



# INDIVIDUAL MONITORING COMMITTEE HANDBOOK (CSI)

EDCSV

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# CSI HANDBOOK

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## The missions of the Individual Monitoring Committee

Firstly, it is important to note that the CSI is not a thesis jury. The CSI is asked to give its opinion on the continuation of the PhD, but the final decision is made by the Doctoral School management in consultation with the thesis supervisor and the PhD student.

The report signed by the various participants must be submitted to ADUM in order for the doctoral student to re-enrol at the University.

Meetings with the CSI must therefore be prepared with seriousness and scientific rigour, but should not cause any particular stress. CSI members must show kindness towards the doctoral student and independence from the thesis supervisor and the Research Unit. The members of the CSI, the doctoral student and the thesis supervisor have a duty of **confidentiality and discretion** for all discussions that take place behind closed doors and to report any problems only to the management of the doctoral school and, where applicable, to the management of the Research Unit. The CSI must provide objective advice on the progress of the PhD programme, which will enable the various parties involved (PhD student, thesis supervisor, doctoral school) to try to find ways of resolving any difficulties that may be reported (scientific, relational, personal, etc.). The CSI meeting also provides a forum for scientific discussions, scientific advice and career development.

**At its first meeting**, the CSI aims to determine whether the thesis has got off to a good start and is progressing well. Its purpose is to identify bottlenecks and difficulties, and to help plan the doctoral work and training (research, courses, participation in Conferences, etc.).

**At the second meeting**, the CSI aims to determine whether the thesis is on track to be completed within the allotted time and to ensure that the doctoral student has begun planning their future career and defined their professional goals.

If the PhD programme continues beyond the third year, **additional meetings of the CSI** will be held to assess the relevance of continuing the thesis.

## 1 Legal Framework

Since 2016 (decree of 25 May 2016), doctoral schools must ensure quality in doctoral training by setting up individual monitoring committees (CSI). The doctoral student's CSI provides support **throughout the duration of the doctoral programme**. It must meet before enrolment in the second year and then **before each new enrolment** until the end of the doctoral programme.

Registration renewal is only possible **after approval by the CSI**. Registration at the University of Grenoble Alpes is renewed at the beginning of each academic year by the head of the institution, on the recommendation of the director of the doctoral school, after consultation with the doctoral supervisor and the CSI of the doctoral student. Beyond the third year of doctoral study, annual extensions may be granted on an exceptional basis by the head of the institution, upon recommendation of the thesis supervisor and after consultation with the CSI and the director of the doctoral school, upon reasoned request by the doctoral student.

## 2 Tasks and commitments of the individual monitoring committee

### Fault detection and alert mission

During the interview with the doctoral student, the CSI must be particularly **vigilant in identifying** any form of conflict, discrimination, moral or sexual harassment, or sexist behaviour.

In the event of difficulties, the doctoral student's individual monitoring committee **alerts** the doctoral school, which takes all necessary measures relating to the doctoral student's situation and the progress of their doctoral studies.

### Assessment mission

During the interview with the doctoral student, the CSI verifies that all the conditions required for the smooth running of the doctoral programme are met and that the research work is progressing in accordance with the planned schedule.

In particular, the CSI assesses the doctoral student's ability to:

- present their research work
- demonstrate its quality and innovative nature
- situate it within its international scientific context
- demonstrate their mastery of the project's timeline and its completion within the planned timeframe

- to take stock of the progress of their work, the development of their scientific culture and international outlook, the development of their expertise and skills, and the state of preparation for their future career.

The CSI ensures that doctoral students receive group training and are trained in research ethics and scientific integrity, and that they are familiar with and apply the guidelines concerning scientific publications and intellectual property.

### CSI missions

The doctoral student's CSI monitors progress and **makes recommendations** to the doctoral school management, the doctoral student and the thesis supervisor. It provides an external and fresh perspective on the work and progress of the doctoral project, which everyone can use constructively.

### CSI commitments

By agreeing to participate, CSI members undertake to maintain **confidentiality and discretion** regarding all discussions, whether scientific or otherwise, that take place during meetings with the CSI or outside of such meetings if members are contacted collectively or individually by the doctoral student or their thesis supervisor.

The members of the CSI undertake to communicate only directly with the management of the doctoral school and, if necessary (e.g. in the event of conduct deemed inappropriate by the thesis supervisor), with the management of the Research Unit.

When the work is of a proven confidential nature, the members of the monitoring committee sign a confidentiality agreement, which is submitted to the thesis supervisor before they are allowed to view the work. (A template is provided by the doctoral school.)

## 3 Organisation and procedure

### Designation and composition

The composition of the CSI is defined within six months of the first enrolment in the doctoral programme. Except in special cases, the composition of the CSI does not change. The members of the CSI are appointed by the doctoral school, after consultation with the thesis supervisor, in consultation with the doctoral student and on the recommendation of the laboratory representative (deputy director of the doctoral school or doctoral school representative designated within the Research Unit as indicated on the website of the CSV doctoral school). The latter ensures that the doctoral candidate is consulted on the composition of their CSI and may assist them in identifying a 'tutor'.

**The individual monitoring committee comprises at least three members.**

- **Two members**, at least one of whom must hold HDR (habilitation à diriger des recherches, or accreditation to supervise research), must be external to the team, with at least one of the two being external to the research unit. At least one of these external members is chosen for their expertise in the disciplinary field of the thesis project. One of these external figures is responsible for drafting the report.

**A third member of the CSI is proposed by the doctoral student.** This person may participate in scientific discussions and acts as a tutor to the doctoral student. They must hold a permanent position in a scientific field (researcher, teacher, technical staff, etc.) and must have no ties to the thesis supervision team (no ongoing scientific collaboration or joint publications in the last three years).

At least one member is a non-specialist, outside the field of research of the thesis work and, as far as possible, one member is from outside the institution.

If a problem is identified in the progress of the thesis, the ED may, if necessary, delegate a member of the board (or a representative) to the CSI.

The members of this committee do not participate in the management of the doctoral student's work.

**Members of the individual monitoring committee may not be thesis reviewers.** They may be examiners and, where applicable, chair the examination panel.

The composition of the monitoring committee should be entered into ADUM, preferably as soon as it is appointed and at the latest before the first meeting of the monitoring committee.

### CSI Meeting

The CSI meets at the initiative of the doctoral student, which is mandatory before enrolment in the second year and then **before each new enrolment** until the end of the doctorate. This meeting takes place **between 1 May and 15 October** of the current academic year (including for doctorates that began outside the academic year).

#### **Before each meeting :**

The doctoral student shall draft and submit to the members of the CSI at least 7 days prior to the meeting a document that includes:

- a written **summary of approximately 5 pages** (maximum 10 pages) of all or part of their work and the scientific context.
- A training plan, as well as a list of training courses taken, participation in conferences, and publications submitted (including those posted on a pre-publication server).

### **During each meeting :**

At the start of the meeting, the CSI spends a few minutes explaining the framework, objectives and points to be discussed.

The interviews take place in **four distinct stages**:

- A presentation of the progress of the work and discussions - in agreement with the doctoral student and the thesis supervisor, this part may be open to other people from the laboratory.

### **The rest of the meeting takes place exclusively behind closed doors.**

- An interview with the doctoral student without the thesis supervisor (including any co-supervisors).

- An interview with the thesis supervisor without the doctoral student.

- A review with the thesis supervisor and the doctoral student.

### **At the end of the meeting :**

At the end of the meeting, the CSI makes recommendations and drafts a report on the interview, which includes an opinion from the doctoral student and an opinion from the thesis supervisor.

### **The report includes :**

→ an assessment of the doctoral training conditions and the progress of the research. It may highlight strengths and areas for improvement.

→ recommendations and advice.

→ **an opinion on re-enrolment**, if applicable, on a request for an extension of the duration of the thesis.

This report, signed by the three parties (CSI members, doctoral student, thesis supervisor) and the director of the Research Unit, is sent to the director of the doctoral school, who may, if necessary, request revisions or additional information. Once the report has been validated by the doctoral school, it is kept by the doctoral school.

In addition, the doctoral student completes **the Appendix to the Individual Monitoring Committee report** and sends it directly to the doctoral school.

### **In the event of difficulties, the CSI has the option of :**

- Mentioning the difficulty in the report

- Alerting the director of the doctoral school without mentioning the nature or details of the difficulties encountered in the report signed by the other parties.

- Alerting the director of the Research Unit if the actions of the thesis supervision team (supervisor – co-supervisor – co-advisor) are deemed inappropriate and constitute acts of violence, discrimination, moral or sexual harassment, or sexist behaviour.

**In the event of a dispute**, the CSI may ask the doctoral school to organise a meeting to attempt to resolve the dispute or ask the doctoral school to refer the matter to the Doctoral College's regulatory committee.

**In the event of acts of violence, discrimination, psychological or sexual harassment, or sexist behaviour**, the doctoral school shall report the matter to the institution's anti-discrimination and sexual violence unit as soon as it becomes aware of the situation.

#### 4. Issues to be addressed, the framework

The questions listed below do not need to be explicitly asked during interviews, but they are questions to which the CSI must be able to find an answer.

##### Progress in research

Is the research question clearly defined? Is the doctoral candidate able to situate their work within the international scientific context, identify what their work can contribute to the field of knowledge, and what will constitute the originality of the thesis?

Does the doctoral candidate have a clear vision of the research process undertaken and the research work to be carried out before the defence?

Is the research progressing satisfactorily? Can the doctoral project be completed within the timeframe initially planned for preparing the thesis?

If this is not the case, can an extension of the thesis preparation period allow you to proceed to the defence, and if so, how many months of extension would be necessary?

Otherwise, has the doctoral student or the thesis supervisor considered discontinuing the doctoral project?

##### Training conditions

Are the scientific, material and financial conditions necessary for the smooth running of the doctoral project in place?

If the doctoral student is preparing their thesis as part of lifelong learning, alongside another professional activity, is the time allocation between their various activities appropriate? Should the conditions for completing their doctorate be reviewed?

If the doctoral student is preparing their thesis within a partnership framework (interdisciplinary, international or with a company), are the terms of this partnership satisfactory? Is there genuine collaboration between the various parties involved?

How are the responsibilities for supervising the thesis shared between the thesis supervisor and any co-supervisors? Are the supervision arrangements appropriate or in need of review? If the scientific supervision is shared, is the supervision team functioning satisfactorily? Does the doctoral student fully understand each person's role?

Is the dialogue between doctoral students and supervisors satisfactory? Are doctoral students well integrated into the research team or unit, and into the scientific community? Do they feel isolated?

Is their motivation and determination to progress in their work sufficient? Do they show signs of demotivation or discouragement?

Is he or she exposed to psychosocial risks? Does he or she suffer from harassment, discrimination, violence, and in particular gender-based and sexual violence or sexist behaviour?

### Skills development and planning for the future

Does the doctoral candidate have substantial written work (progress report, bibliography review, article, thesis chapters, etc.)? If so, what were the working arrangements between the doctoral candidate and the thesis supervisor for the writing and proofreading of the written work?

Is the doctoral candidate familiar with the principles of scientific integrity relating to publication, authorship and copyright of scientific work?

Are the doctoral student's presentation skills satisfactory? Clarity, ability to summarise, quality of materials, oral fluency, teaching skills?

Does the doctoral student have opportunities to develop their scientific culture in their field of research in a broad sense and their international outlook (seminar series, thematic schools, etc.)? Is the development of their general knowledge and expertise in their field satisfactory?

How far along are they in preparing for their future career? Have they thought about their skills, training plan and additional activities? (see skills portfolio). Do they have any professional experience other than research (teaching assignments, for example)?

Has the doctoral student been made aware of research ethics and scientific integrity, as well as the challenges of open science?