

Guideline for a collaboration agreement regarding joint PhD programmes for PhD students enrolled/or planned to be enrolled at SDU

According to the Danish Ministerial Order on PhD education (2013), PhD students can be awarded a double or joint PhD degree, if the PhD student has completed a period of study at a foreign university as part of a mutually obliging collaboration agreement. The degree can be awarded if the Danish university assesses that the PhD student has acquired qualifications comparable with those acquired under a Danish PhD programme.

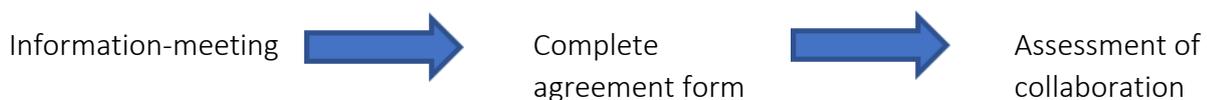
An individual collaboration agreement is necessary as it, according to the Danish Ministerial Order on PhD education (2013), is a requirement for allowing PhD student's to be enrolled at two universities with the same project.

The collaboration agreement must agree on PhD training, including the assessment, defence, awarding of degrees etc. It is important that the agreement is mutually obliging and regards the entire PhD programme. This point will be elaborated later.

It is not a requirement that the PhD student is enrolled at SDU as we begin designing the collaboration agreement, but the PhD project must be approved as well as the student's professional qualifications. Are you already enrolled at SDU as a PhD student, you must apply for a double or joint degree no later than 18 months after start of the PhD programme.

The 3 step process

If you want to apply for a double or joint degree, you need to contact the Graduate School (phd@health.sdu.dk) and then follow the "3 step process", which is described below:



Information-meeting:

Based on the previous contact the main supervisor and the student are invited to an information-meeting, where the Head of the Graduate School and an administrative officer from the Graduate School will be present to inform about the process, which often is time consuming and complex, why a certain level of engagement from both the student and the main supervisor is necessary.

It is important that the main supervisor can argue *why* a collaboration between SDU and the foreign university will be productive – both in relation to the student/students and SDU as institution.

Complete agreement form:

After the information-meeting the main supervisor and the student are asked to complete the agreement form, which can be found on SDU's website:

https://www.sdu.dk/en/forskning/phd/phd_skoler/phdskolensundhedsvidenskab/phd_students/what_is_a_phd/different+types+of+phd+programmes/double+or+joint+phd+degrees.

In the agreement form the main supervisor and the student need to explain the foundation for a productive collaboration between SDU and the foreign university and specify the structure of the PhD course.

Based on the agreement form the Head of the Graduate School will decide whether the Graduate School will move forward with the collaboration agreement.

Assessment of collaboration:

If the Head of the Graduate School assesses that a collaboration agreement should be initiated, one from the Graduate School will contact the foreign university and send an agreement draft. Thereafter it is a process back and forth between SDU, SDU's Legal Department and the foreign university until everybody can agree on the content in the agreement. The process takes approximately 12 months.

The Legal Department at SDU approves the agreement in the end, before collecting signatures from the following persons at SDU:

- Vice Chancellor, Henrik Dam
- Head of the Graduate School, Christian Godballe
- Head of Department
- Main- and Co-supervisors
- PhD student

Meanwhile, as the agreement is being processed, the PhD student can be enrolled at SDU, but must wait for enrollment at the foreign university until the collaboration agreement is approved and signed.

The content of a collaboration agreement

- ✚ Is it a double or joint degree?
- ✚ Requirements for enrollment – this depends on both universities' approval of the candidate's professional qualifications. See SDU requirements here:
https://www.sdu.dk/en/forskning/phd/phd_skoler/phdskolensundhedsvidenskab/phd_students/getting_started/qualification_requirements
- ✚ Structure of the PhD course, including periods of residence at both universities. As a PhD student at SDU you must follow and complete the PhD programme:

https://www.sdu.dk/en/forskning/phd/phd_skoler/phdskolensundhedsvidenskab/phd_students/what_is_a_phd

- + The financing
- + Number of supervisors and distribution of their contribution. The supervisors must support the application for enrolment as a double/joint degree. The main supervisor (who is employed as associate professor or at professor level) must be employed at SDU, SUND. SDU does not recommend more than three co-supervisors.
- + The PhD thesis must be written in English. Summary in Danish and English.
- + Composition of the assessment committee. The Graduate School at SDU recommends one assessment committee with representatives from both universities.
- + Assessment of the PhD thesis, including possibility for revision.
- + The defence
- + Diploma's - The degree from SDU is awarded by the Academic Council at SDU – it is ultimately their decision to award or to not award the degree.

The Head of Department (where the main supervisor is employed) and the foreign university must agree on the projects financing and intellectual property rights. SDU's Legal Department also needs to approve the intellectual property rights to make sure SDU's rights are respected.