



Minutes from PhD Programme Committee meeting

Time: Friday, 2 June 2023 at 9.30 – 10.30

Place: Universitetsbyen 81, 1872-447

Participants: Anna Hvarregaard Christensen, Nanna Birkmose, Ernst-Martin Füchtbauer, Anni H. Andersen, Daan van Aalten (by Zoom), Ditlev Egeskov Brodersen, Jan Trige Rasmussen, Knud Larsen, Pia Møller Martensen and Helle Homann (minute taker).

Not present: Rajlakshmi Sawale.

Item	Minutes
1.	<p>Changes in the PhD Programme Committee</p> <p>The meeting on 2 June was Ernst-Martin Füchtbauer's last meeting in the PhD Programme Committee as chairman. Ernst-Martin has been chairman of the PhD Programme Committee at MBG for 14 years. He is replaced by Ditlev Egeskov Brodersen by 1 August. On the other hand, it was Daan van Aalten's first meeting with the whole PhD Programme Committee, including the student members. Therefore, he was introduced to student members, Anna Hvarregaard Christensen and Nanna Birkmose, present at the meeting. Daan joined the committee as a new member in the spring and has replaced Finn Skou Pedersen.</p>
2.	<p>Discussion of meeting format</p> <p>The focal point for the first part of the meeting was a discussion about the way meetings in the PhD Programme Committee are held. There are two kinds of meetings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Admission meetings where applicants for PhD positions are evaluated. Only VIP-members of the committee attend these meetings that are held four times a year in connection with The Graduate School's admission calls in February, May, August and November.2. General committee meetings where different topics related to the PhD Programme are presented and discussed. All members of the committee, including student members, are invited to attend. Committee meetings are not held very often. Instead, they are scheduled ad hoc when important topics emerge. <p>At present, the two kinds of meetings are held at different times. In the past, however, both meetings were held at the same time starting with the general committee meeting. After this part of the meeting ended, the student members left and the admission meeting began for the VIP-members.</p> <p>According to Ernst-Martin, this way of doing things was abandoned because the meetings had a tendency to become quite long.</p> <p>Several members of the committee stated that it would be an advantage to resume the</p>



	<p>practice of having both meetings in the same day. Primarily because this will make it possible for the student members to participate in and contribute to meetings in the PhD Programme Committee on a more regular basis.</p> <p>Therefore, it was decided that general committee meetings and admission meetings in future will be organized in continuation of each other four times a year.</p>
3.	<p>Evaluation of applicants</p> <p>During the meeting, Ernst-Martin described how evaluation of new applicants for PhD positions takes place in the PhD Programme Committee. This was a topic that the student members had asked to get more information about.</p> <p>Usually, only a few applicants, approx. 1-5, who are supported by a future supervisor require a detailed evaluation. Ernst-Martin distributes the applicants to different members of the PhD Programme Committee, and they interview the applicants and write evaluations. Afterwards, the applicants are discussed at the admission meeting in the committee and divided into different categories, for example “qualified”, “very qualified” or “especially qualified”. The evaluations are then passed on to the admission committee at faculty level.</p>
4.	<p>News from the PhD Association at MBG</p> <p>Anna Hvarregaard Christensen and Nanna Birkmose shared some news from a recent meeting in the PhD Association where the subject of on-site versus virtual PhD defences was on the agenda. This subject was also discussed at the last meeting in the PhD Programme Committee on 5 October 2022.</p> <p>Anna and Nanna pointed out that the PhD students clearly prefer on-site defences with physically attendance by opponents.</p> <p>In this connection Ditlev Egeskov Brodersen mentioned that supervisors must be encouraged to select opponents from Europe in light of the fact that it's easier for them to travel to Aarhus. Selection of European opponents are preferred even though they might not be the top experts within their field.</p> <p>Anna and Nanna also related that the PhD Association had talked about creating a buddy programme at MBG where older PhD students help and guide new PhD students. All agreed that a buddy programme could be a great idea, and Ernst-Martin suggested that PhD students are recognized and credited for taking on the role as buddy for younger students by obtaining half an ECTS credit from the programme chair.</p>
5.	<p>What to do when key participants can't attend PhD defences</p> <p>In continuation of the discussion about on-site PhD defences Anni H. Andersen raised the question of how things are handled in the case that an opponent is unable to participate in a PhD defence at the very last minute. What guidelines should be followed?</p> <p>According to Ernst-Martin, the rules are clear:</p>



	<p>If one of the opponents for some reason cannot attend on the day of the PhD defence, the opponent may send his or her questions to the chairman of the assessment committee by e-mail. Even if this is not an option, it's not necessary to cancel. The defence can proceed with only one opponent. Chairman of the PhD Programme Committee, The Graduate School as well as the chairman of the assessment committee should of course be informed in this situation. Should the chairman of the assessment committee be unable to attend at the last minute, another member of the PhD Programme Committee should be summoned as a substitute. Furthermore, it's allowed to use Zoom at the defence, if the PhD student suddenly falls ill. In this case, the chairman of the assessment committee should be notified about the situation as soon as possible.</p>
6.	<p>New PhD Partner</p> <p>Mie Meulengracht Christensen has replaced Helene Hallas as GSNS PhD Partner for MBG.</p>
7.	<p>Acknowledgment</p> <p>At the end of the meeting Ernst-Martin was applauded and acknowledged by all members for his excellent work as chairman of the PhD Programme Committee.</p>