**WIAS TSP Frequently Asked Questions**

**1. How to count credits for courses?**

One ECTS credit is equivalent to a study load of approximately 28 hours. Some courses have mandatory self-study or homework along with in-class activities and the hours to be spent can be seen on the course certificate or course advertisement. If there is mandatory homework, then the final ECTS for the course can be calculated by adding the mandatory homework hours and the in-class hours. Attending one day of in-class activities counts for 0.3 ECTS.

**2. Mandatory courses and waivers?**

A mandatory course can only be waived if the PhD candidate can prove that all the competences to be gained from the mandatory course are already fulfilled from previous course(s) or work experience. If a waiver is granted, no course credit is awarded. However, the TSP minimum requirement of 30 ECTS still applies. For more information contact the WIAS education coordinator.

**3. When do I take the mandatory courses?**

• **The WIAS Introduction Day (mandatory):** This is an in-person course. You are strongly recommended to take next available course after the start of your PhD. If you are not based in the Netherlands at the start of your PhD, you are expected to take the next available course after you arrive in the Netherlands.

• **A course on Scientific Integrity (mandatory):** There are in-person and online versions of this course. You are expected to take this course within the first year of your PhD.

• **An Ethics course (mandatory):** There are in-person and online versions of this course. You are expected to take this course within the first year of your PhD.

**4. When do I take the recommended courses in the Basic Package**

We strongly recommend that you take a course on personal effectiveness during the first year of your PhD trajectory. Such a course should address topics like PhD/supervisorcommunication, e.g. WIAS Introduction course on Personal Effectiveness for your PhD.

**5. WIAS Midterm Reflection course:** We strongly recommend you take this in-person course at the end of your second year or the begin of your third year.

**6. Can previous education count on the TSP?**

PhD candidates who do not start their PhD trajectory directly after their MSc graduation may have done some courses that are relevant to their TSP. A maximum of 10 ECTS can be transferred if there is proof (certificates), the training is completed after the MSc graduation, and the training is relevant to the learning goals. For more information, contact the WIAS education coordinator.

**7. What do I do if I cannot find a specific course I would like to take?**

Before you submit your first TSP, it is important that you spend time defining your learning goals. Based on these learning goals, you can select relevant courses from the sites mentioned in question 8. If you cannot yet find specific information on a course, you can mention in as much detail as possible, the type of course you would like to take and subject area(s) this course will address. You should update your TSP once more information is known about the course.

**8. How to find relevant courses?**

PhD courses can be done anywhere in the Netherlands or abroad. To find courses, you can:

* Search on the internet, discuss with supervisors, discuss with other PhD candidates.
* Read monthly WIAS newsletter.
* Check out the WIAS website (<https://www.wur.eu/wias>) for courses offered.
* Wageningen Graduate Schools offers subsidized competence skills and career-oriented courses (see: https://wgs.crs.wur.nl/).
* Courses at the other five Wageningen graduate schools (see websites of VLAG, PE&RC, WIMEK, WASS and EPS).
* Courses offered by graduate schools of other (non)Dutch universities.

**9. What are the requirements for presentations?**

* You will receive 1 ECTS for each original presentation given to a broader scientific public (e.g., at an international conference, workshop or seminar).
* You are required to give a minimum of two original presentations, of which one is oral. and one is a poster.
* You will receive credit points for a maximum of 4 original presentations (4 ECTS) and only a maximum of five presentations (one presentation without credit) can be listed in the final TSP.
* Presentations made in your chair group do not count towards your TSP.
* Presenting the same poster at different events does not lead to additional credits.

**10. What are the requirements for PhD discussion groups?**

* A PhD discussion group must be approved by the WIAS Education Committee (EC) based on a written application that describes a discussion group plan (see application form on the [WIAS website](https://www.wur.nl/en/education-programmes/phd-programme/graduate-schools/wageningen-institute-of-animal-sciences-1/phd-candidates.htm)).
* In-depth discussion (e.g., of papers, chapters of a book, with invited guest speakers, etc.) should be the core of the meeting.
* Meetings must take place regularly (at least 6 times per year) and information of each meeting (date, duration, name of staff member present, subject discussed, list of participants) should be archived. The archived information must be submitted yearly to WIAS (wias@wur.nl).
* Note that discussion groups where PhD candidates present their own PhD proposal or practice their presentations before presenting to a broader scientific audience does not count toward the TSP.
* A maximum of 2 ECTS can be obtained per discussion group.
* A maximum of 4 ECTS can be obtained if the PhD candidate is an active member of more than one PhD discussion groups.

**11. Can BSc or MSc level courses count on the TSP?**

* BSc level courses do not count on the TSP.
* In case of deficiencies, MSc level courses (done after MSc graduation) can be included in the TSP totalling a maximum of 6 ECTS. In this case, the supervisor must agree that the PhD candidate takes the course. All requirements for the MSc level must be fulfilled if the course is included in the TSP.

*Exception*: the level of the MSc course ‘’Modern Statistics for the Life Sciences’’ (ABG-30806) is comparable to a PhD course in statistics. This ABG-30806 course can be filled in as PhD level Advanced statistics course (only when done after MSc graduation).

**12. Can online courses be included on the TSP?**

Online courses can be included on the TSP if:

* The level of the online course is at least MSc level (see question 11). An online course at MSc level can be filled in as part of the maximum 6 ECTS MSc level courses.
* Your supervisor agrees that you can attend the course.
* You have a proof of successful completion of the course (a course certificate of completion). Information on enrolment is no proof of attendance for an online course.

**13. Can the Research Master be part of the TSP?**

Research Master cluster (RMC) courses done during yourMSc cannot count on the TSP (courses cannot count twice).

If your PhD proposal written during the RCM course was granted funding, you can include this on the TSP. You will receive a maximum 6 ECTS for proposal writing (TSP section “Disciplinary Competences’’).

**14. When and how does an external training period count on the TSP?**

An external training period for one month or more, e.g., at an external lab or a renowned institute abroad (not at your home institute or at WUR), counts for a maximum of 2 ECTS. In this case, the credit points are awarded for the experience of being somewhere external where you get a chance to get individual training on new laboratory techniques, build your professional network etc. As proof of your visit, you should ask the lab you visited for an email or letter confirming the dates of your visit.

**15. Professional competences: management skills training, how many credits?**

* Organizing a seminar or conference usually counts for 1 to 2 ECTS maximum.
* Organizing the WIAS Science Day/WIAS Annual Conference counts for 2 ECTS.
* For membership of a scientific board or committee (e.g., chairman, secretary, education committee) credits depend on workload (maximum of 2 ECTS).
* For information on WAPS council functions, see the WAPS page on the WIAS website.
* Members of the WIAS magazine board (1 ECTS for 1 year and a maximum of 3 ECTS)

**16. Is writing the PhD proposal a course?**

No, this is not a course.

**17. How much credits do I receive for supervision of BSc and MSc students?**

For supervision of:

* A BSc student 1 ECTS
* An internship student 1 ECTS
* An MSc minor student 1.5 ECTS
* An MSc major student 2 ECTS

More information on WUR teaching rules can be found [here](https://www.wur.nl/en/education-programmes/phd-programme/aim-content-of-the-wageningen-university-research-phd-programme/wur-teaching-rules.htm).

**18. When and how to apply for the certificate of PhD education?**

Not later than 15 weeks before defence, you can submit the following to wias@wur.nl:

* proofs of the education and training done, like course certificates or other proofs.
* the electronic excel file of the final TSP and a signed PDF copy (both by supervisor and PhD candidate).