

Agreement between student and supervisor

A basis for inspiration aimed at increasing communication on difficult topics in the relationship between PhD student and supervisor. A summary must be presented in the study plan and in the updated study plan.

Roles

Which roles will be undertaken by whom in the project?

Who is responsible for time management in the project?

Different roles for different subprojects during the doctoral training.

What are the normal monthly work requirements for this kind of project?

What are the roles of co-supervisors (specify sufficiently to avoid unconstructive ambiguity)?

Access to lab equipment, technical assistance etc should be specified.

Type of collaboration

Type and extent of feedback - level of criticism and challenge expected.

Which areas of the project require which level of supervisor intervention?

Formal/informal meetings.

Minutes on decisions?

How often / in which situations will feedback regarding the progress and quality of work be given?

How detailed a work plan is needed?

Level of supervisor involvement in project (will it change during the PhD project).

Types of supervisor input regarding literature, design, contacts, conference/research fora ...

Supervision meetings

Nature, frequency, and duration of supervisor contact (how will it change during the doctoral training, mode of working, nature of work).

Who calls for meetings? In which situations?

Availability – how long a notice should be given for new formal meetings, brief checkups, readings etc. Are larger periods without supervisor accessibility expected? Use of e-mails for feedback.

Details on preparation, form, outcomes and follow up on meetings. Which kind of input is required – paper drafts, logbook notes, agendas

How common documents/data are maintained/distributed/secured.

Workplace participation

Desires for level of student involvement in group activities – e.g. in other research activities. What is required of the student as a member of staff? How can/should the supervisor assist in creating a scientific and social network for the student both internally at AAU and externally?

What kind of extra tasks for the research group/department are expected?

To what extent is the PhD student expected to participate *actively* in research group meeting?

To what extent is the PhD student expected to participate in the social life at the department?

How often should the student be present at the department?

Development plans

Discuss career plans (e.g. industrial or academic)

What are the learning expectations?

Which methods should the student learn to use?

Developing teaching and communication skills.

What can be done to facilitate the student in meeting the various requirements (in terms of teaching, workplace participation, family issues...)?

Writing papers

Type and level of supervisor involvement in writing papers (will the supervisor actively write/revise the paper or just comment on the content).

Who writes the first draft of the papers (specify for each paper)?

What is the expected time needed for a draft once the project is completed?

Expected response time from supervisor.

Characteristics of and expectation to the project

To what extent is the path of the project clear or fuzzy?

Is the field of research and contributions clear? What is the level of expertise of the supervisor within this area?

Involvement of other colleagues/external collaborators. Who takes the initiative/formal contact?

Developing the cooperation and updating the agreement

Throughout the project it will be relevant to regularly discuss and adjust both the cooperation and the more formal agreement. The agreement could incorporate expectations regarding this:

When is working relationship evaluated?

- Sufficient interaction
- Meeting form
- Need for other agreements
- Which personal skills should be strengthened?

Which parties are relevant to bring in for development of this working agreement – both for challenge and development and in case of conflicts or misunderstandings?

As input for an evaluation process the student might ask questions of the following type to get feedback on status and ideas for improvement:

- *Am I progressing satisfactorily? What are the perceived problem areas and impediments?*
- *Are you satisfied with my work effort, our collaboration...?*
- *Could our working relationship develop further?*