

Meeting date: 14 March 2023 at 9.15-11.15 am

Meeting place: Tåsingevej 3, building 1443, room 440, 8000 Aarhus C + online

Meeting subject: Ordinary PhD Committee meeting

Attendees:

Academic representatives: Kirsten Elisa Petersen, Katja Brøgger, Jacob Lund, Christian Ulrik Andersen, Charlotte Appel, Anders-Christian Jacobsen (chair).

PhD representatives: Catrine Sundorf Kristensen, Rithma Kreie Engelbreth Larsen, Maiken Norup, Hatice Nuriler, Alexander Ulrich Thygesen, Kalle Kusk Gjetting (vice chair)

Observers: Head of Graduate School/Vice Dean Anne Marie Pahuus, Anders Gade Jensen (minutes) and Anna Louise Plaskett/PhD Admin team.

1. **Welcome and approval of the agenda**
2. **News from the graduate school**
3. **Themes to be discussed during 2023**
4. **Seminar 13th September 2023**
5. **Presentation of report about PhD - employment**
6. **Assessment committees**
7. **PhD Defences – Blended formats**
8. **Any other business**

1. Welcome and approval of the agenda

Newly elected chair, Anders-Christian Jacobsen gave welcome followed by round of introductions. Agenda was approved without comments.

2. News from the Graduate School

Anna Louise Plaskett gave status over the Graduate School data; cases and course overview. Anne Marie Pahuus and Alexander Thygesen gave introductions to the PhD Student Committee for Wellbeing across AU: The committee has been working to ensure that Staff Development Dialogue (MUS) is offered to all employed PhD students, and group dialogues (GRUS) offered for all enrolled PhD students. ALP noted that the system is in place at Arts, and that the administration would like to be informed if employed students are not offered SDD/MUS.

The committee for wellbeing was set up on an AU level following COVID lockdown to counter several different factors inflicting the wellbeing of PhD students: Imposter syndrome, loneliness, issues with supervision etc.



3. Themes to be discussed during 2023

A list of suggestions was submitted along with the agenda. ACJ summed up.

Point 4 on possible “supervision” of PhD students after enrolment end, and especially during revision process, was discussed. The allocation of supervisor hours is under the jurisdiction of the liaison committee (samarbejdsudvalg) and the faculty wide agreement on working hours. It was noted that a PhD candidate who has submitted a dissertation for assessment is no longer enrolled as a PhD student thus rendering the term supervision slightly problematic compared to the regulated supervision hours under the agreement. A new term would have to be coined.

Point 1 concerning internationalisation is a core issue for the PhD Committee and should be prioritised. It is suggested to prioritise the points in the order mentioned, but make point 4 a brief discussion before handing over the question to the liaison committee.

Regarding item 6 (expected political reduction of MA-education ECTS): the committee asked if there is anything, we could do at this point. The issue is that we do not yet know the details of the plans, so there are no real recommendations from the administration or the management currently. When things get more concrete, the committee will be able to lift the point up on the agenda. It is important to ensure that the committee chairs are involved in the discussion.

4. Seminar 13th September 2023

Currently there is no seminar planned. If the PhD Committee decides to go ahead, all members should prioritise it. There were issues with the 14th for some members, which ruled out a two-day seminar. A whole day meeting with included walks and talks and possibly a meal afterwards could give some of the benefits of a Sandbjerg seminar in a one day campus setting. This was generally agreed upon. Getting familiar with each other is important for the efficiency of the work of the PhD committee. Programme directors will be invited for parts of or the entire programme/agenda.

5. Presentation of report about PhD - employment

Arts comes out quite well in terms of general employment both in general and compared to other faculties. There seems to be a bit of a gap for full-time employment compared to other areas.

From a committee perspective, the tables in chapter 3 showing skills developed during the education compared to skills required afterwards shows the most potential for graduate school quality development.

The question was raised if it is possible to sort by gender in the numbers. It might explain some gaps especially in regards to tables regarding part time and employment by sector.

Arts is showing relatively low private sector employment. The committee suggests that the primary reason is the relatively low intake giving rise to more graduates employed in the public sector following graduation.

6. Assessment committees

Adjunct/assistant professors in the assessment committees was discussed. It was stressed that the PhD committee members are not mandated to give dispensations from associate professor level. The committee evaluates proposed members to ensure that they live up to the requirement set in the ministerial order on associate professor level based on other merits than an academic position.

The committee discussed if they were too liberal with the merit levels. Consensus was that there have been no known problematic cases.

Suggestion for streamlining the approval procedure: Creation of a sub-committee to evaluate suggestions and only involve the entire PhD committee in cases of doubt. If a committee is established, PhD students suggests a majority of permanent staff since they have the expertise on assessing associate professor level. We will keep the five day deadline, but reduce the email load on committee members in general.

A sub-committee consisting of two academic representatives and one PhD student member was elected: Anders-Christian Lund Jacobsen, Jacob Lund and Maiken Norup will be the only ones to receive emails with assessment committee composition proposals.

The preliminary title or project title will be a part of the proposal. A finished title is not required.

7. PhD Defences – Blended formats

A few members expressed concerns over complications with hybrid defences. Some of the issues had been registered with IT following defences, some not. ALP will send out the manual on defence formats, which has been negotiated with the heads of secretariats over the past few years explaining all procedures. PhD defences are arranged at the schools (institutter), and issues should be taken up locally with the head of secretariat.

A question was raised about whether the Graduate School prefer physical defences. There seems to be doubts to the policies.

The AU has a policy for CO2 reductions. The obligation of due diligence in connection with long distance flights is a matter communicated by management to all members of staff at AU. The PhD programme directors, departments and committee chairs are responsible to live up to the policies when arranging defences. The administration might ask the programme directors and chairs of the committee if physical attendance is required and recommend using zoom for intercontinental travel.

8. Any other business

No items under this point.