



## Minutes from PhD Programme Committee meeting

**Time:** Monday, 21 August 2023 at 13.00 – 14.00

**Place:** Universitetsbyen 81, 1872-547

**Participants:** Ditlev Egeskov Brodersen, Anna Hvarregaard Christensen, Rajlakshmi Sawale, Anni H. Andersen, Daan van Aalten, Jan Trige Rasmussen, Knud Larsen, Pia Møller Martensen and Helle Homann (minute taker).

**Not present:** Nanna Birkmose, Christian Kroun Damgaard.

Item	Minutes
1.	<p><b>Meeting format</b></p> <p>Ditlev Egeskov Brodersen, new chairman of the PhD Programme Committee, opened the meeting with some remarks on the meeting format.</p> <p>At the last meeting in June, it was decided that general committee meetings and admission meetings are held in continuation of each other four times a year in connection with GSNS's application calls. The plan is to schedule future meetings around the 21<sup>st</sup> of August, November, May and February and book them in advance in the committee members' calendars. Furthermore, general committee meetings will be open for discussion and conducted without a strict agenda.</p>
2.	<p><b>Information for supervisors</b></p> <p>Ditlev called attention to the fact that there has to be at least two months between submission of the thesis and the PhD defence itself. A shorter time frame will make it difficult to conclude the assessment process properly due to the time spent for pre-screening at GSNS and the new three-week deadline ahead of the defence. Ditlev plans to communicate this at the next meeting for the group leaders and encourage them to take it into consideration when planning upcoming PhD defences.</p> <p>Furthermore, Ditlev mentioned that supervisors must be aware that PhD students planning a stay abroad shorter than 3 months or longer than 12 months have to apply for an exemption. The request for exemption must be sent to the chairman of the PhD Programme Committee via the main supervisor as early as possible.</p> <p>Ditlev also informed the members of the PhD Programme Committee about the fact that gender diversity and gender balance are important issues to consider when main supervisors fill out the form called "Members of the assessment committee, incl. Rules of Impartiality" in connection with upcoming thesis submission and PhD defence. GSNS wishes to highlight the importance of gender diversity among the external assessment committee members, as external female</p>



	<p>assessors are under-represented at GSNS. Therefore, the graduate school strongly encourages awareness of gender balance in the composition of the assessment committee members.</p>
<b>3.</b>	<p><b>On-site vs. hybrid PhD defences</b></p> <p>GSNS wishes to reduce the number of hybrid defences where one or even two of the opponents participate online.</p> <p>Following the end of Covid-19 restrictions, fully virtual defences have become rare but hybrid defences are sometimes proposed for the convenience of the opponents. Even though hybrid defences have an advantage from a climate perspective, GSNS strongly recommends that all participants are present on-site at the PhD defence as this gives a much better experience for the students.</p> <p>Supervisors should take this into account when selecting opponents.</p> <p>Student members Rajlakshmi Sawale and Anna Hvarregaard Christensen stated that they prefer on-site defences with physical attendance by opponents but that hybrid defences can be used as an alternative when necessary.</p> <p>Ditlev encouraged the PhD students to discuss the subject of on-site vs. hybrid defences and feed back to the committee.</p> <p>Jan Trige Rasmussen suggested that the subject is added to the agenda for the upcoming MBG PhD conference in October.</p>
<b>4.</b>	<p><b>Wellbeing meetings (trivselssamtaler)</b></p> <p>The wellbeing meeting is an annual meeting between a member of the PhD Programme Committee and the individual PhD students. The purpose of this meeting is to give the PhD student a possibility to talk with someone other than their supervisor about anything that might influence their wellbeing (work related or not). Wellbeing meetings are not mandatory but PhD students are strongly encouraged to participate.</p> <p>It is important that PhD students gain as much as they possible can from the wellbeing meetings. In order to facilitate this, Ditlev suggested that the committee member selected to participate in the initial alignment of expectations meeting acts as an anchor for that student and also participates in the wellbeing meetings throughout the PhD. Having the same committee member as a discussion partner in both types of meetings will ideally ensure a form of coherence and continuity for the PhD student. Meetings will not have to start from scratch each time.</p> <p>The members of the PhD Programme Committee supported the suggestion and agreed that it would benefit the PhD students.</p> <p>Additionally, Daan van Aalten mentioned that perhaps it would be a good idea to allow the PhD students to choose for themselves who they want to talk with at the wellbeing meetings. This</p>



	<p>would be to prevent that the PhD students are “stuck” with a committee member throughout the duration of their PhD education that they don’t get on with very well.</p> <p>Ditlev and Helle Homann will look into how the suggestion can be put into practice so that alignment of expectations meetings and wellbeing meetings are organized with the participation of the same committee member.</p>
<b>5.</b>	<p>The PhD Programme Committee meeting ended at approx. 13.30, and the admission meeting about applicants from the August Call commenced immediately afterwards.</p>