My Doctoral File

Guidelines

The application 'My Doctoral File' (MDF) is an electronic tool under development to monitor the doctoral process. The current version of this application is used to draw up or modify a doctoral file, follow up and report on the progress and apply for the extension of a registration or an appointment (e.g. as a grant holder, assistant, research fellow, …) as well as the end phase.

Attention: all automatic emails from this application are sent from a **no-reply email address**.

1.a. Doctoral file

The doctoral file should be drawn up by the PhD student in consultation with the UHasselt promoter and must be submitted within 3 months after the first enrollment as a PhD student (or 6 months if the PhD student is appointed as an assistant (3x2 years)).

MDF Fase 1a: Flow doctoral file
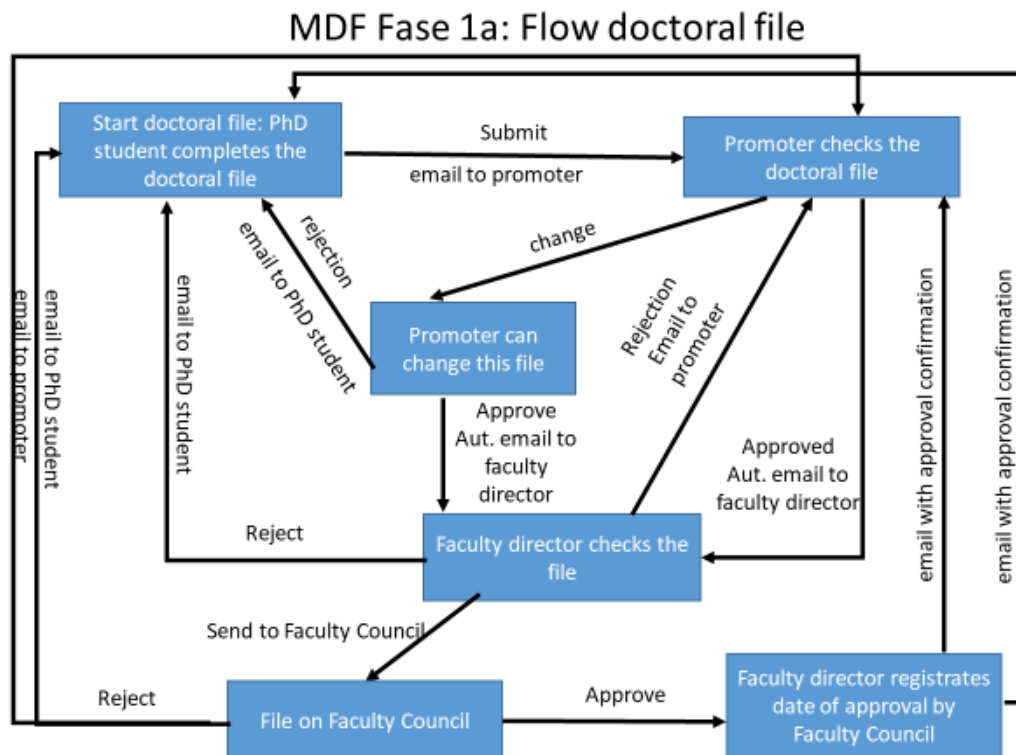
Procedure PhD student

Status MDF: application / candidate editing)

- After registration at the student administration, the PhD student has access to the electronic doctoral file in the application 'My Doctoral File' (MDF). The application is available via this website (year 1 - step 8) or via the student file.
- Initially the login is with the student number and corresponding password. In the doctoral file, the PhD student must make the link with the staff number by clicking on the 'pencil" and looking themselves up (see also page 13 – FAQ's of these guidelines). Once this link has been made, it is also possible to login with the employee number.
- The PhD student completes the first page of the file. The file must be fully completed before clicking on 'Next'. Per type of PhD there are some points of interest:
  - o **UHasselt/tUL PhD**: this is a PhD of which only an UHasselt/tUL doctoral discipline will be awarded after a positive single public doctoral defense of the single doctoral thesis.
  - ➔ Select under 'Type': 'UHasselt/tUL PhD'
  - ➔ 'Promoter': insert the name of the UHasselt-promoter (max 1)
  - ➔ 'Co-promoter': insert the name(s) of (maximum 2) co-promoter(s) (only if applicable)
  - ➔ 'Committee': The doctoral committee consists of at least 3 persons including the promoter and any co-promoter(s). The doctoral committee must contain at least 1 member who is not the promoter or co-promoter of the doctoral candidate.

- o **Joint PhD**: a joint PhD is <u>only</u> when there is a cooperation between 2 <u>universities</u> for the specific research on which each university awards a doctoral discipline after a positive single doctoral defense of the single doctoral thesis. A mandatory joint PhD agreement will be concluded for this purpose.
  - ➔ Select under 'Type': 'Joint PhD'
  - ➔ 'Promoter': insert the names of the promoters (1 from each cooperating university)
  - ➔ 'Co-promoter': insert the names of the co-promoters (maximum 2)
  - ➔ 'Committee': The doctoral committee consists of at least 3 persons including the promoters and any co-promoter(s). the doctoral committee must contain at least 1 member who is not the promoter or co-promoter of the doctoral candidate.
- After completion of the first page, the PhD student clicks on 'next' and sends this file for approval to the promoter using the 'Submit' button. The promoter will receive an automatic email from the application with the request for revision of the doctoral file.

Procedure promoter

Status MDF: application / promoter approval pending

- When a PhD student submits the doctoral file via the application, the promoter receives an automatic email from the application with a direct link to the doctoral file of the PhD student.
- The promoter can log in via the direct link in the email or via 'the application portal (intranet) – doctoral file' by getting access to every file of which the UHasselt staff member is (co-) promoter and/or committee member.
- In the main menu (on the left) the promoter can click on 'Doctoral files' and then on 'Files waiting for your approval'. A list will be shown with all files that are still awaiting approval of the promoter.
- The promoter may (1) approve, (2) modify and approve or (3) modify and reject the doctoral file.
- Upon (1) approve or (2) modify and approve the doctoral file the promoter clicks on 'next' and completes the procedure by adding the start date of the PhD student. The promoter can finalize the procedure by clicking on 'submit'. An automatic email containing the file is forwarded to the Faculty Director/Manager school of the relevant faculty/school (faculty/school to which to doctoral discipline belongs) for revision and scheduling on the next faculty/school council for approval.
- Upon modify and reject (3) the file will be returned to the PhD student and the entire procedure must be repeated.

Procedure faculty/school
Status MDF: submitted / admin head approval pending OR submitted / faculty council approval pending

- The Faculty director/Manager school receives an automatic email from the application and checks whether this doctoral file complies with the doctoral regulations.
    - o The doctoral file can be rejected. An email is then automatically sent to the PhD student and promoter with accompanying comments regarding the rejection. If applicable, the procedure described above must be repeated again.
    - o If the doctoral file complies with the doctoral regulations, it will be scheduled on the next faculty/school council. The status of the file changes to 'submitted / faculty council approval pending'.
        - ▪ The faculty/school council can reject the doctoral file. An email is then automatically sent to the PhD student and promoter with accompanying comments regarding the rejection. If applicable, the procedure described above must be repeated again.
        - ▪ The faculty/school council can approve the doctoral file. The Faculty director/Manager school enters the date of approval of the faculty/school council. De PhD student and promoter receive an automatic email in which the approval is notified.

1.b. Change request in the doctoral file

A change request can only[1] be requested by the promoter after the doctoral file has already been approved by the faculty/school council. A change request can be requested for the following items of the doctoral file:

- Type of doctorate: transition from UHasselt/tUL PhD to a joint PhD or vice versa. For specific details see page 2 and 3 of these guidelines.
- Start date of PhD
- Title of the PhD project
- Composition doctoral committee
- Research proposal

MDF Fase 1b: Flow Change request
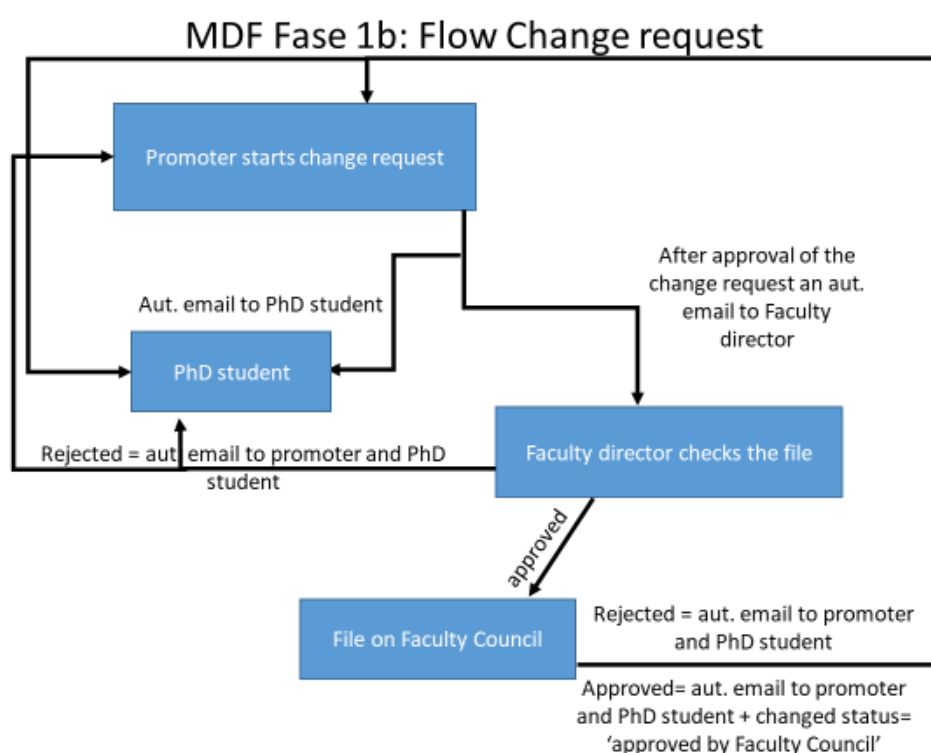
Procedure promoter

Status MDF: approved by faculty council / change requested – editing

- The promoter can consult a doctoral file via 'the application portal (intranet) – doctoral file' in which one is promoter. In the main menu (on the left) the promoter can click on 'Doctoral files' and search the file for which the change request is necessary.
- To change an item within the doctoral file, the promoter must initiate a change request in the respective doctoral student's file (button at the top). Next, the promoter must click at the top on 'View change request'. By clicking on the pencil, certain items can be changed per file.
- As soon as all changes have been made, the promoter must send the file to the faculty/school by clicking on the button 'Confirm this change request'. The promoter than describes on the

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[1] In exceptional situation a change request can be initiated by the faculty director/manager school of the faculty/school concerned.

next page what has changed in the doctoral file and why. To finalize, the promoter clicks on 'Confirm this change request'.
- An automatic email is sent to the Faculty director/Manager school of the relevant faculty/school (faculty/school to which the doctoral discipline belongs) with a request to review the change request and submit it for approval to the next faculty/school council.
- The PhD student will automatically receive an email from the application stating that a change request of the doctoral file has been submitted.

Procedure faculty/school
Status MDF: approved by faculty council / change requested – admin head approval pending OR
approved by faculty council / change requested – faculty council approval pending

- The Faculty director/Manager school receives an automatic email from the application and checks whether this change request complies with the doctoral regulations.
  - o The change request can be rejected. An email is then automatically sent to the PhD student and promoter with accompanying comments regarding the rejection. If applicable, the procedure described above must be repeated again.
  - o If the change request complies with the doctoral regulations, it will be scheduled on the next faculty/school council. The status of the file changes to 'approved by faculty council / change requested – faculty council approval pending'.
    - ▪ The faculty/school council can reject the change request. An email is then automatically sent to the PhD student and promoter with accompanying comments regarding the rejection. If applicable, the procedure described above must be repeated again.
    - ▪ The faculty/school council can approve the change request. The Faculty director/Manager school enters the date of approval of the faculty/school council. De PhD student and promoter receive an automatic email in which the approval is notified.

2. Monitoring and reporting of progress (meeting commission year 1 and 3 and possibly year 5 for PhD students with assistant's mandate)

The doctoral committee meets at least once a year **on the initiative of the PhD student** to monitor the progress of the research and to adjust if necessary. A written report is drawn up by the committee (see template on this [website](#) (year 1 – step 10), only section A), which is signed by the entire doctoral committee and PhD student. This report is added by the PhD student in My Doctoral File under the section 'reports'. If the doctoral committee is of the opinion that the progress of the doctoral research is insufficient, it will state this explicitly in the report.

3. Extension request (year 2 and possible year 4 for PhD students with assistant's mandate

In the years that an extension of the registration or appointment to the personnel department is necessary (year 2 and possibly year 4 if the end phase is not started and in year 4 for PhD students with an assistant's mandate), the PhD student and promoter are invited via My Doctoral File to draw up and submit a progress report for the doctoral committee. This invitation is also sent to the Faculty director/Manager school of the relevant faculty/school (faculty/school where the PhD student is appointed).

MDF Fase 3: Flow extension request
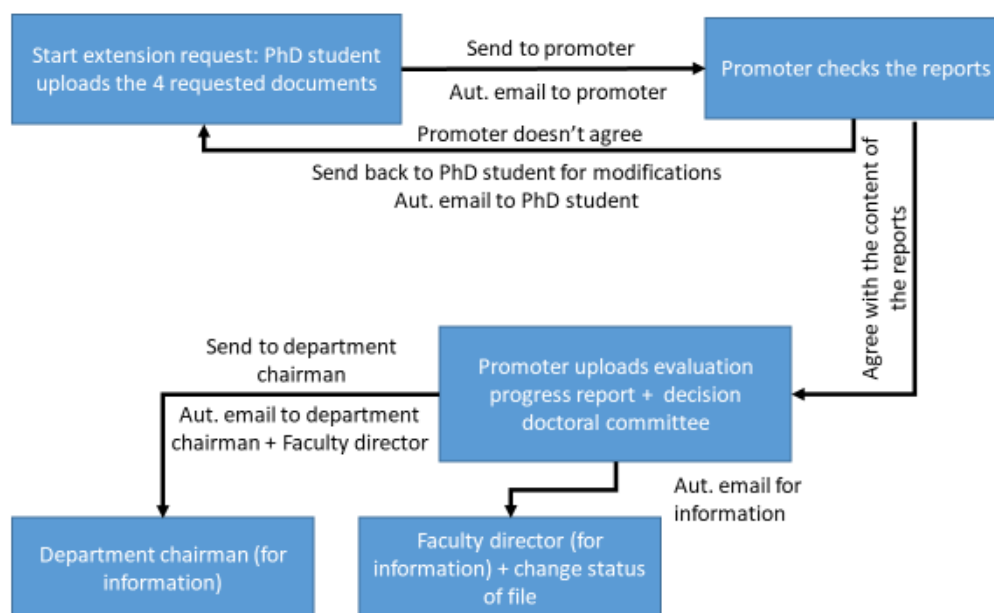
Procedure PhD student

Status MDF: approved by faculty council/extension requested

- The PhD student initiates a new extension request in My Doctoral File. This is only possible if the status of the file is 'approved by the faculty council'. If the file has a different status (eg 'approved by faculty council / change requested – editing') the change must first be approved before an extension request can be started. After clicking on 'start a new extension request' the status of the file changes to 'approved by faculty council / extension requested'.
- The guidelines for this progress report can be downloaded under 'research progress report'. Under 'upload research progress report', this report must be uploaded by the PhD student. If a research progress report is needed for an external funding organization, e.g. FWO, this progress report can be uploaded here. In addition, the following reports must also be added: research output, research activities, and teaching activities activities@uhasselt. These three reports are reports based on information available in other databases of UHasselt like the Document Server, the academic file or the study guide. Because not all teaching activities are listed in the study guide, it is possible for the PhD student to upload a document in which is explained in which teaching activities the PhD student is involved and where not mentioned in the study guide.
- After all reports have been added, the PhD student clicks on 'send to promoter'.
- The application sends an automatic email to the promoter with a request to revise the extension request and to add the committee's report.

Procedure promoter

Status MDF: approved by faculty council/extension requested/progress report sent to promoter

- When a PhD student submits an extension request, the promoter receives an automatic email from the application with a direct link to the extension request from that PhD student. The promoter can also consult this extension request from the 'application portal (Intranet) – doctoral file'. In the main menu (left) the promoter can click on 'Go to extension requests' and then on 'extension requests waiting for your input'. After this a list is visible with all files that are still waiting for input from the promoter.
- The promoter checks the submitted reports and the progress report. In the event of disagreement, the promoter clicks on 'Return to PhD student for review' to then formulate any comments on the next page and then click on 'Send back to PhD student for review'. The PhD student receives an automatic email from the application with the request to make the necessary adjustments. Upon approval, the promoter clicks on 'agree with the content of the reports'.
- The doctoral committee meets, assesses this application and drawn up a written report (see template on this [website](#) (year 2 – step 3), sections A and B) for the PhD student and the relevant department. In this report, special attention is paid to the evaluation of the progress of the doctoral research and the feasibility of completing the doctoral dissertation with the foreseen time.
- The promoter adds this report to the application under the heading 'upload report meeting committee upon extension' or writes the report directly in the available text field.
- Before clicking on the 'confirm' button, the promoter must check whether the committee's advice is positive or negative.
- After this an automatic email is sent from the application to the Department Chair and Faculty director/Manager school of the relevant faculty/school (faculty/school where the PhD student is appointed).

Procedure Department Chair – faculty/school

Status MDF: approved by faculty council/extension requested/sent to chair of capacity group

- The Department Chair receives an automatic email from the application stating that an extension request has been submitted. The Department Chair can consult all the reports in the application. The Department Chair must not take any action in the My Doctoral File application.
- In the event of a positive recommendation, the Department Chair will formulate an extension recommendation in consultation with the Department Council and will arrange this extension in Fintra if applicable. After the extension has been approved on the faculty/school council, the Faculty director/Manager school will enter the date of approval of the extension in MDF of the PhD student in question and the file will again receive the status 'Approved by faculty council'. The faculty/school, in cooperation with the personnel department, takes the necessary steps to extend the registration or appointment of the PhD student.
- In the event of a negative recommendation, the registration or appointment will not be extended and the preparation of the doctoral thesis cannot be continued. The modalities with regard to 'Termination of a doctorate' are available in the Doctoral regulations.

4. End phase

Once the doctoral committee has given permission for the doctoral thesis to be submitted, the end phase can be started in My Doctoral File. The requirements to start this end phase are (a) the approval of the Doctoral School board concerning the doctoral school portfolio (even if ones must not (fully) meet the Doctoral School requirements) and (b) the My Doctoral File needs to have the status 'Approved by the faculty council'. This end phase must start at least 6 months before the planned date of the doctoral defence. This end phase consists of 4 steps.

Step 1: Enter details of the doctoral defense and the constitution of the doctoral jury

Step 2: Request cover/first page/invitation/announcement

Step 3: Request printing of the doctoral dissertation

Step 4: Enter input for the Communications and Marketing Office

Currently, only step 1 is executable through the application. The first step includes the request for the jury composition. This involves checking and/or adjusting the current data in the doctoral file. Furthermore, it is about adding the necessary details regarding the planned doctoral defense. This includes the entries of the jury members. After submission, the supervisor will check the file and, if agreed, send the file to the faculty/school. The Faculty director/Manager school then adds the chair (if known) and schedules the request on the next faculty/school council meeting. The faculty/school council gives an advice on this request in accordance with the Doctoral regulations. The rector then will or will not approve the request of the end phase. If approved, the next steps of the end phase, which are available on the website, can be worked out by the PhD student.

Step 1: Enter details of the doctoral defense and the constitution of the doctoral jury

Procedure PhD student

- In the main menu (on the left) the PhD student can click on 'End phase' and subsequently on 'Start end phase'. The image below will occur. The PhD student can now start step 1 by clicking on 'Enter details of the doctoral defense ant the constitution of the doctoral jury'.
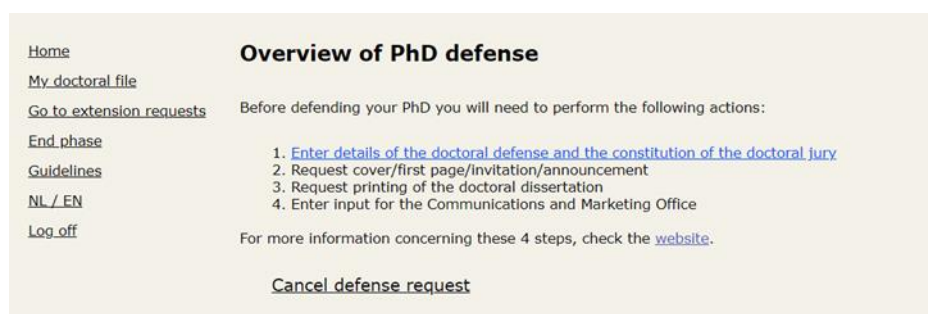
Page: 'Details of the doctoral defense'

After clicking on step 1: 'Enter details of the doctoral defense and the constitution of the doctoral jury' the PhD student will be taken to the page 'Details of the doctoral defense'.

On this page one fills in the necessary information regarding the language of the doctoral dissertation and the doctoral defense. If this deviates from Dutch or English, the PhD student needs to motivate this or refer to the approval already given by the rector (see link 'rector's advices'). Furthermore, one enters the planned date of the pre-defense (if applicable) as well as the planned date of the public doctoral defense where the month and year are mandatory fields.

If specific motivations are needed in case of deviations from the Doctoral regulations, these can be entered in the field 'Extra comments'. These deviations can e.g. have to do with the place of the public defense, the rules concerning the constitution of the doctoral jury or other matters that deviate from the rules in the [UHasselt-Doctoral regulations](#).

Page: 'Confirmation for the constitution of the doctoral committee and the title of the doctoral dissertation'

On this page one checks the current title of the doctoral dissertation as well as the current composition of the doctoral committee. If the composition of the doctoral committee needs to be changed, this can be done on this page with entering a mandatory motivation in the provided input field.

Page: 'Constitution of the doctoral jury'

De members of the doctoral committee are part of the doctoral jury. If members of the doctoral committee were removed on the previous page, they are still visible on this page. Please perform the removal again on this page. Also, on this page the other members of the jury need to be added. Attention: for all external members, it is mandatory to add the e-mail address.

The doctoral student finalizes the application by clicking on 'Send details of doctoral defense to the promoter'. An email is automatically sent from the application to the promoter for revision of the application.

Procedure promoter

The UHasselt-promoter receives an automatic email from the application with a direct link to the end phase request of the PhD student. The promoter can also consult this request from the 'application portal (Intranet) – doctoral file'. In the main menu (left) the promoter can click on 'End phase' and then on 'Doctoral defense requests awaiting your approval as promoter'. After this a list is visible with all files that are still waiting for approval from the promoter.

At the appropriate file, the promoter can click on 'View defense' to review the request. The promoter goes through the same pages as the PhD student, making any necessary changes if applicable.

Page: 'Confirmation for the constitution of the doctoral committee and the title of the doctoral dissertation'

On this page, the promoter additionally indicates whether or not all members of the doctoral committee have a doctorate by dissertation or are appointed at UHasselt as an appointed ZAP member or temporarily appointed ZAP member (Associate Professor). If this is not the case, the promoter fills in a mandatory motivation for this.

Page: 'Constitution of the doctoral jury'

On this page, the promoter additionally indicates whether or not all members of the doctoral jury hold a doctorate by dissertation. If this is not the case, the promoter fills in a mandatory motivation for this. Likewise, the promoter must state whether or not the doctoral committee has granted permission to submit the doctoral dissertation.

The promoter finalizes the application by clicking on the button: 'Send application of doctoral defense to faculty'. Once the Doctoral Schools has entered a decision regarding the doctoral school requirements, the application will automatically email this request to the Faculty director/Manager school of the faculty/school.

The Faculty director/Manager school then adds the chair (if known) and schedules the request on the next faculty/school council meeting. The faculty/school council gives an advice on this request in accordance with the Doctoral regulations. The rector then will or will not approve the request of the end phase.

The PhD student, the promoter, the faculty/school and the student administration office will be automatically notified through the system via e-mail regarding the rector's decision on this request. After approval, the PhD student can work out the next steps conform the end phase which are available on the website.

Changes needed after approval of the end phase?

➔ please contact the Faculty director/Manager school of the faculty/school for this matter.

5. FAQs

In general:

- What to do if an error message occurs?

Create a ticket via the 'self-service page' (through your UHasselt account). In the search bar at the top type 'doctoral file'. Then choose 'request technical support doctoral file'. In the note field you can formulate your questions.

For PhD students:

- Why can't I access My Doctoral File?

Access to My Doctoral File is blocked if you have not (re-)enrolled as a PhD student. Please contact the Student Administration Office (studentenadministratie@uhasselt.be). They will be able to assist you with enrolment.

When you log in for the first time, you must do so with your student account and the corresponding password. Afterwards you can make a link with your personnel file and from then on you can log in using your personnel account (see 1a Doctoral file – procedure PhD student).

- Why is there an error message when I try to link my Personnel ID to My Doctoral File?

This implies that your name was registered differently with the Student Administration office and the HR department. This can happen if you have multiple last names, if your official name is different from the name on your identity card or passport, or if you have a nickname.

Create a ticket via the 'self-service page' (through your UHasselt account). In the search bar at the top type 'doctoral file'. Then choose 'request technical support doctoral file'. In the note field you can formulate your question.

For promoters:

- Why can't I find my PhD student in My Doctoral File?

This could have different reasons. If your PhD student's doctoral file has already been approved by the faculty/school council, it means that the PhD student has not yet re-enrolled. Please encourage your PhD student to contact the Student Administration office (studentenadministratie@uhasselt.be) about the re-enrolment.

If your PhD student's doctoral file has not yet been approved by the faculty/school council, the PhD student has probably not completed nor added your name to the doctoral file.

- Why can't I make any changes to my student's My Doctoral File?

If you cannot make any changes to the My Doctoral file of your student, please check the status of the file. If it is probably being processed by either the student or the faculty/school council regarding an approval, change, or extension.

More FAQs available under: https://intranet.uhasselt.be/en/research/phd/faq-phd