

# Leiden University Graduate School of Archaeology (GSA) Monitoring Meeting Instructions for Reviewer

Version Apr 2024

For many PhD candidates, the monitoring meetings are the only occasions when they will have the opportunity to talk about their research and their experience with outsiders. The reviewers' role is to support the PhD candidate so that they can deliver a PhD dissertation within the framework of the agreement established between the PhD candidate and the supervisors. The quality of the supervision is an important aspect of this meeting, with emphasis on the "[golden rules](#)" of [supervision](#).

The reviewers will give constructive feedback that is:

- **Respectful:** for the candidate's (and the supervisors') achievements and choices,
- **Goal-oriented:** providing assistance on specific points by asking for clarification,
- **Digestible:** increasing understanding of what may be expected by providing examples / presenting options from personal experience.

The notes of the monitoring meeting are **confidential**: the form remains with the GSA. The GSA evaluates the comments and recommendations. If all is well, the documentation is filed; where there are grounds for concern, the GSA contacts PhD candidate first and then the supervisors, proposing specific actions within a defined time frame. The review may lead to adjustments and/or revisions within their work plan and supervision team.

The first monitoring meeting for internal PhD candidates is roughly 10 months after the start of the PhD trajectory (for external PhDs, it is at 1 year and 10 months). The first meeting is of crucial importance since it will be decided at that point whether the candidate may continue with their PhD trajectory. This 'go / no-go' decision – made by the Director of the Graduate School – is based on the recommendation of the interviewers and advice from the supervisors. In the case of serious problems that cannot be solved, the GSA may discontinue the PhD track. Monitoring meetings in years 2-4 do not involve a go / no-go decision.

All reviewers have a PhD degree and are not involved in the project of the PhD candidate. For the first monitoring meeting, the GSA aims to assign a team of

two reviewers from different research groups or departments than that of the PhD candidate. Only one interviewer is assigned for the subsequent meetings, usually one of the two from the first meeting.

For the interviewers, it is an opportunity to get to know better what type of research is done in other research fields, to work with PhD staff from other departments, and to contribute to the success of the PhD candidates at the Faculty of Archaeology.

#### GSA Progress Interview Procedure and Timeline

1. The GSA indicates to the PhD candidate who will interview them.
2. **The PhD candidate** contacts the review team to make an appointment. Please schedule ca. 1.5 hours for the entire meeting.
3. The PhD candidate prepares an evaluation dossier, including filling out section 1 of the monitoring meeting form and providing other materials listed below, to the reviewer(s) **latest one week before the meeting** is scheduled.
4. The evaluation dossier is discussed at the interview.
5. **The reviewers** are responsible for filling in the remaining sections of the form, both during and immediately after the interview, including recommendations for follow-up action.
6. The combined review report is signed by the interviewers and the PhD candidate and will be emailed to the GSA by one of the interviewers as a PDF file within two weeks after the interview has been conducted.
7. The GSA evaluates the comments and takes further action if necessary.

#### Material to be sent by the PhD candidate to the reviewers 1 week before the meeting

1. The latest version of the Training and Supervision Plan (TSP)
2. Working title and detailed outline of the monograph or of the articles constituting the PhD dissertation (link to already published articles, if any)
3. Filled-out Monitoring Meeting form (Section 1: PhD section only)

### Tips for the Reviewers:

Past reviewers have suggested that it's easier to consider this more of a conversation than an interview.

- If the candidate is stuck on answering an important question, perhaps give an example from your own experience (e.g., with supervisors, publishing, or funding).

For some of the PhD candidates you are the first scholar from outside their research group / supervising team to critically discuss their work. Most PhD candidates feel very insecure and vulnerable – your role is to act as a facilitator and, if possible, empower the candidate.

- Give constructive feedback.
- Frame your questions and remarks positively, and ask for clarification when it is unclear to you how your propositions to the PhD candidate would work out.
- Your recommendations for what may (or needs to) be done to improve/consolidate the PhD and their research well-being can be addressed at the end of the questionnaire.

Some PhD candidates may have serious issues with their thesis, the topic, their supervisors, or even just general concerns about beginning, doing, and completing a PhD project.

- Again, feel free to discuss any relevant personal experiences or strategies you've found helpful in dealing with these issues.
- Recognize that this may be a key moment for the research career of the person you are interviewing (go/no-go; changing supervisors; re-framing their research topic).
- Acknowledge that there is a diversity of research topics and research approaches ('cultures') in our Faculty and beyond.

It's OK if you are not familiar with some of the issues raised by the PhD candidate: these can be passed on to the GSA and/or the supervisor if needed.