

Recognition of non-NIG courses as electives

The NIG-program is 30 ECTS, of which 15 are compulsory common courses. This leaves PhD-candidates 15 ECTS for elective courses, offered by NIG or others, including their local graduate schools. This memo explains what types of external elective courses can be recognized by NIG, what rules apply and how this works practically.

Why elective courses?

Elective courses offer the opportunity for on-demand and made-to-fit development for PhD-candidates. In principle three types of elective courses may be most relevant.

- 1) Specialized **substantive** courses, relevant to the individual PhD-candidate and his or her specific PhD-project.
- 2) Specialized **methods** courses, relevant to the individual PhD-candidate and his or her specific PhD-project.
- 3) **Professional-academic skills**, relevant to the PhD-candidates' more general academic development and future employability, excluding courses focused on teaching (with the exception of a completed BKO, see below).

Rules for recognition

- NIG recognizes the ECTS's granted to courses by reputed institutions, such as universities, on the same terms. Thus: a 5 ECTS course offered by for instance the local graduate school will also be accredited 5 ECTS by NIG.
- Elective courses must be of advanced (post-graduate) level and followed during the candidate's PhD-trajectory.
- Substantive or methods courses followed during the PhD-trajectory in research master programs offered by NIG-member institutions can be accepted as electives to a maximum of 7.5 ECTS.
- Professional-academic development will be accepted as electives to a maximum of 7.5 ECTS. See below for further specifications and options.
- A completed BKO (Basic teaching qualification) will be recognized for 3 ECTS as elective.

How to have a course recognized as elective?

Please send an email to nig@uu.nl, including

- The request to have one (or more) course(s) recognized as elective.
- A certificate proving the course was completed successfully, specifying at least
 - The subject
 - The date
 - Your name
 - The ECTS awarded to the course
 - The name of the institution offering the course

The application will be assessed by the NIG-directorate.

Enquiries regarding eligibility of specific courses can be sent in advance.

Substantive, methods- or professional-development courses which do not explicate ECTS can still be accepted as elective courses. This includes courses offered only online.

The NIG directorate will assess the course following the general EAPAA-guidelines for course credits.

The PhD candidate will have to provide the required information (course description, work load, the institution offering the course, assignment, level of teaching) that enables the NIG directorate to assess the course.

Professional-academic skills

Beyond the specific 'deliverable' of the PhD-project (the thesis) it is important for young researchers to further develop their professional academic skills more broadly, in light of their future career steps inside or outside of academia. In order to stimulate this, NIG will recognize courses or activities to a max. of 7.5 ECTS (25% of the full curriculum).

These may include specific courses, for which the general rules (stipulated above) for recognition are relevant. These may however also include initiatives and activities which are not formal courses yet do greatly aide one's professional development. In order to make those a real learning experience, structured and explicit self-reflection is needed. Therefore, a reflective report and portfolio are required to qualify for credits.

The list provided here is not finite. This is a 'living document'; NIG will update and specify these sections in a learning-and-explicating-by-doing process.

Specifically:

A. Organisation or chairing of a conference panel

- minimum of 4 presenting participants
- may include NIG- annual conference
- 2 ECTS

B. (Co-)chairing NIG-colloquium

- At least for 1 year
- 2 ECTS

C. Organizing other academic activities

- Such as organizing academic conferences, editing (semi-)academic journals, etc.
- max. 2 ECTS

D. Organizing impact activities

- Such as organizing training or other dissemination activities for public sector professionals or the general public, including blogs or vlogs (with a long-term frequency). These should be directly related to the PhD-research of the candidate.
- max. 2 ECTS.

E. Internship (semi-)public sector

- Specifically for full-time PhD-candidates
- NIG investigates whether an internship-program for NIG-candidates can be developed
- max. 5 ECTS

All of the above can only be recognized once as an elective (so only one internship or panel hosted, not two, three, or fifteen).

Guidelines Reflective report and portfolio

A reflective report and portfolio are required if you want to have non-course activities accepted as professional-academic skills components of your NIG-certificate.

The reflective report and portfolio are first of all relevant to the PhD-candidate aiming to learn from such experiences as organizing and hosting panels, co-chairing research colloquia or working on societal impact or a (part time) internship. Structured reflection helps to make implicit learning experiences explicit and facilitates the encoding of experience and self-realization of strengths, lessons and future challenges.

The reflective report and portfolio are secondly all relevant to the NIG directorate assessing such activities in light of assigning credits.

For the requirements see the next page:

Reflective report and portfolio

Requirements

PART 1 DESCRIPTION

- A name: what type of professional academic development is it the PhD candidate has done? (following the logic A-E stipulated above)
- Timeframe
- A description of activities, as concrete as possible
- A description of the candidates' role in the activities
- A *guesstimation* of time spent on the specific professional development activity
- This section has no word limits or targets. It should be factual and specific, can be written in bullets. No literary ambitions necessary. The purpose is simply to make the reader understand what it is in practical terms the PhD candidate has done.

PART 2 REFLECTION

- You are kindly asked to reflect on the questions below:
- What professional-academic skills have you developed during this activity?
- In this role: what would you say was your main strength? Please elaborate on your answer and include (at least) one specific situation or example.
- After having performed this role: what would you say is the professional-academic skill you most need to develop? Please elaborate on your answer and include (at least) one specific situation or example.
- Was this activity mostly relevant for your 1) specific PhD-project, 2) your general academic skills, 3) our academic networks, or 4) your general professional skills, also in relation to the non-academic job market. Please choose one of the above as the most relevant and reflect on your answer.
- This part would be around 1.000 words max.

PART 3 PORTFOLIO

- The portfolio should provide case-specific materials, such as outputs (of internships), the schedule (of a hosted conference panel), the invite or description of impact activity, etc., all depending on the nature of the activity.