Tasks and role of the ACLC PhD moderator (*gespreksleider*)

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Profile of the moderator
Within the ACLC each PhD candidate is assigned a moderator. This moderator is a senior member of the ACLC (i.e., an Assistant/Associate Professor or a Professor), who represents the director of the ACLC. The moderator is not directly involved in the project. S/he is an ACLC scholar from a different department and is active in a different ACLC research group. In the unlikely situation where no eligible senior member is available, the ACLC Director can evaluate whether it is appropriate to assign a moderator (temporarily) within the same research group as the PhD.

Tasks of the moderator
To ensure the quality management of the ACLC PhDs, their progress is monitored throughout the PhD track. PhD candidates have an intake meeting, a pilot (go/no-go) meeting ±9 months into the project, annual progress interviews, and an exit meeting. These meetings are chaired by the moderator. The pilot meeting is of major importance and requires that the moderator reads the submitted piece for its coherence and writing style. If the moderator is familiar with the field of the research s/he can also make remarks over the content. Details about the form and content of the pilot can be found [here](#).

The moderator makes sure that these meetings are held in a structured and fair way in accordance with the [ACLC guidelines](#). At the end of progress meetings, the PhD and ACLC moderator speak in private about the PhD candidate’s overall progress and well-being. The moderator, in consultation with ACLC, provides support and assistance to PhDs in an open and easily accessible way. In case of problems, the moderator offers help and support to deal with and/or resolve these problems.

Role of the moderator
The ACLC is committed to providing its members, and its PhDs in particular, a positive and safe work environment. The ACLC expects all of its members to treat each other with respect and equality.

The moderator is the *first point of contact* for any issues relating to the progress of the PhD that cannot be resolved with the supervisors.

- These issues may concern content-related disputes, but also academic integrity. The moderator will assist in solving the issues impartially by offering advice to either or both of the parties, and/or by acting as a mediator.

- If these issues concern the social safety of the PhD (e.g. sexual harassment, intimidation, bullying, discrimination), the moderator consults with the ACLC director and/or ACLC coordinator if immediate concrete action is needed. The moderator can also put the PhD in touch with one of the [FGw confidential advisors](#) to receive help from specialists appointed by the UvA who can then advise the PhD, and provide additional help.

- In all the above cases, the PhD can always contact the ACLC director or coordinator directly (i.e., without necessarily involving the moderator).

*Note that the PhD can always directly contact the confidential advisers themselves and does not need to go through the moderator in they are confronted with undesirable behaviour. The confidential advisers for undesirable behaviour at the Faculty of Humanities are Elke Kingma, Marita Mathiisen, and Asli Ozgen. The confidential adviser for academic integrity for the University Quarter is Luiza Bialasiewicz ([L.A.Bialasiewicz@uva.nl](mailto:L.A.Bialasiewicz@uva.nl)). More information on the confidential advisors can be found [here](#).*
FAQ

• Does the moderator hold any kind of formal responsibility for the way in which problematic situations with a PhD candidate are handled?

Answer by M.T. Seignette, the faculty’s policy officer for Social Safety:

*The moderator [is] not (formally or otherwise) responsible for the way in which a situation of social unsafety is resolved. According to the guidelines of the faculty, the relevant research director is responsible for handling situations of inappropriate behavior if it concerns a report from a PhD candidate. The moderator, when receiving a report, forwards the report, if the PhD gives permission, to the research director, who then processes the report. If the report concerns the research director, the moderator can scale up to the AIHR director. If the PhD does not want the moderator to do anything, the moderator could also refer the PhD to a confidential advisor, HR and/or encourage the PhD to report to the research director themselves.*

• To what extent is the moderator bound by confidentiality (‘zwijgplicht’), and on the other hand, to what extent do they have the obligation to report difficult situations (‘meldingsplicht’)?

Answer by M.T. Seignette, the faculty’s policy officer for Social Safety:

*Everyone who receives a report is in principle obliged to keep it confidential. The moderator has no duty of confidentiality, like the confidential advisers. The moderator also has no obligation to report, unless he suspects that a criminal offense has been committed. If the PhD does not give permission to the moderator to do something with the report, the moderator can encourage the PhD to report the situation themselves to the research director or AIHR director, to HR, or to a confidential adviser, to someone the PhD trusts. The faculty guidelines do state that everyone who receives a report must act. Action can therefore also be encouraging the PhD to do something themselves and monitoring that, as well as asking whether the situation has been resolved or how the PhD is doing, etc.*

Further links

- [Social safety Support guide for staff](#)
- [UvA's code of conduct](#)
- [Academic integrity at the UvA](#)
- [Confidential advisers](#)