

Meeting date: 11 May 2026 at 9.30-11.30
Meeting place: Tåsingegade 3, building 1443, room 440, and Teams
Meeting subject: PhD Committee meeting at Arts

Attendees:

Academic representatives: Anders-Christian Jacobsen/IKS (chair), Charlotte Appel/IKS, Katja Brøgger/DPU, Camilla Paldam/IKK, Mette-Marie Zacher Sørensen/IKK.

PhD representatives: Toke Kløve Junge/IKS, Jamila Juzer Siamwalla/IKK, Sasha Denae Juul Nielsen/IKS, David Sebastian Jæger/DPU and Anna Lea Munk Magnussen/DPU.

Observers: PhD students Dina Winther/IKS and Sara Didriksen/IKS.
Head of Graduate School/Vice Dean Søren M. Sindbæk, Advisor to the Vice Dean Lars Lodberg, Anders Gade Jensen (minutes) and Anna Louise Plaskett/PhD Admin team.

Absent: Freja Ruby Flejsborg/IKK (vice chair)

1. **Approval of the Agenda**
2. **Status update from the Graduate School/PhD Administration**
3. **Status of the process regarding the reorganisation of the PhD Administration**
4. **Status and preparation of the International Evaluation of GSA**
5. **Mandatory PhD Courses (CED)**
6. **Any other business (Evt.)**

1. Approval of the Agenda

A request to make item 3 a discussion point in addition to the status, was raised. All decisions are paused until the evaluation report, but we shall see if there are any new pieces of information that can be discussed. There may be room for a brief discussion.

2. Status update from the Graduate School/PhD Administration

Anna Plaskett gave overview of the data in appendix 2A. The long-term sickness status has improved across the GSA. The rescheduling of dates for the Research Integrity course have clashed slightly following an evacuation on Campus Aarhus which forced all participants to cancel activities.

Following a hiatus, the GDPR course is now up and running again.

The committee enquired on who will be taking over when Anna Plaskett leaves. For now, Division Manager Steen Weisner will be the administrative point of contact for this committee.



3. Status of the process regarding the reorganisation of the PhD Administration

When the committee applied pressure to be involved in the process there was no formal involvement in the intended decision regarding reorganisation of the PhD administrative team. On 27 March, the management gave notice that the decision was paused until after the international evaluation of the Graduate School. The committee now expects to be involved in the process before any decisions are made.

It is unclear for some members of the committee whether it was the decision or the implementation of the decision which was paused.

Søren offered to give status:

The background of the discussion was a report ordered by the Faculty Management to be made by the Head of the Administrative Centre, Arts (ACA); Following new management, changes were expected to be made. The report was initially aimed as an internal document for the Faculty Management team and the liaison committees (LSU + FSU).

However, due to discussions of the report within the liaison committees (LSU/FSU) it was decided that the report was to be shared publicly as part of the hearing process.

Faculty management received the feedback and was sympathetic to the questions raised as part of the hearing. The question was on the agenda on 26 March at the Faculty Management. In order to implement the issues raised, Faculty Management decided to postpone the decision and implementation until November 2026.

This means that we will continue business with the uncertainty for further months.

The general position is to go ahead with the proposed decision, mainly regarding the establishment of the new research support team ('Arts Forskning'). A process plan has recently been shared with the Faculty Management detailing how all parties will be involved in discussions regarding the reorganisation of ACA. The first meeting is scheduled for this June, the second for October.

The chair of the committee finds it clarifying to know that there is a plan for the process. The committee will be available to meet with management outside of the regular meeting schedule. This is not the point where we should start a discussion of the content. That should wait for the upcoming meetings.

The committee asks the management to give notice of the new meeting dates ASAP and would like information about the frame of the meetings.

How will management implement input into future structure?

Søren: The purpose of the process is to clarify the existing administrative support of the Graduate School further. The ACA administration seeks to develop an overview of perceived needs and requirements. This initiative serves as a fact-finding mission.

Anna Plaskett mentioned that a joint meeting with the PhD Programme Directors has already been planned for 26 August 2026. The next ordinary PhD Committee meeting will be 8 September 2026. It would be ideal to use these two meetings for these discussions.

The committee stresses the importance of due notice regarding questions and structure in good time before the meetings. The committee will convene via zoom before the scheduled August meeting and discuss ongoing issues. The committee will be ready to be summoned to meetings earlier as well.

The PhD students enquire a written description of the hearing process in a timeline.

Søren noted that the current draft will be shared very soon.

Søren noted that the PhD committee is also involved in the hearing regarding HR reorganisation, probably at the same meeting.

The committee states that the entire process has been frustrating, lacking transparency, and involvement in matters which are under the supervision of the elected PhD Committee.

Søren noted that the intentions behind keeping administrative matters within the ACA-track is to ensure that administrative staff are treated respectfully.

4. Status and preparation of the International Evaluation of GSA

The self-evaluation report has been circulated among the PhD Committee and the PhD Programme Directors. Meetings for the field visit have been scheduled.

The panel will receive the report within a day or two. The chair of the panel has seen the programme and has enquired as to why no 4+4 students have applied to attend the interview of the group of PhD students. This is a coincidence, but it may be interesting for the committee to raise the question. There are 4+4 students in the PhD committee, and questions about the scheme might be raised with the committee.

Students may participate in interviews both in capacity as PhD students and members of the PhD committee.

The panel will be in charge of the questions, but the PhD Committee might need to be prepared for “further comments” either individually or as a group.

5. Mandatory PhD Courses (CED)

There have been a few examples of applications for exemptions (‘dispensationer’) which indicates that there might be issues in the planning and geography of the courses that makes it difficult for PhD students to navigate the planning.

The two courses (Teaching and Supervision) are provided by the Centre for Educational Development (CED). The courses are combined with the BSS Graduate School.

If the PhD Committee wishes to engage in dialogue, it may be relevant to reach out to CED directly.

Generally, reading the evaluations, the PhD students seem to be overall satisfied with the academic content. Possibly this reflects the way the questions are phrased. The only relevant question evaluating the overall content of the course, the rate of positive evaluations drops. Furthermore, the PhD population is quite diverse. Possibly, the course could be separated related to experience. Some students who have done extensive teaching found the teaching course less relevant.

Regarding the timely panning of the mandatory courses, it seems to be relevant to do a follow up with the PhD supervisors regarding the PhD students who postpone the courses. This needs to be addressed around enrolment and PhD plan approval. We need to stress the responsibility of the supervisors and the PhD Programme Directors. A reminder could go to the supervisors and to the PhD Programme Directors to ensure that these issues are addressed early in the process. This is a normal part of the screening supposed to be done in connection with approval of the PhD plan by both supervisor and programme chair, supported by the administration. Supervisors and PhD Programme Directors are formally responsible for this. Last minute cancellations might also be a part of the message to supervisors and Programme Directors. This issue is generic to all PhD courses – also regarding courses provided by the Graduate School.

The past few renditions of the English version of the Research Integrity and Ethics course have given rise planning issues to Aarhus-based PhD students, especially with families. The Ethics course took place at campus Emdrup in autumn 2025, and the upcoming course in autumn 2026 will also be held there. The annual English course is the only option for international students.

Anna Plaskett noted that the principles behind coordinating and administering the PhD courses in future should be a note for future committee discussion and should be on the agenda for the upcoming administrative changes in the autumn.

It is important to have a dialogue with CED to have their input on how to engage both experienced and new teachers. The committee acknowledges that it will be difficult to address all levels of experience simultaneously. Previous PhD committees have invited teachers and managers at CED to have an open dialogue. This could be fitting at a regular committee meeting at the end of the year.

6. Any other business (Evt.)

Søren notes that the PhD Programme Director of the programme in Arts, Literature and Culture Studies has had a meeting with PhD students who have addressed concerns and issues regarding student wellbeing. A memo with their points will be discussed in the Graduate School management. It will also be passed on to the chair of this committee for further discussion.

Anders-Christian asked the PhD students to give notice if any PhD students would like to be primary contact person during Freja Flejsborg's absence.