

Framework letter for the individual monitoring committee

Dear colleague,

Thank you very much for having agreed to participate to an individual monitoring committee for one of the doctoral candidates enrolled at the ABIES doctoral school.

Before committing yourself, I ask you to assess your potential links of interest with the doctoral candidate or his/her supervisors (self-assessment questionnaire can be found at the bottom of this page <https://abies.agroparistech.fr/en/phd-student/thesis-supervision>) and to inform me of any situation of interference

This committee aims to ensure that the doctoral candidate training runs smoothly. It evaluates, annually, in a meeting devoted to the PhD project (with the participation of the doctoral candidate and his/her supervisors) the conditions of his/her training and the progress of his/her research project. It seeks to detect any form of conflict, discrimination or harassment and reports them, if necessary, to the doctoral school or directly to the listening units of the institution where the doctoral candidate is registered.

The committee can use as guidelines the PhD charter and the individual doctoral training agreement (CIF) which is signed at the start of a PhD by the different actors involved in doctoral training (the doctoral candidate, the supervisors, the Director of the research unit and the Director of the doctoral school). These elements are available on your ADUM interface, if you have one, once you have been designated by the doctoral candidate as a member of his/her monitoring committee.

Each meeting of the individual monitoring committee provides an opportunity to analyse the outcomes and perspectives of the work undertaken during the PhD, based on the initial project and calendar. In addition, the committee is an opportunity to discuss the future training sessions which could be followed by the doctoral candidate and the publication strategy, taking into account the professional career envisaged by the doctoral candidate.

The first meeting, which should be held within 6 months of the start of the PhD and before June, aims to ensure the appropriation of the PhD project by the doctoral candidate. The second meeting aims to verify the good progress of the PhD and that it can be carried on. The third meeting aims to define the steps leading up to the end of the PhD and discusses the possible need for an extension beyond the third year. This third meeting is not compulsory, except if a fourth registration is needed. I would like to stress that this extension is derogatory and is only possible if an additional source of funding has been found. This committee will also examine if the conditions necessary for the defence are met: completion of a sufficiently large volume of work in order to allow a good quality manuscript to be written, a publication which will have been accepted by the time of the defence and a number of training hours which should be around the 160 hours requested by the doctoral school, including a training about ethics and research integrity, about data management and open science, career development, communication and about the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence. The committee can help the doctoral candidate and the supervisors to choose the members of the jury. However, as a member of the individual monitoring committee, you cannot be a reviewer of the thesis and we ask that at least half of the jury does not have any link of interest with the doctoral candidate or his/her supervisors (see the self-assessment questionnaire for links of interest) and is outside ABIES doctoral school, the registration institution and the research unit of the doctoral candidate.

The members of the individual monitoring committee can offer, if they wish, to be contacted by the doctoral candidate outside of the committee meetings to discuss different aspects of the PhD, give advice, and allow the doctoral candidate to benefit from their expertise or to discuss his/her professional project.

In addition, the ABIES doctoral school asks a period for confidential discussions to be organised at each committee meeting with the external members of the committee (including the ABIES adviser; see below). This will allow a discussion to take place on the one hand between the external members and the doctoral candidate, without the supervisors (and any representative of the employer), and on the other hand between the external members and the supervisors, without the doctoral candidate. The objective is to discuss the progression of the PhD by addressing the different practical aspects of the project including the relationship between the doctoral candidate and the supervisors. The discussion should be brief. The doctoral school has deliberately not established a framework for the discussion since it should be open. These discussions are an opportunity either to say that everything is going well or to collectively identify a difficulty that the actors, including

the doctoral school, will try to solve together. The content of these exchanges must not be indicated in the report sent to everyone.

An ABIES adviser is appointed by the doctoral school among supervisors from the doctoral school. He/she participates in at least the first two individual monitoring committees with the following objectives:

- To guarantee that the individual monitoring committee runs smoothly and, if necessary, to remind the expectations and steps of the committee, according to the framework letter
- To make sure that the doctoral candidate is the most active during the scientific debates
- To lead the discussions about trainings, professional career and the confidential discussions with the supervisors and with the candidate
- Eventually to ask questions about the scientific work to ensure the good comprehension of the subject by the doctoral candidate and his/her communication skills
- To warn the doctoral school about potential difficulties, but the adviser is not supposed to sort them himself/herself. Solutions should be shared only with the doctoral school

Following each meeting, the external members give a general assessment, including a favourable or unfavourable opinion on the continuation of the thesis, and formulate recommendations in a signed summary report using the provided [template](#). The ABIES advisor sends it to the correspondent person at the doctoral school direction. The elements resulting from confidential exchanges must not be indicated in this report but may be directly communicated to the correspondent with the agreement of the doctoral candidate or his/her supervisors, depending on the person or persons with whom the exchanges took place. After validation, the correspondent will send the report to the doctoral candidate for signature and for any comments on the course of the interview and organize an interview with the doctoral candidate.

Finally, I would like to point out that it is up to the doctoral candidate to organise the meetings of the individual thesis monitoring committee and that it is requested to send the committee members, at least one week before the date of the meeting, a summary document (or PowerPoint presentation) presenting the thesis and the progress of the work.

Thank you very much for participating,

Sincerely,

Pierre Larraufie
Director of the ABIES Doctoral school 581