

Response ILLC director Yde Venema to ILLC PVC report 2014

Dear ILLC staff and PhD candidates,

It is a pleasure for me to present to you the PVC-report 2014. Recall that the ILLC annually evaluates its status as a training and working environment for PhD students by means of the PVC (Promotievoortgangscommissie, or PhD Progress Committee). The PVC report has been discussed in the ILLC Management Team ; the aim of this message is to briefly record my response in writing.

First of all, I would like to thank the members of this year's PVC, Jenny Batson, Nick Bezhaniashvili, Paul Dekker (chair), Raquel Fernández, Tanja Kassenaar, Peter van Ormondt and Henk Zeevat, for their efforts. We think of the PVC as an important instrument for our PhD candidates to provide qualitative information about their situation, and for the ILLC management to maintain a high quality of our PhD programme. We intend to continue with the PVC talks, following the same set-up as in past editions.

Second, concerning the concrete recommendations of the PVC 2014, here is my response:

1. The ILLC MT agrees that in principle every PhD student should have two supervisors, and this is now also the official UvA-policy. We will require in the future that exceptions to this rule will have to be explicitly motivated. It is important though, that one of the two supervisors takes full responsibility for the project.
2. We agree that it should be clear to PhD students what their rights, responsibilities and duties are, and what kind of supervision they can expect. Clearly the OBP is the primary document for writing this down, but on the other hand, it is not realistic to expect that the OBP is totally comprehensive.
3. Concerning the crossing of ILLC borders, we hope that the new training programme will increase the contacts between students of distinct groups. We believe that there are enough meetings held at ILLC, and do not encourage the organization of more.
4. We will do our best to promote research visits abroad.
5. The ILLC Management closely monitors the quality of the skills courses in the PhD training programme. Courses that do not meet the stated purpose will be modified or replaced.
6. We are happy to see that the members of the PVC will act as confidants, to which PhD candidates can turn with all kinds of issues.
7. We have asked the PhD council to evaluate the PVC.

Best wishes,
Yde Venema
Director, ILLC