

Minutes - PhD Committee meeting

30 April 2026 from 10.15 – 12.00

Meeting place: 1520 - 732 (City View), Ny Munkegade 120, 8000 Aarhus C

Meeting information

Participants:

Stefan Hallerstede (SH), Lis Wollesen de Jonge (LWJ), Ole Højberg (OH), Ali Soltani (AS), Christian Frigaard Rasmussen (CFR), Laura Ruth Bisgaard (LRB), Shristi Khanal (SH), Michelle H. Williams (MHW)

Apologies for absence:

Martin Holmstrup (MH)

Secretariat:

Frederikke Kongsted Hansen (FKH), Mie Meulengracht Christensen (MMC)

1. Approval of agenda

The meeting commenced with a brief round of introductions. The agenda was approved.

2. Announcements – Overview of assessment committees and exemptions etc. for the period 07.01.2026 – 20.04.2026

Approved with no comments. If anyone has comments or questions, they can be sent to FKH (fkh@au.dk).

3. News from the Course Committee

SH introduced the item. The committee was informed that, until solutions have been found, some courses in the GSNS/GSTS transferable PhD course portfolio have been cancelled for autumn 2026. It was noted that a solution is close for the statistics courses, and that new statistics courses are expected to replace the cancelled courses in the autumn.

3.1. Proposed transferable skills PhD course portfolio 2027

The PhD Committee approved the transferable skills PhD course portfolio for 2027.



MHW noted that many course proposals currently emerge from a bottom-up process, and that the Heads of School have also considered the need for overarching strategic considerations. The Graduate Schools have been contacted by DARA (the Danish Advanced Research Academy) regarding potential collaboration on courses. This may be an opportunity to scale up some of the existing courses and/or to develop new ones. A dialogue will be initiated, and the GSNS/GSTS Course Committee will of course be involved.

3.2. New course proposal: Collaborative Scientific Programming
The course proposal was approved.

3.3. Science writing toolkit – online version
The adjusted course description was approved.

3.4. Attendance checks
The committee approved the recommendation.

4. International evaluation

4.1. Draft self-evaluation report
The committee was given the opportunity to comment on the draft report. One comment concerned Table 12, “Top five continents represented among international applicants (2021–2025)”. It was noted that the Graduate School naturally receives many applications from Asia, as it is a large continent; however, a correspondingly higher number of applicants from Asia are not admitted, which may give a skewed impression. This was noted.

The discussion also addressed which questions could be posed to the panel. It was suggested to ask the panel about the available scientific and generic courses, whether there are ideas on how to ensure alignment of expectations between supervisors and PhD students, and input on how inclusion can be ensured in a systematic way.

Any further input or comments should be sent to FKH (fkh@au.dk) no later than 10 May.

4.2. Draft programme for the international panel’s site visit
The committee was given the opportunity to comment on the draft programme.

There were questions as to whether the meeting with the PhD Committee implies participation by the full committee. This was confirmed. If some members cannot participate, this is of course fully understandable.

SH requested that participants be informed in advance of the framework for the meetings, including whether the panel will pose questions or whether participants are expected to present something. There was support for this. Expectations will be aligned with the panel prior to the meetings.

As regards the draft report, it was noted that any further comments or questions should be sent to FKH (fkh@au.dk) no later than 10 May.

5. The PhD Committee: Representation areas

There was support for the presented proposal to divide the engineering representation area as follows: BCE + MPE and ECE + CAE.

The administration will follow up.

6. Quality in the PhD Process

The committee briefly discussed potential topics. MHW noted that follow-up is also taking place in the Programme Chairs' committee with the involvement of the local programme committees.

No further follow-up on the report was agreed within the PhD Committee.

7. News from the PhD students

7.1. The GSTS course "How to Manage Your PhD project" (CFR)

CFR introduced the item. He noted that he has heard very positive feedback on the How to Manage Your PhD Project course and suggested that the course be made mandatory, potentially as a replacement for the Introduction Day course, or that the two be more closely integrated. This was noted.

7.2. The PhD supervision course (CFR)

CFR introduced the item. It was confirmed that new supervisors are

required to complete the PhD supervision course if they have not previously done so. It was noted that this could be a local issue, with a need for follow-up at the local level.

7.3. The recommendation concerning the transferable skills courses (LRB)

It was emphasised that it is important to communicate that this is a recommendation, not a rule, and that supervisors and PhD students can jointly align what is meaningful in relation to the specific project.

7.4. The research environment change (LRB)

The item was briefly discussed. It was noted that the MyPhD system does not deduct weekends when a period of change of research environment is entered in the system. In addition, it was noted that it is possible to apply for an exemption from the three-month duration requirement if needed.

8. For your information

None.

9. Any other business

None.