

## Individual thesis monitoring committee (CSI) 2023-24

### Objectives of the Individual Monitoring Committee (CSI) :

The Individual Monitoring Committee (CSI) was introduced into national regulations in 2016, at the request of doctoral student representatives. Its role was clarified and modified by L'arrêté du 26 août 2020 and then by the Loi pour la recherche voted in 2022, which reinforced its role.

The purpose of the CSI is to **support doctoral students throughout their doctoral studies and ensure that their thesis is progressing smoothly**, based on the AMU doctoral charter, the laboratory charter and the individual training agreement. It ensures that the doctoral student has the conditions and resources he or she needs for the thesis, reviews the training courses taken, assesses the progress of the thesis and evaluates the progress of the thesis from one year to the next.

At the end of the dCSIussion, the CSI **makes recommendations** which are **summarized in a report** sent to the doctoral school director, the doctoral student and the thesis director. In this report, the committee gives its **opinion on whether or not to re-register for the thesis** and, if necessary, alerts the doctoral student, thesis director and doctoral school to any delay in the progress of the thesis. It must also be particularly vigilant in identifying any form of conflict, dCSIrimination, moral or sexual harassment or sexist abuse.

In this way, the CSI provides a fresh, external viewpoint on the progress of the doctoral project, which everyone (thesis director and doctoral student) can use constructively. The monitoring committee does not evaluate the doctoral student or the thesis director. It assesses the conditions of the student's training and the progress of his or her research. At CERGAM, we take particular care to ensure that **dCSIussions during the CSI are conducted in a friendly manner**. The committee's recommendations will be **well-founded, precise and constructive**, to help the doctoral student make the best possible progress in his or her thesis from year to year.

## In summary :

<b>CSI IS NOT</b>
A jury
A pre-thesis defense, or preparation for the defense with the prospective rapporteurs for the thesis jury
A place to <u>assess</u> the "substance" of doctoral work (e.g. the relevance of the data analysis methods used, the theoretical framework or the research questions): committee members are not involved in directing the doctoral student's work.
A place to evaluate the thesis supervisor's work
<b>CSI IS</b>
This is a time for friendly, constructive discussion, to assess the progress of the thesis and its progress from one year to the next, and to <u>make recommendations</u> . These may also concern the "substance" of the thesis work, but they remain recommendations and not an evaluation.
A forum for doctoral students to ensure that they have the conditions and resources they need to complete their thesis in peace.
A body whose responsibility is to give an opinion on thesis re-registration and, if necessary, to warn of any delays or difficulties encountered by the doctoral student.

## Composition of the CSI

The doctoral student's individual monitoring committee **is made up of at least two members, including:**

- a. **A member specializing in the discipline or related to the thesis field.**
- b. **A non-specialist member from outside the thesis research field**
- c. **Whenever possible, a member from outside the company.**

As far as possible, the composition of the CSI **remains constant throughout** the doctorate.

The thesis director decides on the CSI members in consultation with the doctoral student. Within each axis, external members may be pooled to facilitate the organization of CSIs.

The Réseau National des Collèges Doctoraux (RNCD) recommends that members of the CSI should not be appointed as rapporteurs for the thesis, for the following reasons: "Doctoral students and their supervisors benefit from the advice and recommendations of the CSI, and make the best use of them. They must remain free, should the need arise, not to follow this advice and recommendations, without this subsequently weighing on the authorization to defend the thesis, through the report of a rapporteur who may regret that his or her advice was not followed. More generally, rapporteurs must not have had any involvement in the doctoral student's work.

However, it is conceivable that members of the CSI could **take part in the thesis jury as suffragants**, if of course the doctoral student does not object. More generally, the laboratory's recommendation is to avoid inviting CSI members to sit on the thesis jury if their recommendations have not been followed by the doctoral student, or if their overall assessment of the student's work is unfavorable. **It is therefore advisable not to make an a priori commitment to CSI members to include them on the thesis jury, without however prohibiting the possibility of inviting**

**them to join the jury (as suffragants) closer to the defense**, if the conditions seem to be right for this choice to be favorable to the doctoral student.

### Organization of CSI at CERGAM

All CSIs must take place **before July 31**, barring exceptions. The dates of the CSIs can either be set freely by the thesis director, according to the availability of CSI members, or organized within each axis in the form of "marked" days or half-days during which doctoral students can meet.

To prepare for the CSI, each doctoral student must complete a document that includes a progress report and can be downloaded here: [amu - modele de rapport du csi - vf.docx \(live.com\)](#). This document is intended to enable the CSI to assess the progress of the thesis, and we therefore recommend to include all the elements relevant to this assessment.

In addition to this form, doctoral students may provide the CSI members with any additional information they consider relevant (e.g. a conference paper, a review of the literature). Similarly, the supervising team and/or CSI members may ask the doctoral student to provide additional information to better assess the progress of his or her work, **particularly when re-registration beyond the fourth year is envisaged**.

### How the CSI works

The CSI lasts about 1 hour, and is organized as follows:

- (1) **Oral presentation by the doctoral student** (ppt format) on the progress of his/her thesis, the conditions under which it was carried out, and the training received: **15-20 min**. The oral presentation will set out the context of the thesis, the state of progress of the problem, the research question(s), the literature review, the methodology, the intermediate results, the limits and expected contributions, and the thesis schedule.  
The presentation is public, so the thesis supervisor can attend if he or she wishes. Other people (e.g. other PhD students in the laboratory) may also be invited to attend.
- (2) **DCSIussion and interview with the doctoral student (without the thesis supervisor): 10-15 min**. During this interview, the following points in particular will be discussed (which will enable the report to be written):
  - i. The quality of interactions between the doctoral student and the supervising team
  - ii. The doctoral student's integration into the laboratory and participation in laboratory seminars
  - iii. Material conditions for carrying out the thesis
  - iv. The projected timetable for the thesis over the next few years
- (3) **In camera interview with thesis supervisor (without doctoral student) (10-15mn)**
- (4) **Time for exchange between committee members** to prepare the report and formulate recommendations (10 min).
- (5) **The report is drafted and sent to the doctoral school director, the doctoral student and the thesis supervisor at the latest, one month before re-registration for the thesis.**

**The use of videoconferencing is possible:** "The monitoring committee can of course be organized by videoconference. This facilitates the participation of external members and reduces travel time. However, the conditions used must not stand in the way of free expression and the human exchanges that facilitate it. For example, it is generally necessary to open one's camera

during private interviews, and it can be reassuring to specify that interviews are not recorded" (RNCD CSI Guide, p.14).

### Additional resources (in french)

**AMU CSI vademecum:** [amu - vademecum du csi - vf.docx \(live.com\)](#)

**The RNCD CSI guide (very useful and complete) :** [Guide du CSI du RNCD.pdf - Google Drive](#)

[Guide to individual doctoral student monitoring committees \(CSI\) | Université Paris-Saclay \(universite-paris-saclay.fr\)](#)

**AMU doctoral charter (2021 version):** [https://www.univ-amu.fr/system/files/2021-06/charte-du-doctorat\\_validee-cd-cr-ca-16\\_03\\_2021.pdf](https://www.univ-amu.fr/system/files/2021-06/charte-du-doctorat_validee-cd-cr-ca-16_03_2021.pdf)

**The national survey conducted by the national network of doctoral colleges among doctoral students and their supervisors: see the section on monitoring committees (p ages 57 to 61 of the report):** [national survey](#)