

Nijmegen School of Management

Visiting Address
Heyendaalseweg 141
6525 GD Nijmegen

Mailing Address
Postbus 9108
6500 HK Nijmegen



Date
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Our reference
20N.005499

Contact details
p.hendriks@fm.ru.nl

Subject
Applying for an extension for PhD trajectories
on corona-related grounds

Your reference

Dear PhD candidates and supervisors,

After liaising with the Doctoral School, the PhD Council and the Scientific Advisory Committee, I would like to inform you about the basic principles and procedure with regard to applying for an extension for PhD trajectories on corona-related grounds. This letter only concerns internal PhD candidates with an employment contract with the faculty.

Contract extensions are certainly possible and the faculty will be generous in granting them. The Faculty Board opts for an approach based on mutual trust with as little undesirable bureaucracy as possible (good arguments, no extensive forms). Financial considerations will not be a reason for a possible rejection. The extension will be financed from faculty resources, in combination with the resources available at the university level due to national agreements.

An extension based on corona-related delays can be requested by the supervisor and the respective Head of Department to the Vice Dean of Research. An application can be submitted between six and three months before the end of the contract. The choice of this period is prompted by the fact that the assessment is to take place when it is sufficiently clear whether there will actually be a delay that cannot be mitigated in any other way. The application must be accompanied by a substantiation that makes it plausible (1) that corona-related causes are at the root of the observed delay, (2) that the supervisor and the PhD candidate have seriously explored possibilities to prevent delay or mitigate negative effects and (3) that extension is expected to contribute to successful completion (also in the case of actual completion after the expiry of the extension). Arguments can be presented that relate to the progress of the research (problems with data collection, availability of data, etc.) as well as personal circumstances (mental and physical health-related, home situation, etc.). It is paramount that no privacy-sensitive information is used in the argumentation. The standard extension to be requested is three months, but an extension of six months can be applied for provided that a clear case is made that the corona effects extend beyond the period of the 'intelligent' lockdown.

The default for decisions on applications will be that extensions will be granted unless the criteria are clearly not met.

An application is a written text with arguments in support of the three assessment criteria that, in the opinion of the submitters, make an extension desirable. There are no formal requirements for an application other than this; for example, we have not designed an application form. Because, for the reasons described above, an application for extension is only possible in the final phase, it is important for a project that is not yet in that phase to keep track of the corona-related delay that you are experiencing or expecting as well as the measures that have been considered or taken as a result. Supervisors are therefore advised to build up a file to have evidence at hand if it becomes necessary to apply for an extension later, particularly for the second criterion of exploring alternatives. Supervisors should also raise the implications of the Corona situation at least once a year during the annual interview. Also, when the corona-related issues are discussed in other, regular consultations between PhD candidate and supervisor, it is advisable to write down your considerations and conclusions for the purpose of building up a dossier. You are not expected to attach such reports to an application; the reports can be used as a basis to support the argumentation. Please make sure not to include any privacy-sensitive information in the application.

As mentioned above, this letter provides information that applies to PhD's with an employment contract. In a separate letter from the Doctoral School, you and other PhD candidates will receive information about an inventory of how corona affects PhD candidates at IMR. I would like to reconfirm that you can ask the Doctoral School for any assistance you may need in exploring ways to prevent delay (cf. the suggestions made earlier).

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'P.H.J. Hendriks', written in a cursive style.

prof. dr. P.H.J. Hendriks
dean