SDU

Alignment of expectations within the supervisory team

Purpose
The purpose of this document is to provide a tool that can help the main supervisor and co-supervisors to align expectations from the start of the PhD project for the benefit of the PhD student, the project and the collaborators involved. It is strongly recommended that all supervisors (formal as well as informal) meet and clarify how each of you contribute to the supervisory team; how you will work with the PhD student; and how you will handle challenges during the supervision process.

This can help you avoid misunderstandings that can potentially lead to disappointments and conflicts.

Initial meeting within the first month
It is recommended that supervisors arrange an initial meeting within the first month of the PhD project period where you discuss the questions 1-3 and align expectations. Please allot one hour and note down important decisions.

Follow-up meetings once a year
Further, it is recommended that the PhD supervisory team all meet at least once a year to discuss progress, roles, and responsibilities. The second set of questions is a guide for the follow-up meetings. These meetings in the PhD supervisor team should preferably take place either before or after the regular assessment meetings with the PhD student.

Questions for the initial meeting in the PhD supervisory team

1. Contribution from each supervisor
- What professional/research skills do you each bring to the PhD supervisor team (e.g., knowledge of the process, the topic, the method)?
- What personal skills do you each bring to the team (e.g., communication, support, network)?
- What is your preferred style of supervision?
- How will you each define your role as a PhD supervisor for the PhD student?

2. Collaboration
- How do you want to distribute the different responsibilities among the members of the PhD supervisor team?
- Where do you see potentially differing interests between you in the team? And how will you deal with this?
- How will you discuss concerns about the PhD student?
- How do you plan to inform each other of the decisions taken?
- What happens if one PhD supervisor is absent for a long period?
- How do you each see your role in ensuring that the PhD student knows and honors the university's code of conduct, ethical standards, and business-related interests, if any?

3. Writing and publishing
- How do each of you normally support your PhD students' writing? How do you prefer to give feedback?
- How will you share the tasks and responsibility of giving feedback on the PhD student's drafts and presentations?
- Do you expect to co-author manuscripts with the PhD student? If yes, how will you make agreements regarding the order of authorship, if any?
- How and in which cases should the PhD student credit contributions aside from co-authorship?

4. Economy and data ownership
- Who brings what kind of funding to the table, and how does it affect your roles/contributions as supervisors?
- What are your agreements about data ownership in the project?

Questions for the follow-up meetings in the team

Please consider:
1. How satisfied are you with the PhD student's progress (research, writing, publication, other)?
2. How satisfied are you with your own role in the project?
3. Has anything changed regarding your roles and responsibilities in the project?
4. Do you see any challenges or potential conflicts regarding e.g., patents, university procedures, business-related interests, or publishing? If yes, how can you help each other solve them to avoid jeopardizing the PhD project?