

# Iedereen Professor - Frequently Asked Questions

**The recently adopted career policy ‘Iedereen Professor’ takes effect on November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024. It changes the way we use titles, toga use academic ceremonies, and the rules for granting the ius promovendi. This document offers more details on how these changes are implemented and what they mean for you.**

Although the policy takes effect on November 1<sup>st</sup> 2024, there are some aspects that require changes to our Promotiereglement (Regulations governing the conferral of the doctor’s degree). A separate working group is developing these new regulations, which will integrate the changes due to ‘Iedereen Professor’ and further updates. This FAQ concerns those changes that take immediate effect on Nov 1<sup>st</sup> 2024. Notably, until the new regulations are adopted, the composition of Doctorate Committees remains as it is described in the current regulations.

**Please note, the information specifically for chairs, (co-)promotores, and candidates with a planned PhD defense can be found on page 4 of this document.**

## 1. Title

**When can I as an assistant or associate professor use the title of professor, and when is it used to address me?**

The title professor (abbreviated: prof.) may be used to address or introduce those holding assistant, associate, and ‘full’ professor positions at TU/e in academic ceremonies (such diploma award ceremonies, PhD defenses) and in situations where mention of the title helps establish expertise, such as in grant proposals or the media. It will almost always be followed directly by the last name. Examples are:

- Professor Jansen, a recently appointed assistant professor in the department of Mechanical Engineering, shares her views on autonomous flight.
- In a grant proposal: Name: prof. J. Garcia. Position: Assistant Professor. Field: Lazy AI.
- Professor Da Silva, an associate professor in the department of Industrial Design, works on what he calls empowering systems. These systems, prof. Da Silva explains, are all around us.
- The research on 5G networks is led by prof. Abebe, professor in the department of Electrical Engineering at TU/e.
- *Dit jaar ging de prijs naar Chun Zhang, universitair hoofddocent aan de TU/e. De jury roemt in het bijzonder prof. Zhang’s bijdragen aan de energietransitie vanuit haar achtergrond in de organische chemie.*

When a formal position is referred to in a communication it is presented, in full, as ‘assistant professor’ or ‘associate professor’. Full professors use either that (‘full professor’) or simply ‘professor’. In Dutch, the terms *universitair docent* (UD), *universitair hoofddocent* (UHD), and *hoogleraar* (HL) are used. For full transparency, business cards, personal websites, and professional social media profiles should be clear about the formal position of the TU/e employee.

### **How is the title professor used in defense ceremonies?**

In defense ceremonies the chair, the candidate, and other committee members address all assistant, associate and full professors with the title professor, followed by the last name.

During the defense, PhD candidates will continue to address only those members of the committee who hold the position of full professor as *hooggeleerde*, and those who hold assistant or associate professor positions as *zeergeleerde*. This because in Dutch, specifically, only full professors are styled *hooggeleerde* and this form of address therefore refers to their formal position of *hoogleraar* (full professor).

### **How is the title professor used in writing, such as on the official diploma and in theses?**

In Dutch, the combination of titles prof.dr. or prof.dr.ir. only refer to full professors (*hoogleraren*). For this reason, the written official titles for assistant and associate professors cannot change, such as on the first page of dissertations/theses mentioning the committee members, office tags, or business cards.

### **Is the title professor to be used in classroom settings?**

No, TU/e remains a university where informality is cherished. For occasions other than formal academic events, TU/e does not instruct students or colleagues on how they should address their professors and it will not do so in the future.

### **What about inaugural and valedictory lectures?**

TU/e chooses to continue to offer inaugural and valedictory lectures to full professors only, to mark the start or end of their appointment to a formal position as full professor.

## **2. Toga**

### **Who is allowed to wear a toga in TU/e defense ceremonies?**

In TU/e defense ceremonies all assistant, associate, and full professors have the right to wear a toga. The right is reserved to holders of these three academic positions; committee members from industry, postdoctoral researchers, and all others not affiliated in any professorial capacity with a university cannot wear a toga.

### **Can I as an assistant or associate professor wear a toga in ceremonies at other universities?**

The rules for togas differ between universities; not all universities currently allow or require assistant and associate professors to wear it. When participating in a defense ceremony at another university, TU/e professors (assistant, associate, and full) observe the local rules of that university. The TU/e-granted right to wear a toga does not extend to other universities. This includes external ceremonies

besides the defense, such as inaugural lectures and diploma awards. There, too, TU/e professors will observe local practice.

### **Can colleagues from other universities wear a toga at a TU/e defense?**

Yes. Colleagues who hold the position of assistant, associate, or full professor at their home university are asked to observe the TU/e practice that every assistant, associate, and full professor wear a toga at a TU/e defense.

### **At what other TU/e occasions - besides the PhD defense - can I wear a toga?**

Assistant and associate professors may wear a toga, and join the cortège, at all ceremonies where currently full professors may wear one. This includes MomentTUM, the Opening of the Academic Year, and BSc/MSc diploma award ceremonies.

### **Is wearing a toga mandatory at official academic ceremonies?**

No, wearing a toga is a right, not an obligation. The choice to wear it, or not, is yours and yours alone. In case you decide against, dress code rules for non-toga wearing committee members/participants apply.

### **How can I get a toga? Will I need to buy my own?**

Togas are expensive. Fortunately, TU/e has 20 togas, in various sizes, available to loan out to those who do not own one. This amount will comfortably suffice for PhD defenses and graduation ceremonies.

For large academic ceremonies, such as MomentTUM or the Opening of the Academic Year, TU/e will likely run out of loan togas. The 'first come, first serve' principle will be used here, so make sure that you apply ahead of time if you wish to wear a toga, but do not own one yourself.

If for whatever reason no toga is available to loan, you may wish to reach out to one of your colleagues to see if you can borrow their toga. Of course, you can also buy your own toga. As is currently the case, this is not reimbursed by TU/e. Your toga may, however, be tax deductible as '*ambtskleding*' (professional uniform). Note that toga design varies subtly (but sometimes vastly) between universities; TU/e has no preferred supplier, but several vendors may be found online.

Any time you wish to use one of the TU/e loan togas, make sure to contact the office of Doctoral Presentations and Academic Ceremonies ([penp@tue.nl](mailto:penp@tue.nl)) well ahead of time to avoid disappointment.

Please also take note of the fact that the dress code for formal academic occasions is more than the toga: professors are also asked to wear a white blouse or white shirt with a grey tie (or cravat), a dark suit, and black shoes. Except for a limited stock of ties and cravats, these are not available on loan. As always, participants from countries other than the Netherlands may wear attire considered appropriate in their country or culture for the event in question.

## In short for chairs, (co-)promotores, and candidates with a planned PhD defense: what are the changes and what stays the same in your upcoming PdD defense?

No worries, the changes will be simple to accommodate. In particular, we note that the new rules for the composition of doctorate committees will only take effect once the new Doctorate Regulations are finished and adopted; your committee and the roles in it are fine as is and no changes are needed.

### Use of Titles:

1. In the listing of members of the committee in the printed thesis, **the candidate** is asked to use titles in their current form (that is, dr. for non-full professors, prof. dr. (ir.) for full professors). In other words, this *stays the same*.
2. In the defense, all assistant, associate and full professors are addressed as ‘professor [last name]’ by **chair, other committee members and candidate**. Any committee members not holding one of these three positions at a university are addressed as ‘doctor [last name]’. In other words, *all toga-wearing committee members are addressed as professor*.
3. At the start of their answer, **the candidate** addresses full professors as ‘*hooggeleerde*’ (followed by opponent, or (co-)promotor depending on the role), and all others as ‘*zeergeleerde*’ (opponent, (co-)promotor). See also the FAQ. In short, *this also stays the same*.

### Toga’s

1. All **assistant, associate, and full professors (including the chair, of course)** in the defense are allowed to wear a toga. Since likely not all will have one of their own, we ask the **(co-) promotores** to contact the office of Doctoral Presentations and Academic Ceremonies ([penp@tue.nl](mailto:penp@tue.nl)) well ahead of time to make sure enough toga’s are available, and to avoid disappointment. You may also wish to make sure you know where to pick up the loan toga’s; these may be either brought to the meeting room (Atlas 0.520) or they may be in the toga room in Auditorium.

Note, that the dress code for formal academic occasions is more than the toga: professors are also asked to wear a white blouse or white shirt with a grey tie (or cravat), a dark suit, and black shoes. Except for a limited stock of ties and cravats, these are not available on loan. As always, participants from countries other than the Netherlands may wear attire considered appropriate in their country or culture for the event in question. Also, wearing a toga is a right, not an obligation. The choice to wear it, or not, is entirely up to the committee member. In case a committee member decides against, dress code rules for non-toga wearing committee members/participants apply.

If there are (co-)promotores or members from other universities in your supervision team or in the committee, please feel free to share this overview with them. The right to wear a toga and the use of the professor title also extend to them.

### 3. Ius Promovendi

#### How do I apply for the ius promovendi?

The ius promovendi at TU/e is granted by the Doctorate Board (*College voor Promoties*, in Dutch). Before a request for the ius promovendi is considered by the Doctorate Board, it needs to be approved by your Department Board.

In most cases, the ius promovendi will be considered at natural moments in the career progression of assistant and associate professors. For assistant and associate professors that do not yet possess the ius promovendi, awarding it will be considered as part of the BAC process for promotion from UD-2 to UD-1, or for the promotion to UHD-2. In some cases, however, there may be compelling reasons to evaluate an assistant or associate professor for ius promovendi separately from the BAC. For those cases, we will use one form for both approval stages (Department Board and Doctorate Board). You can find the link to the request form in the 'Downloads' section on the Everyone Professor intranet page.

The Doctorate Board can award the ius promovendi on one of three decision grounds:

- 1) The candidate is an experienced supervisor based on the criteria in the policy document
- 2) The Doctorate Board deems the candidate to otherwise possess sufficient and relevant supervisory experience to award experienced supervisor status
- 3) The candidate is not yet an experienced supervisor, but meets criteria C1-C4

The process of applying for the ius promovendi outside the usual BAC process starts with the submission of the completed form to your Department Board. This submission may be done whenever you feel your case should be considered, or it may be done at the invitation of your supervisor or your departmental board. Your application will be treated the same regardless of how the process was initiated.

#### How do I qualify if I am an experienced supervisor?

For this, we assume you apply for the ius promovendi outside the usual BAC process on decision ground 1) or 2) above. Once your form is submitted, a departmental advisory committee will need to establish whether you meet the criteria for an experienced supervisor. For this, the committee will require evidence from you to determine whether:

1. You already possess the ius promovendi from a previous appointment at a reputable Dutch university. Universities in different countries may or may not have rights similar to the ius promovendi, if you feel your rights as promotor at a previous country imply supervisory qualities and seniority similar to those required for ius promovendi at TU/e you may argue this in the form as well.
2. Or, in case you do not already possess the ius promovendi, that you completed two or more PhD projects as co-promotor at TU/e and demonstrate for each of these that
  - b1) The supervision was successfully completed: You may want to provide evidence of output - thesis and published works, software, reviews, etc - generated by the candidate under your supervision, with you as last author for instance to support your senior role in the work (or, if author order is not indicative, another practice in your field that indicates seniority) AND
  - b2) that you displayed sufficient supervisory qualities in your supervision of the project. You may present your own evidence for this, but you may also opt to have this aspect

assessed by colleagues, the student, your supervisor, or other members of the supervision team.

3. Or, in case you do not already possess the ius promovendi and have not completed two or more PhD projects as co-promotor at TU/e, that you possess sufficient and relevant supervisory experience from earlier appointments. Support for this may be presented by supplying documentation similar to b) above, but not necessarily limited to TU/e projects.

The application form for ius promovendi is where you provide the above information. You can find the link to the application form in the 'Downloads' section on the Everyone Professor intranet page.

### **How do I qualify if I am not an experienced supervisor?**

For this, we assume you apply for the ius promovendi outside the usual BAC process on decision ground 3) above. Once your form is submitted, a departmental advisory committee will need to establish whether you meet the four criteria for a non-experienced supervisor. For this, the committee will require evidence from you to determine whether:

- a) You are indeed employed as assistant or associate professor, at TU/e, on a permanent contract of 0.4 fte or more, or that you are on a development track to such a position.
- b) You were the primary supervisor during the entire project, evidenced for instance by your role in the selection of the candidate and the nature and frequency of progress meetings you hold with the candidate.
- c) The project is on track to be successfully completed: You may want to provide evidence of output - thesis and published works, software, reviews, etc - generated by the candidate under your supervision, with you as last author for instance to support your senior role in the work (or, if author order is not indicative, any other practice in your field that indicates seniority)
- d) You were the content owner of the project; This is evidenced for instance by the fact that you wrote the grant application or the project proposal for the PhD project.
- e) You completed the Supervision Qualification (with the understanding that for a transitional period, this will be covered by the TU/e EWUU course 'Supervising PhD Candidates' – see below).

The application form for ius promovendi is where you provide the above information. You can find the link to the application form in the 'Downloads' section on the Everyone Professor intranet page.

### **How can I obtain the Supervision Qualification?**

As stated in the policy document, the SQ will be developed by the Graduate School. This will take some time, and our own TU/e SQ program is not yet in place. You can find the policy document in the 'Downloads' section on the Everyone Professor intranet page.

Until the SQ is finalized, the TU/e EWUU course 'Supervising PhD Candidates' will serve as the mandatory and prerequisite training to apply for the ius promovendi for colleagues who are not yet experienced supervisors. You may already register for the next rounds of the 'Supervising PhD Candidates' course (or join a waiting list) here: [Supervising PhD Candidates || WP, PDoc](#)

### **Do I need to complete the course 'Supervising PhD Candidates' when I am already an experienced supervisor?**

No, the SQ is only part of the criteria for supervisors who do not yet qualify as experienced supervisors.

### **Who will assess if I meet the criteria for ius promovendi?**

Each department will establish a (standing or ad-hoc) departmental advisory committee. It advises the Department Board on whether a request for ius promovendi outside the usual BAC process should be submitted to the Doctorate Board. The Department Board then formally decides to forward to application to the Doctorate Board. The applications from all departments are considered by the Doctorate Board in its bi-weekly meeting, where the decision is made to approve or reject the application. The decision is communicated back to the applicant without delay, along with any non-confidential feedback relevant to the applicant, by departmental HR.

Note, that the advisory committees still need to be established, and then will likely take some time to settle on a way of working. Please be aware that, especially at the start of this new committee, there may be some delay in handling all requests.

## **Other matters: Supervision teams**

The policy document specifies the composition of the supervision team. You can find the policy document in the 'Downloads' section on the Everyone Professor intranet page.

### **What is the difference between a process expert and an experienced supervisor?**

A process expert is an experienced supervisor, and has gained expertise with the way of working in TU/e. They safeguard that supervision is consistent with TU/e best practices and act as a mentor to the content owner. As regulations and the way of working can differ between countries and universities, an experienced supervisor who was hired from another university first needs to become acquainted with TU/e regulations and best practices before they are a process expert.

### **Can there be changes in the roles in existing supervision teams?**

Yes, an assistant or associate professor without the ius promovendi may initially be designated co-promotor in Hora Finita. If, closer to the date of the defense, the Doctorate Board has awarded the assistant or associate professor the ius promovendi, they can act as first promotor (and will be designated as such in Hora Finita). The Doctorate Board can accord such a change of supervision team provided the original first promotor, the dean, and the new first promotor all agree.

## **Other matters: Retirement or end of contract**

### **Am I as assistant or associate professor still able to act as first promotor after my retirement or after the end of my contract?**

Yes, the Higher Education and Research Act (Wet op het Hoger Onderwijs en Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek, or WHW) states in Article 9.19 that honorably discharged full professors shall retain the right to act as PhD promotor for five years after their dismissal. TU/e decided in March 2025 to extend the rule for full professors to associate and assistant professors (i.e., to all holders of TU/e ius promovendi), as this will help to ensure continuity for the organization as a whole and the PhD candidate in particular.