capable of critical analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of new and complex ideas;
	Can communicate with their peers, the larger scholarly community and with society in general about their areas of expertise;
	Can be expected to be able to promote, within academic and professional contexts, technological, social or cultural advancement in a knowledge based society.

2.4.3 Comparison with similar third cycle degrees

A (UAS) PD differs from a (WO) PhD. Both degrees are of the same level, namely level 8 of the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning (EQF). The two titles do not differ in level, but in orientation: practice-oriented versus knowledge-oriented research.

A PhD program is an academic program that trains scientific researchers who learn to conduct independent scientific research (Vereniging Hogescholen, 2021a). Such researchers create generic new conceptual knowledge that contributes to the scientific knowledge base, pushing the boundaries of a scientific field. A PhD program will thus allow a candidate to:

- analyse theories and concepts;
- evaluate the relevance of current, and emerging theories;
- assess identified gaps in current research literature;
- advance the body of knowledge through original research;
- communicate effectively primarily to an academic audience.

The PD focuses on applying research to practical problems, formulating solutions to complex issues, and designing effective professional practices within a work field. It trains independent inquiring professionals who learn to assess and if possible implement

interventions in complex practices on the basis of a practical question from society or the professional field (Vereniging Hogescholen, 2021a). The PD professionals learn to intervene and innovate in such practices on the basis of developing and validating new and generic action knowledge.

At the end of the PD trajectory in leisure, tourism and hospitality, the candidate is able to:

- evaluate the relevance of current and emerging theories and practices within leisure, tourism and hospitality;
- formulate effective solutions to complex, real-world problems in leisure, tourism and hospitality;
- apply research-based knowledge to practical problems in leisure, tourism and hospitality;
- design rigorous research that expands the professional body of knowledge in leisure, tourism and hospitality;
- communicate effectively to a combined audience of academic and industry stakeholders in leisure tourism and hospitality.

2.5 Program characteristics

The generic characteristics of all PD-trajectories in the LTH domain can be described as follows:

- PD-trajectories originate from demands by the national and international LTH sector in the eight cross-sectoral themes formulated in paragraph 2.3. Research problems and questions are developed with and respond to the needs of public and private actors in the professional LTH domain. The candidate generates interventions (a change in practice, communication, organizational processes, methods, prototypes, products, or services) with the objective to improve and solve key concerns and/or allow LTH actors to introduce new opportunities in professional practice.
- PD candidates address strategic industry problems; proposed solutions can be short-cyclical and scalable, but may also lead to long-term systemic changes. PD research approaches are multi-, inter- or transdisciplinary by nature (e.g. use of technologies for re-use of waste, reduction of water use, e-mobility solutions, green bonds finance, etc.).
- PD trajectories are designed within a range of organisational contexts. Professors, researchers, degree programs, and professional partners are in a constant dialogue while articulating a research question, developing, testing/implementing, evaluating intervention(s), and communicating results.
- PD-trajectories are strongly connected to a context of implementation. Criteria for assessing the quality of final PD-research output are co-designed with professional LTH actors (for example, different approaches to value creation, alternative methods of analysing returns on investments, etc.).
- PD-trajectories are a natural next step in the LTH domain, after the undergraduate and graduate degree programs (1st and 2nd cycle) in Universities of Applied Sciences. They contribute to innovation of curricula and professionalisation of faculty staff.
- PD-trajectories lead to new insights and knowledge in the LTH domain. This knowledge will be disclosed and shared through various channels with students, professionals, researchers, and the broader audience during as well as after the trajectory.

2.6 Intended program learning outcomes

In order to meet the Qualifications Descriptors (mentioned in 2.4.2), to provide input on the eight topics relevant for the future of the LTH domain (described in 2.3) and to be successful (generic characteristics of the PD-trajectories mentioned in 2.5), PD candidates are expected to develop themselves in three major roles: that of **researcher**, **professional** and **innovator**.

These roles are interconnected and can be considered as the three dimensions of the research practice (described in 2.4.3) of the PD candidate. These roles are to a large extent context-dependent and can therefore differ per research topic and project. This means that candidates must be able to switch flexibly between the different roles and to integrate them for the purpose of their research projects. However, all three roles will be needed to complete a PD trajectory and to develop into an investigative and innovative professional.

2.6.1. Generic learning outcomes of the LTH PD trajectory

After completing a PD trajectory in LTH domain, candidates demonstrate the highest level of:

- knowledge and systematic understanding of the LTH domain and its challenges (described in 2.3);
- research skills to conceive, design, implement, and evaluate a substantial, original body of research work;
- analytical, and problem solving skills to identify complex, transdisciplinary problems, and come up with innovative solutions or a redefinition of existing knowledge, or professional practice in the LTH domain;
- communication skills including the ability to communicate with peers, the larger scholarly community, and with society in general about their areas of expertise;
- autonomy and authority, including scholarly, and professional integrity.

2.6.2 Role-specific learning outcomes

PDs as researchers

...investigate a complex, cross-sectoral, practice-based research problem in the LTH domain and, in cooperation with all relevant stakeholders, develops new professional practices, knowledge, or interventions that contribute to the solution of the problem.

The candidates:

identify complex problems and research topics in the LTH-practice in continuous dialogue with the stakeholders;

demonstrate a strong scientific foundation by their ability to apply, reflect on, synthesise, and operationalise new and existing theories to articulate and analyse a complex research problem in the LTH domain in an effective and structured way;

demonstrate a strong methodological foundation by their ability to make articulated choices in the development and application of relevant multi-, inter-, or transdisciplinary research and design methods, to contribute to a solution of the research problem, taking in to account the roles and interests of all relevant stakeholders and/or end-users.

2 PDs as professionals

...position themselves as advisor in the LTH domain and can contribute to developing, redefining, and innovating existing professional practices, knowledge and education in the LTH domain.

The candidates:

- assess the ethical, and societal (such as sustainability, inclusiveness) implications of their research design and interventions in order to understand the impact on all stakeholders;
- can communicate a research problem, outcomes, interventions, and evaluations both orally and in writing to engage in critical dialogue with academic, professional, and public audiences;
- assess which parts of their research, research outcomes, interventions, are relevant for future professionals in the LTH domain and translate these into education.

3 PDs as innovators

... design, test, implement (or reject) interventions that contribute to the solution of a complex, cross-sectoral, practice-based research problem in the LTH domain.

The candidates:

- design impactful interventions substantiated and validated by strong scientific and methodological foundations and by relevant stakeholders and/or end-users to make a substantial contribution to the solution of the problem; proposed interventions or solutions are practical, can be short cyclical, may include strategies and/or prototypes that allow stakeholders to actively engage with the research and that facilitate implementation of related change processes;
- develop a clear vision on proposed changes to understand (and help others understand) the implications for the organisation;
- are aware of (sudden changes in) the continuously evolving (international) context of the research problem and/or stakeholders' interests, know how to prioritise these changes and how they may impact their research, and can come up with creative strategies to deal with these challenges;
- have strong communication skills (advisory and negotiation skills, ability to empathise with others) to create support for and engagement with the proposed innovation or change in the organization.

3

Program structure

3.1 Pedagogical Philosophy

The PD program is a personalised research and design track, offered by the Graduate Network of seven affiliated Universities of Applied Sciences in the LTH domain. This LTH Graduate Network stimulates research and design that promotes transferable knowledge of and insight into complex issues in society, policy, and organisational processes in the domain of leisure, tourism, and hospitality. PD candidates will:

- learn in practice;
- follow in-depth and broadening courses;
- be part of a learning community of fellow PD and PhD candidates, supervisors, LTH stakeholders, the LTH Graduate Network (see 3.4 and 3.5), and CELTH.

Based on these points of departure, the LTH PD trajectory is not a formal curriculum, but a process of learning in practice. Learning and development take place through the candidates' activities of researching a complex problem and intervening in complex situations as well the candidates' organisational, and communicative qualities, reflective capacity, and initiative, in consultation with the supervisors.

Candidates from different backgrounds will work in different ways and with different methods on a diverse range of complex problems which necessitates a flexible trajectory. The learning in practice is supplemented with courses, tailored towards the needs of the candidate and the demands of the research problem. The PD trajectory is thus a flexible trajectory with a high degree of personalised learning, allowing the candidate to choose several courses that will deliver appropriate knowledge and skills for the specific issue they are working on.

The candidate will frequently interact with the stakeholders to develop a clear perspective on the research problem, to develop relevant new professional practices, knowledge, or interventions, and to assess the impact of these. Supervisors who can guide the candidate through the process of learning in practice and a community of fellow PD candidates for peer consultation are essential.

This kind of learning in practice and engaging with the work environment of a company or organization generates both knowledge of complex LTH problems and more broadly applicable transversal skills (such as analysing, communicating, negotiating). It also enables the candidate to grow into the three roles (researcher, innovator, professional) that have been defined as the learning outcomes of the PD trajectory, to be context-sensitive, and to switch between the roles.

A portfolio based assessment suits this kind of personal learning trajectory and will be discussed below.

3.2 Program content

Candidates articulate a research problem and subsequently generate interventions (a change in practice, communication (e.g. nudging), organizational process, methods, prototype, product, or service) with the end goal of improving them and solving key concerns and/or allowing LTH actors to introduce new opportunities in the professional practice. Since the program is based on interventions, a candidate demonstrates progress in the research process through the design, testing, evaluation, and implementation (scaling up/reject) of interventions. This shall be done on basis of:

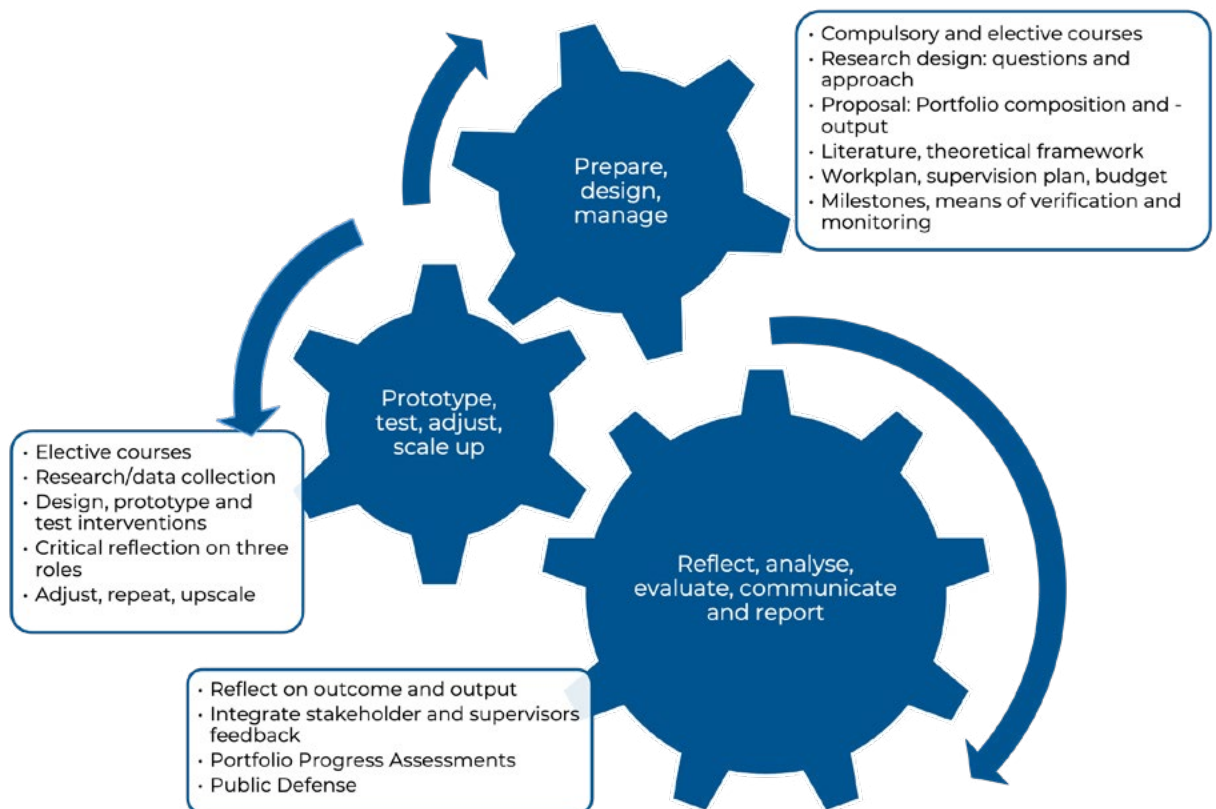
- a strong scientific foundation: the candidate shows theoretical understanding, is able to critically reflect on theories and concepts and is able to operationalise them in the context of the research problem.
- a strong methodological foundation: focus on developing and applying research and design skills, tailored to the research problem, that allows the PD candidate to understand and research the object of study (the intervention as well as the context in which it is applied).
- a strong professional foundation: the candidate demonstrates understanding of the context and can identify key issues in related fields through analysis and critical reflection in communication with relevant stakeholders. In the duration of the PD project, the candidate is able to design and test appropriate interventions and assess the ethical and societal implications thereof in an effort to advance current practices in collaboration with relevant industry partners and disseminate learnings through appropriate channels.

The PD-LTH program allows candidates to develop a conceptual analysis, use research, and design methods to analyse an applied research question, or problem, create an intervention, test, and evaluate it, and transfer the knowledge that it generates.

Theories and knowledge from a wide range of disciplines are relevant to the LTH domain. Where, for example, a PD trajectory for innovations in the hotel industry might be more closely connected with disciplines such as business administration, marketing and psychology, PD trajectories in leisure may have interfaces with the arts and creative business, while trajectories in the tourism and travel industry connect to environmental sciences and economic, social, and political sciences.

The PD program can be visualised as three processes that interrelate and connect:

Figure 1: PD-LTH processes



3.2.1 Prepare, design and manage

The first process of the PD program relates to the way candidates define, manage, reflect on, and redefine their research and design process. Candidates should demonstrate the relevance of the research for the domain and society as a whole and show the capability to identify research and design methods that can be applied when tackling the presented research issue.

During this process the candidate will interact with key stakeholders in the work field of LTH. They will articulate the research question, have the responsibility to assure that it is validated with relevant leisure, tourism & hospitality stakeholders and develop a validation plan that describes how demand articulation, validation and feedback loops are assured during the trajectory. This multi-annual collaboration could take different forms and relate to different areas such as: access to company data, co-financing, etc. CELTH will support the candidates in developing a relationship with industry stakeholders and designing this validation plan. During this component, candidates will also develop the research skills needed for further design and implementation of the professional doctorate trajectory. Innovative and context-sensitive research and design methods will be discussed and developed in collaboration with the researchers who are part of the LTH Graduate Network.

3.2.2 Prototype, test, adjust and scale up

The second process of the program will allow PD candidates to:

- collect and analyse relevant data;
- design and test one or more interventions;
- validate results with LTH stakeholders;
- conduct (if possible) improved/scaled up interventions;
- grow into the roles of researcher, innovator, and professional.

The prototypes/design/interventions, respond to an industry knowledge gap that is identified and validated during the first process. In parallel to the research/data collection, design, and testing of interventions, candidates may be still finalising part of the elective courses.

As part of this second process, candidates should also reflect critically on the three roles (researcher, innovator, and professional) and how these apply to their own intervention(s) proposed. They should demonstrate progress in the fulfilment of these roles, wherever applicable.

Though in theory, this process logically follows the first one, in practice the research process will be iterative: the three processes interact with each other. The second process should be organised in such a way that eventual interventions are substantiated on the basis of scientific insights and have been established on the basis of the correct application of methodologies/methods suitable for the context.

3.2.3 Reflect, analyse, evaluate, communicate, and report

The third process of the PD cycle refers to the capability of candidates to reflect on outcomes, analyse results, to assess the value of the tested intervention(s), and communicate these to relevant stakeholders. By completing this process in a satisfactory manner, the candidate demonstrates to have achieved the end qualifications at the level of PD.

To give evidence of successful completion, candidates will defend their entire Portfolio which should contain:

- evidence of successful completion of Portfolio Progress Assessments 1 and 2 (assessment reports of the assessors);
- the final research output (model, interventions, or other results in a written, such as an article, or visual form decided by the candidate, approved by the supervisor, and added to Portfolio before Portfolio Progress Assessment 2);
- a critical analysis and reflection on the entire PD process, the relevance of delivered output, and detailed, and substantiated advice to the professional field involved.

Though not compulsory, quality of Portfolio output, which may correspond to any of the three phases or the final critical analysis and reflection, may be demonstrated by peer-reviewed academic articles.

A “learning community of practice” will be established to support the candidate throughout the three processes. The learning community acts as a sounding board that can be addressed to discuss and receive feedback for various stages in the PD trajectory and share experiences, knowledge, and contacts that might be relevant to members of the learning community (*further detailed in 3.4*). Active participation in the learning community is expected to contribute to the candidate’s communication skills and generic learning outcomes as outlined in 2.6.1 through discussion of transdisciplinary approaches to the candidate’s research.

3.2.4 Course program

To enable candidates to successfully complete all three interrelated processes and achieve the required end qualifications, the UAS that support the Graduate Network offer a series of courses that complement the candidate’s knowledge and skills development in the project. The PD trajectory in line with the described processes is expected to provide the scope of the research, in which the candidates will actively develop their knowledge and skillset relating to the PD roles of becoming an independent investigative and innovative professional. Moving through all processes, candidates are expected to learn by doing and progress through continuous critical reflection. It is expected that this procedure will result in the identification of relevant knowledge and skill gaps which will be supported through a **common core program** and **elective program**.

Common core program (15 ECTS)

The common core program covers two components:

1. A compulsory course on ‘research ethics, data management and academic integrity’.
2. A selection of courses in ‘Advanced Studies in LTH’. These courses cover current issues in LTH and expected domain developments. The courses are developed by one or more of the UAS participating in the PD LTH. Initially, five courses will be developed, each of them requiring a time investment equivalent to 5 ECTS. The individual courses shall be assessed in a formative manner.

In consultation with the PD supervisory team, the candidate chooses two ‘Advanced Studies in LTH’ courses and integrates learning outcomes of the entire common core program (so including the course mentioned under a) above) into **one final product** with a time allocation that equals 15 ECTS upon successful completion and that needs to be approved by the supervisory team.

The format of the final product is flexible, but it needs to demonstrate in-depth understanding of the selected courses, the topics covered and the relation to the PD trajectory. The product could for instance be a written critical reflection, a documentary, a game, an advisory report, etc. The end product will be assessed during the first Portfolio Progress Assessment (see Assessment chapter). As the common core program is expected to support defining the scope of the PD project, it is *recommended* that PD candidates complete the common core program within one year after starting the PD trajectory.

Elective program (15 ECTS)

This program is composed of elective courses to be chosen by the candidate in agreement with the supervisory team. The selection will be based on the anticipated study design

of the candidate's current qualifications and the PD project. Criteria for elective courses are dependent on level and intensity with the condition that courses should relate to EQF Level 8. The selection of courses in the elective program is supportive of the defined project of the candidate and should not dictate the trajectory of the PD project. Before an elective course can be considered, the level needs to be determined and agreed upon by the supervisory team. A list of courses could include:

- quantitative and qualitative research methods;
- design thinking approaches and methods;
- writing and presentation skills for academic, professional, and public audiences;
- negotiation, advisory, and communication skills;
- change/innovation management/planning for impact.

Evidence of completion of each course has to be submitted to the candidate's Portfolio. The exact form of this evidence will depend on the course requirements.

3.3 Matching and selection of candidates

The PD program is an individual research and design track offered by the Graduate Network of seven affiliated Universities of Applied Sciences in the LTH domain. Prospect PD candidates are expected to develop a research plan that can be supported by professors and senior researchers employed at UAS, that participate in the LTH Graduate Network. Potential candidates will be invited to an introductory interview in which the proposed research plan will be presented and discussed. This moment also serves as the first impression of the candidate's suitability for the program. Following the interview, the candidate is expected to formulate a detailed research proposal supported by the supervisory team applicable to the candidate that shall be assessed by the Graduate Committee of the LTH Network. The Graduate Committee will assess:

- the initial entry qualifications of the candidate (references, background, title, and relevant track record) of the candidate;
- the supervision structure of the UAS presenting the candidate;
- the relevance of the research problem related to the research focus of the PD-LTH program;
- the proposed validation and collaboration with relevant industry actors (including financial robustness of the proposal).

Upon approval by the LTH Graduate Committee, each PD candidate shall receive a temporary (part-time) employment contract from the proposing UAS and will be added to the professorship of the promoting professor as a PD candidate researcher.

The LTH PD Program will commence from January 2023. However, there will be no annual cohorts: each PD candidate may start the program after being admitted by the Graduate Committee.

To be able to start with the PD trajectory, the PD candidate usually goes through a pre-PD trajectory. The proposals are worked out in the pre-PD phase, after which the final selection is made by the Graduate Committee.

3.4 Support and program team

After acceptance, while not yet being a member, PD candidates will benefit from working with senior graduates in the LTH Graduate Network. This is the group of collaborating lecturers and senior researchers who, together with aspiring PhD students and aspiring PD students, form an active and close international network of LTH researchers. They are therefore part of a “learning community of practice”. As such, PD candidates become colleagues, participants, witnesses, and supporters of each other’s learning. The network should create a stimulating learning environment for the PD candidates by offering inspiration sessions, peer review of draft research output, meet-ups with industry, and development of public debates, conferences to present and communicate research output. The PD candidate is encouraged to contribute to the personal, cultural, and professional experiences of all participants in this community. The underlying aim of this is to provide an exciting learning environment in which a new researcher can grow into the three roles and learn from experienced colleagues.

As part of the guidance process, and of this environment, the Graduate Network organises at least one inspiration session with the professional field every year for PD candidates and external PhD researchers. In practice, this “learning community of practice” will lead to a “team supervision model”, in which the direct supervisor, together with other lecturers and senior researchers, plays a role in the supervision.

The PD candidate is supervised by a team of supervisors selected and appointed by the Graduate Committee. The team consists of:

- A lead supervisor: a professor or senior researcher (with a PhD Degree or equivalent, relevant to the PD research focus). Preferably the lead supervisor has previously acted as promotor or co-promotor of PhD or PD trajectories from relevant domains. The lead supervisor acts as first contact point to the candidate and will closely monitor the progress and level of the research.
- A second academic scholar, from the LTH Graduate Network, whose knowledge and skills supplement the lead supervisor. It is generally encouraged to involve a second academic scholar in regular discussions throughout the PD trajectory as sounding board to offer a third opinion in the discussion. However, this is not mandatory and can also entail a selected involvement for specific applied research methodologies or for the support of one specific process as described in 3.2.
- A supervisor from the domain/work field of leisure, tourism and hospitality who has the right substantive expertise in the research topic. The domain related supervisor contributes to the PD by offering practical feasibility advice to the research and providing guidance in the design, data collection and applicability of the research in the industry.

The lead supervisor will be employed at a UAS that participates in the LTH Graduate Network. Being employed at the corresponding UAS, the candidate will have access to the UAS knowledge bank, and courses offered. The lead supervisor is expected to take an active role in involving the candidate in the organisation and to support the candidate’s integration at the UAS. In discussion with the lead supervisor, the candidate can be invited to deliver educational sessions at the UAS regarding the topic of the PD research. External co-supervision is possible: professors, researchers or professionals from industry or partner universities (such as Wageningen School of Social Sciences [WASS], University of

Groningen [RuG], Tilburg University, Hong Kong Polytechnic University) or (international) Graduate Schools may be invited to become an external member of the LTH Graduate Network. They may act as second supervisor to the PD candidate.

During the first phase of the research, the PD candidate has intensive, but at least monthly contact with the supervisors. Within the LTH Graduate Network we expect communication about progress to be a joint responsibility of the supervisors and candidate. The candidate is expected to prepare for meetings with supervisors. This also means that there must be a productive working relationship between supervisors and candidate. The supervisors act as gatekeepers to connect candidates to relevant experts within and outside of the LTH Graduate Network. It is the responsibility of the candidate in discussion with the supervisory team to evaluate the present knowledge within the team and reach out to LTH Graduate Network for support if any knowledge gap is identified.

There will be a clear distinction between supervising and assessing. Supervisors can never be members of the assessment committee. The lead supervisor nominates the candidate to the assessment committee and informs its members about the quality of the results and progress of the candidate.

3.5 Embedding: LTH Graduate Network, UAS professorships

Selected PD candidates will have access to data, knowledge and research results of affiliated professors and researchers of the LTH Graduate Network². The aim of the Graduate Network is to “contribute to the development of a high level of scientific and applied research in leisure, tourism and hospitality”. Graduates are critical professionals who participate in the social debate about LTH and contribute to solving issues in this domain. The LTH Graduate Network is responsible for assuring that sufficient support is provided to all PD candidates.

The seven UAS developing the PD LTH program collaborate internationally with a large number of partner universities. These almost without exception offer a complete first, second, and third cycle of higher education in the domain. PD candidates who are members of the LTH Graduate Network will thus be able to connect to their international fellow researchers and collaborate through international (research) projects or publications. They can contribute to current or new research and, where possible, also to the feedback of research results to education in master’s or bachelor’s degree programs.

Through this, PD candidates contribute to the LTH research focus of the Network and affiliated UAS. This can differ per University of Applied Sciences, in line with the individual profile of each UAS and professorship. Professors at each UAS can place different accents, in line with the research themes or focus areas and which are filled in by lecturers, matching research groups and research institutes – together with students.

² Please refer to the CELTH proposal (CELTH 2019) for more details about the professorships connected to the Graduate Network.

3.6 Study load and duration

The minimal duration for a full-time PD trajectory is expected to be 3 years. A part-time PD candidate trajectory may have a longer duration, depending on the time dedicated to the PD research. Though it is no obligation, it could be a natural combination of a candidate to not only act as a researcher but work as a part-time lecturer at the same time. The research plan that is prepared in the preliminary phase before the start of the PD program is not considered to be part of the program study time. The study load will be more intensive when candidates are participating in courses and at the same time writing a research proposal and integrating in the LTH Graduate Network.

3.7 Organisation and procedures

The PD is offered by the LTH Graduate Network which also assures its management. The LTH Graduate Network is a partnership of selected professors and researchers of seven affiliated Universities of Applied Sciences. The Graduate Network will form a Graduate Committee composed of 7 professors. The members of the Graduate Committee will include professors with proven experience with PhD supervision trajectories or as (co-) promoters of PhD candidates. Since there is no track record yet, during the pilot phase, experience in assessing proposals, supervision as well as co-supervision may be limited. Therefore it is recommendable to develop a mentoring and coaching scheme that allows supervisors and assessors to develop required skills. This scheme could be set up across the seven Graduate Networks of all pilots that VH develops.

During the period of implementation of the PD pilot phase, CELTH functions as a secretariat to the seven UAS, to initiate and support the processes and procedures for the LTH Graduate Network, the Graduate Committee and the PD trajectories. The CELTH secretariat will develop and communicate application procedures and related templates to prospect candidates and the LTH Industry, together with the Graduate Committee. In addition, it will support the creation of an inspiring learning environment for PD candidates, within UAS, through linkages with industry stakeholders, that may be involved through financing or in other ways.

In addition, this entails organising the PD process and making process agreements between Universities of Applied Sciences, supporting the organisation of the course administration at Universities of Applied Sciences, administration of supervision.

CELTH also supports Universities of Applied Sciences in setting up and organising the assessment and completion/certification of the PD trajectories and the secretariat organises PD inspiration meetings, in which the professional field is involved. In addition, CELTH plays an important role in mobilising and organising co-financing by the professional field.

The organisation structure of the LTH PD Program is thus composed of:

1. Program Board
2. Graduate Network
3. Graduate Committee
4. secretariat (facilitated by CELTH)

Program Board

Composition:

- 4 governors (Executive Board/Board of Directors) of participating UAS, of which at least two are non-CELTH member institutions.

Role and Tasks:

- Overall joint governance of the PD LTH program, on behalf of seven UAS;
- Approve strategic and operational plans of the PD program, as developed by Graduate Committee;
- Approve and monitor support structure as developed by CELTH;
- Assure progress of PD LTH, in terms of 'business case' and financial and budgetary parameters.

Graduate Network

Composition:

- Professors and senior researchers employed at affiliated UAS;
- Minimal qualification: PhD (or PD) finalised, extensive experience of master thesis supervision;
- Externally invited professors or senior researchers from partner universities;
- Externally invited professionals from LTH Industry partners.

Role and Tasks:

- Supervise PD candidates;
- Assess PD candidates;
- Actively support the creation of a inspiring learning environment for PD candidates;
- Participate in semi-annual PD program intervention, feedback, and evaluation meetings.

Graduate Committee

Composition:

- 7 professors employed at UAS or LTH university partners, with extensive track record in PhD or PD supervision and – assessment;
- Rotating participation of affiliated UAS: Committee members participate maximum 2 consecutive terms of three years.

Role and Tasks:

- Develop and implement compulsory and elective PD courses;
- Develop and update the LTH PD Program Handbook and PD Candidate Profile;
- Maintain the multi-year PD plan with themes on which candidates must be recruited;
- Development of assessment rubric;
- Develop and assure quality of (compulsory and elective) courses for PD candidates;
- Selects – using the program profile – the pool of lecturers who are authorized to both supervise candidates and nominate the candidates to the assessment committee as main supervisor;
- assesses the PD plan and the basic qualifications of the intended candidate before starting a PD trajectory
- Assure quality of PD LTH trajectories;
- Compiles the assessment committees on the recommendation of the supervising lecturer and ensures that they reflect the stakeholders in the practical issue of the PD trajectory
- periodically organizes calibration sessions with lecturers from the supervision pool to promote the joint development of standards
- Decide on composition of assessment committee as proposed by the supervising professor;
- Awards the certificate to the PD candidate.

Secretariat (facilitated by CELTH)

Composition:

- 1 program secretary;
- Support staff.

Role and Tasks:

- Act as secretariat and back office of PD LTH Program;
- Oversight of organisation, secretariat, and administration of
 - Graduate Committee
 - Graduate Network
 - Program Board PD LTH
- Develop and maintain official communication channel for PD LTH program pilot (8 years);
- Support recruitment, matching, and selection (develop communication strategy);
- Develop information and inspiration sessions with prospect candidates and LTH Industry;
- Develop fund-raising and industry co-financing strategies.



4

Assessment

4.1 Assessment philosophy

The assessment program for the PD has been designed to assess the development of the candidate towards the end qualifications formulated in 2.6, which enable the candidate to operate as a researcher, professional and innovator in the LTH domain. Assessing in the PD prioritises professional research, design, and implementation practice. PD candidates are expected to learn by doing, and assessed by what they have done, implicating a high degree of agency and accountability. Because the process involves communication with and intervention on multiple audiences, variety in what the PD candidate has done is not only considered as contributing to the reliability of the evidence collected for the Portfolio but also seen as having inherent value. Finally, multiple stakeholders are crucial in evaluating whether the work that the PD has done meets the learning outcomes. Thus, the assessment committee is composed of assessors from both the academic world and the LTH work field related to the project.

Points of departure:

In alignment with the pedagogical philosophy, assessment is based on the evidence that candidates collect in their Portfolio during the PD trajectory. In order to assess their progress towards the end qualifications, candidates present a wide variety of products and/or documents in their Portfolio which are assessed during two Portfolio Progress Assessments and the Final Portfolio Assessment. These are described in general terms below; candidates should be able to define the exact form or shape of required evidence themselves; the exact evidence will also depend on the research topic the candidate is working on and the research methodology used.

A digital Portfolio is available in which all evidence can be included; the digital Portfolio is accessible to the PD candidate and supervisors and meets GDPR requirements;

- To ensure validity of the Portfolio evidence (triangulation), candidates present a diverse range of products and/or documents as noted above; these, moreover, are collected in different contexts (on the job; the academic world) and assessed by an assessment

committee composed of members from both the academic world and the LTH work field.

- The first document to be added to the Portfolio three months after the start of the trajectory is the PD project plan in which the candidate describes the research topic, design, validation, work plan, and budget; the plan has to be discussed with and agreed upon by the supervisory team;
- There is a clear separation between supervisors and assessors; supervisors cannot be assessors.
- The assessment committee is composed by the Graduate Committee. During the pilot phase this committee consists of a member of the *Validatie Commissie Professional Doctorates* (Validation Committee Professional Doctorates or VaCo-PD); a professor from the LTH Graduate Network, and three members nominated by the supervisory team who are a reflection of the stakeholders in the supervisory team: i.e. at least one lecturer and professionals from the field and/or practice (Vereniging Hogescholen, 2021a, p. 20).
- The assessment committee is supported in its assessments by an assessment model (rubric) in which the end qualifications are operationalised in criteria (Vereniging Hogescholen, 2021a, p. 20);
- Assessors and experts from the LTH work field who are involved in assessments are offered a training course in (Portfolio) assessment and providing feedback if necessary.
- The courses that are part of the candidate's Portfolio are translatable to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS).
- At the end of the trajectory, the candidates defend their entire Portfolio during the final assessment.

4.2. Assessment program

The assessment program covers all activities carried out by the candidate as part of the PD trajectory. The information on learning in practice and course-based learning as well as the feedback proved by the supervisory team and assessment committee is collected into the Portfolio. The assessment program is thus composed of a development-oriented Portfolio which is evaluated during three assessments (after 12 months, 24 months, and at the end of the trajectory) in which decisions are made on the progress of the candidate towards the learning outcomes of the PD trajectory; the final assessment should ultimately result in the awarding of the certificate of successful completion of the PD trajectory.

Portfolio development: learning in practice

For successful completion of the Professional Doctorate, the candidate is expected to deliver a "substantial body of work". Evidence of this is collected into a Portfolio throughout the program and assessed three times based on a pre-determined timeline. The candidates' Portfolio proves that progress in their research and growth in the three roles of researcher, innovator, and professional qualifies them to graduate at EQF Level 8. Portfolio products are developed while learning in practice in close contact with the industry environment directly linked to the research topic. They reflect the candidate's ability to design, research, test, implement, and evaluate interventions, and transfer the accumulated knowledge of this research process inside and outside the related LTH environment.

The PD Portfolio will be composed of a diverse range of products and/or documents related to each of the three phases described in the former chapter and covering the three roles. This wide range and variety is required to increase reliability of the assessment and should consist of four types of evidence:

1. that provides insights into the research & design process;
2. of personal and professional reflection on that process;
3. of increased competence towards the three roles and end qualifications;
4. of validity and quality of the outcomes of the research & design process.

Furthermore, the collected evidence should demonstrate the growth towards and - ultimately, at the end of the trajectory - the fulfilment of the learning outcomes. The exact products and/or documents to be collected in the Portfolio will be designed by the candidate and approved by the supervisory team. The candidate has to make sure that there is sufficient variation in the evidence, that it is relevant for proving the learning outcomes; that it is authentic, reliable, and substantiated as well as sufficiently recent and up to date. Before designing their evidence, candidates have been informed about the assessment model (rubric) and criteria used.

4.3 Assessment tools

Progress of PD candidates will be monitored through two so-called “Portfolio Progress Assessments” and a “Final Assessment”. The Progress Assessments will be planned at two fixed time moments. For a full-time PD candidate, the first Progress Assessment is expected to be **12 months** after starting the PD program and is a summative moment; the second one is a formative assessment and takes place after **24 months**. The goal of these Portfolio Progress Assessments is to allow candidates to present partial progress results, discuss challenges, and ask for support, and as such allow them to finalise their PD program successfully in three years time. A part-time PD trajectory may have a longer duration, in which case the timing of the Portfolio Progress Assessments will be adapted.

During the Progress Assessments, an assessment rubric is used which will be developed by the Graduate Committee (paragraph 3.7). The rubric will be based on the PD program’s learning outcomes and - from a holistic perspective with global indicators allowing an overall judgement of the candidates work - used to examine how well the candidate has met and is progressing towards the three roles. The description of the rubric will take place prior to the start of the PD in calibration sessions with members of the Graduate Committee. As such, the creation of a rubric can contribute to more unity and agreement in assessments. The ensuing rubric will be used during both Portfolio Progress Assessments and the final Assessment.

4.3.1 Portfolio Progress Assessment 1: assessment interview

The first Portfolio Progress Assessment is a **summative assessment** and takes place 12 months after the start of the PD trajectory; it is based on a partial Portfolio that should include:

- the PD project plan (which has to be ready after 3 months) in which the candidate describes the research topic and design, validation (to be determined by the candidate but can consist of presentation for peers and relevant partners in the LTH domain with feedback; written, recorded), work plan and budget - relates to all 4 evidence types and provides candidates with the opportunity to demonstrate their progress as a researcher, innovator and professional;
- evidence and results of substantial completion of compulsory and partial completion of elective courses (see 3.2.4 above for format of evidence) - relates to evidence types 3 and 4 and supports candidates in their growth as researchers and innovators;
- a written critical self-reflection on the progress and development of the candidate towards the three roles including evidence that shows this progress - connects to evidence type 2 as well as to all three roles candidates need to be able to perform;
- recommendations by/feedback from the supervisory team collected during the first 12 months and providing insight into the progress of both the candidate and the research process - evidence type 2 and necessary for writing the self-reflection mentioned above;
- proposal for further Portfolio composition (including validation plan) - evidence type 1 and relevant for the roles of researcher and professional.

The assessment will be conducted by the assessment committee (composition described above). The assessment report (which includes comments on the submitted evidence, feedback from the interview as well as recommendations for the next phase) of the assessors will be included as an integral part of the final Portfolio.

This first Portfolio Progress Assessment is a summative *Go/no-Go* moment where the candidate is either admitted to the next phase, conditionally admitted to the next phase or has to end the PD trajectory.

A **Go** decision is taken when the assessment committee is - based on the submitted evidence and the interview - confident that candidates will be able to grow into the three PD roles and meet the learning outcomes during the remainder of the PD trajectory. This is a weighty decision moment since the second Portfolio Progress Assessment is a formative assessment. During this *Go/no-Go* moment, the assessment committee must therefore be fully convinced that candidates will be able to conduct and finish their research according to the learning outcomes and within the set time frame.

A **no-Go** decision is taken if the assessment committee assesses the submitted evidence to be of insufficient quality to guarantee successful completion of the PD trajectory within the specified time frame.

In exceptional situations - mostly when due to force majeure the candidate was unable to realise some of the required evidence - a conditional *Go* decision may be taken. In that case, the assessment committee will specify in their assessment report which types of evidence need to be supplemented and re-submitted and within which timeframe. If the candidate fails to meet these criteria, the conditional *Go* will be replaced by a *no-Go*.

4.3.2 Portfolio Progress Assessment 2: assessment interview and presentation

At the end of the second year of the PD trajectory, the candidates should demonstrate the advanced capability of collecting, processing, and analyzing primary data in a scientifically

sound manner. The PD candidates also show how they have translated this analysis into one or more substantiated test interventions (if applicable) and have validated these tests/ interventions in a real-world LTH corporate or organizational environment.

The second assessment is a **formative assessment** and takes place 24 months after the start of the PD trajectory. The supervisory team has to agree that the candidate is ready for this assessment and that the required documentation has sufficient quality. Documents/ evidence added to the Portfolio since Portfolio Progress Assessment 1 should include:

- evidence and results of any remaining compulsory and elective courses taken (indicative 10 ECTS) - relates to evidence types 3 and 4 and supports candidates in their growth as researcher and innovator;
- evidence of the research conducted so far as well as the sharing of findings and analyses (and possibly the designed intervention prototype) to the LTH domain with proof of validation (to be determined and organised by candidate); based on these evidence types 3 and 4, should be able to prove their growth as researcher and innovator;
- a written self-critical reflection on the research progress and the three roles and demonstrating how the recommendations/feedback of both the supervisory team and assessment committee so far have been incorporated - connects to evidence type 2 as well as to all three roles candidates need to be able to perform;
- recommendations by/feedback from supervisory team collected during the second 12 months and providing insight into the progress of both the candidate and the research process - evidence type 2;
- proposal for final Portfolio products and assessment; evidence types 1 and 4, connecting to the roles of researcher and professional;
- updated work plans and budget; evidence types 1 and 2 and indicative for the roles of researcher and professional.

This second *Portfolio Progress Assessment* is not only based on an **interview** about the submitted Portfolio components but also comprises a **presentation** (evidence types 3 and 4), summarising their main implications. The presentation shall be organised by the LTH Graduate Network, for the following audience:

- representatives of the professional LTH work field;
- the supervisory team and the assessment committee;
- members of the LTH Graduate Network.

Criteria and assessment rubric for the second Portfolio Progress Assessment are the same as for the first one. Candidates should be assessed on increased levels of complexity and competence, based on the same rubric that assesses both their growth towards the three designated roles and learning outcomes. In exceptional situations - mostly when due to force majeure the candidate was unable to realise some of the required evidence - the assessment committee may ask the candidate to supplement and re-submit some of the evidence.

4.3.3 Final assessment: defending the entire Portfolio

The PD process is successfully completed if the candidate has met all the end qualifications and can perform independently as researcher, innovator, and professional in the LTH domain at EQF8 level.

The candidate informs the supervisory team that the research has been completed and that all the required evidence has been added to the Portfolio. The supervisory team has the right to check the evidence submitted and decide if the candidate can be nominated to the assessment committee for the final assessment. This takes the form of an interview.

A completed Portfolio should contain:

- evidence of successful completion of Portfolio Progress Assessments 1 and 2 (assessment reports of the assessors and the way how recommendations & feedback were incorporated, as reflected on in the self-evaluation; evidence of the courses followed is also included in these 2 Progress Assessments);
- the final research output (model, intervention, or other results in a written [article] or visual form decided by the candidate [added to Portfolio before Portfolio Progress Assessment 2] and validated according to the candidate's validation plan);
- the final research output can contain two peer-reviewed academic articles that substantiate the professional and social relevance of the research and may correspond to any of the three phases of the PD trajectory or the final critical analysis and reflection. The articles need to be submitted with a realistic chance of being accepted, and not necessarily accepted already, at the time of final assessment;
- a critical analysis and reflection on the entire PD process, the relevance of delivered output, and detailed and substantiated advice to the professional field involved.

The Portfolio defense takes place for an assessment committee that is composed, as noted already above, for each PD trajectory by the Graduate Committee. In the pilot phase, the members of this committee consist of:

- a member of the Validation Committee Professional Doctorates (VaCo-PD) as chairperson;
- a member of the LTH Graduate Network;
- three members nominated by the supervisory team (and approved by the Graduate Network) who reflect the stakeholders in the supervisory team, i.e. at least one lecturer and one professional from the work field.

4.4 Quality control

The components and procedures of the PD program guarantee that the PD degree represents a quality standard that corresponds with EQF 8 and QF-EHEA qualifications as described in paragraph 2.4.2.

A **national quality framework** for all the PD trajectories that take part in the national PD pilot is currently being developed and will be made available as soon as possible. The starting point for this is the document *University of Applied Sciences Professional Doctorate: a professional education with a focus on practice-based research* of the VH

(2021a). Below a brief summary of the points of departure in this document for quality assurance is described, translated towards the LTH PD, to provide clarity on where and how quality assurance will be deployed in the PD LTH. However, this will be replaced by the national framework which will not be entirely different but more detailed, when ready.

4.4.1 At national level

The monitoring of quality at national level will be guaranteed by a national Validation Committee Professional Doctorates (VaCo-PD). All PD pilots shall be assessed and certified based on a set of quality standards that are currently being developed.

Certification of the PD-LTH program will be done periodically and is based on findings of a validation committee set up by the VaCo-PD. Participants in the validation committee are experts on the relevant key themes from the LTH business community, the public sector, and from higher education. One or more members of the VaCo-PD are assigned to each validation committee.

At the start of a PD program, the VaCo-PD assesses the program on the following points:

- the program level: do the intended learning outcomes as formulated in the program profile match level EQF8 and the wishes and requirements of the professional field?
- the program: has the program been designed in such a way that the final objectives can be achieved by the candidate?
- the quality of supervision and lecturers: Are supervisors and lecturers knowledgeable in terms of content and didactical skills?
- assessment procedure: is the assessment of the candidate valid, reliable, and sufficiently independent?

A review of this validation process will take place every four years. The quality achieved in the past four years based on (a sample of) candidate Portfolios is also examined. An important point of attention for the coming years is a common finding of quality standards. In order to facilitate this finding of standards, the VaCo-PD provides a committee member for each assessment committee, at least during the pilot phase. The VaCo-PD also maintains a register in which all graduates of certified PD programs are registered. The VH appoints members to the VaCo-PD, proposes candidates to the VaCo-PD for the validation committees, and provides the secretariat, thus contributing to the quality of PD programs. The VaCo-PD appoints the validation committees that periodically assess the individual courses.

In the pilot period, the PD programs will work together to further professionalise quality assurance. The current program team will be continued for this purpose. Experiences and lessons learned are elaborated in this. Tools to improve quality assurance are also being looked at, such as training examiners, manuals, assessment forms, and checklists. The mutual learning of the PD candidates is stimulated by establishing a national UAS PD community.

4.4.2 At domain level

During the pilot phase, the PD is developed as a joint program in which seven UAS in Leisure Tourism and Hospitality collaborate (see chapter 2). The Graduate Network is led by the Graduate Committee LTH that will be responsible for the assuring the quality of the PD program. Tasks and functions of the Graduate Network are described in chapter 3. The functioning and tasks of the Graduate Committee will be evaluated at the end of the pilot period and adjusted in accordance with future VH agreements.

4.4.3 At PD trajectory level

Each PD trajectory will include at least the following guarantees for quality:

- supervisors are selected and appointed by the Graduate Committee, meet previously agreed quality criteria, and are a reflection of LTH stakeholders engaged in the PD trajectory;
- the prospect PD candidates' PD plan and basic qualifications are assessed by the Graduate Committee. While doing this, explicit agreements are made about the intensity of the supervision and specific set of compulsory and elective courses to be followed;
- the PD trajectory is clearly divided into steps with a *Go no-Go* moment at the end of the first year;
- the assessment is based on a Portfolio of evidence. This is subject to review by an assessment committee that tests it against the end qualifications (the three roles the PD candidate has to fulfil) and the associated assessment model (rubric);
- the assessment committee is set up by the Graduate Committee;
- the lead supervisor ultimately has the authority to nominate the candidate for final assessment;
- the awarding for the certificate has to be approved by the Graduate Committee.

On all research activities taking place by the PD candidate, the Netherlands Code of Conduct for Scientific Integrity applies. The candidate makes agreements with relevant stakeholders about the property rights of (sub) products and about Open Access of results.



5

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6 Addendum

Introduction

By the end of May 2022, the programme proposal University of Applied Science Professional Doctorate (PD) – programme Leisure, Tourism and Hospitality was completed for submission to the Validation Commission PD (VaCo-PD). The Task Force LTH completed this programme proposal spring 2022, assuming that the VaCo-PD would have assessed it in the summer of 2022. However, the VaCo-PD was only formalised December 2022 and ready for assessing the programme proposal. Due to this, there are some programme components described in the current programme proposal slightly changed as a result of changing insights and/or to the content of Quality Framework PD that was established November 2022. Therefore, (anticipated) changes of the main components are described in this addendum, as addition to the programme proposal. This addendum only describes the components that are not yet included in the program proposal, but need attention in the near future.

Quality Framework Standard 2: Transmission, impact and realisation of learning outcomes

As a follow-up on the national overall Monitoring & Evaluation task force, we will set up a procedure for domain-specific monitoring and evaluation. In this plan we will include the transmission and impact of the PD trajectory on professional practice, society, education and practice-based research. The LTH domain also monitors careers of the candidates during and after finishing the trajectory (alumni success). Moreover, we will describe the organisation of data-archiving, accessibility and transparency of the output of PD-trajectories in the programme in the domain. Continuous improvement and assurance of the programme quality is part of this monitoring and evaluation plan. Two examples: 1) annual evaluation of coaching and supervision procedures from supervisor and candidate perspectives will be described; 2) the bandwidth of our learning and evaluation workflow during the pilot period will be monitored – we will compare various cohorts in their workflows and output.

Quality Framework Standard 3: Quality, review and assessment

The quality of PD-trajectories has to fit with the needs, aspirations and challenges of professional practice. Applied methods should also be practical relevant with fitting thoroughness and in an ethical responsible way. Trajectories are in compliance with the Netherlands Code of Conduct for Research Integrity. PD LTH views Open Science as of

great importance, and will therefore candidates educate in Open Science as part of the learning community. As part of the monitoring and evaluation plan, we also reflect of the contribution of candidates in the LTH domain on Open Science and making research results publicly available.

Complaints and objections procedure: when Universities of Applied Science as submitter of a PD-proposal or as member of Graduate Network, or professional bodies as Graduate Network members, have complaints or objections about current procedures, they can report and raise the issue by the VaCo-PD. Such a complaint and objections procedure gives Graduate Network and Graduate Committee members of LTH opportunity to express dissatisfaction with procedures or executors of procedures.

Quality Framework Standard 4: Organisation

The Graduate Committee within the LTH domain is the administrative division that is responsible for the quality of the PD-programme and consist of a delegation of participation Universities of Applied Science. Many of the Graduate Committee tasks are executed in co-creation with the Graduate Network (Graduate Network). The Graduate Committee has a mandate to act on behalf of the Graduate Network and works according to the procedures described in the Quality Framework. Appointment of Graduate Committee members is primarily due to four years. However, during the pilot we will strive for continuity and be more flexible in Graduate Committee members to appoint them for two years in first instance. In line with monitoring and evaluation described in standard 2 above, the Graduate Committee also reflects on their working procedures continuously. For example: how does the governance of the Graduate Committee in relation to the Graduate Network ideally look like? What is the ideal number and composition of Graduate Committee members (also in relation to conflicts of interest)? What can we learn from curriculum and examination boards in education and assessment procedures in the PD programme?

The Graduate Network is the joint partnership of Universities of Applied Science and external parties who jointly develop the educational profile, educational content, assessment procedures and other programme components. The triple helix is represented in the Graduate Network: participating Universities of Applied Science in the domain as knowledge and educational parties, and professional and governmental bodies with national and international perspectives. We also strive for having multidisciplinary perspectives in the Graduate Network, by participation of a number of Graduate Network members from other domains in the PD national programme. The Graduate Network mandates assessments of individual PD-proposals by Graduate Committee members, though functions as advisory group for the Graduate Committee on the PD-programme. The Graduate Network works according to the procedures described in the Quality Framework.

In line with monitoring and evaluation described in standard 2 above, the Graduate Network reflects on their working procedures continuously. For example: how does the governance of the Graduate Network in relation to the Graduate Committee ideally look like? How does the Graduate Network fills frequent adjustments with Graduate Committee? What is the ideal mix of number of Graduate Network members, e.g. two members per University of Applied Science?

The current program proposal is evaluated and adjusted annually as needed to optimize the proposed program. In 2023, we will offer a fully updated version to the VaCo-PD that is in line with the guiding quality framework. We also organise the domain specific VaCo-PD in line with the formal quality framework.

In the domain LTH, CELTH is closely working with both chairs of Graduate Committee and Graduate Network and will coordinate for instance: implementation of goals, visions and ambitions of the PD-programme; growth, development and quality assurance of the programme; composition of Graduate Committee and Graduate Network members; output of PD-trajectories and the monitoring and evaluation within the domain.

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