

Response to PVC Report 2017

We would like to thank the members of this year's PVC for their detailed and informative report and for the numerous recommendations: Benno van den Berg, Tamara Dobler, Peter van Ormondt (secretary), Yde Venema (chair) and Daniel Wiechmann.

The PVC report has been discussed in the ILLC Management Team. This document briefly reports in writing our response to the concrete recommendations of the PVC 2017.

Recommendations 1 & 2 regarding supervision and assessment:

We agree that it is key to clarify the roles and responsibilities of supervisors, especially in projects that involve large supervision teams and in cases where the promotor is not the main supervisor. In order to promote this, a Code of Practice for supervisors has recently been written and the PhD Programme director plans to elicit a discussion of this among supervisors.

Regarding the nine-month report required for the 1st-year evaluation, we welcome the given recommendation and will try to clarify its nature by providing a list of possible types of formats of pilot-studies on the PhD Programme website.

Recommendation 3 regarding training programme:

We are constantly striving to improve the quality of the skills courses that are part of the PhD Programme. However, the PhD Programme director agrees that the current organisation of the transferable skills training programme needs to be assessed and we are open to exploring new options concerning the mandatory character of the courses. This is not an easy matter given the constraints coming from both the faculties, Science and Humanities. We will nevertheless investigate possibilities for alternative designs of the training programme, especially in light of new developments on PhD training at the Faculty of Science.

Recommendation 4 regarding teaching tasks for PhDs at the Faculty of Humanities:

The ILLC director is in contact with several departments in the faculty of humanities in order to discuss an easier way to establish the allocation of teaching tasks within Humanities (taking into account the nature of the employment contracts for PhD candidates within the faculty of Humanities).

Recommendation 5 regarding welcoming of new members:

The MT fully agrees with the given recommendation and is currently working on preparing welcome packages not only for new PhD candidates but also for other new members of staff.

Recommendation 6 regarding annual travel budget for PhD candidates:

We agree that more clarity is required in this respect. The MT will discuss the available budget for PhD candidates and provide information on the amounts available, the kind of activities the money is intended for, and who decides on how the budget can be spent.

Recommendation 7 regarding facilities at SP 107:

This is recurring recommendation which the MT frequently takes up with the responsible instances within the faculty of Science. We hope progress can soon be made in the on-going discussions.

Recommendation 8 regarding work-life balance:

We agree that it is desirable to encourage an atmosphere where questions related to balancing working hours and private life can be openly discussed and will try to facilitate such an atmosphere among PhD candidates and their supervisors.