

Graduate School of Natural Sciences (GSNS)

PhD committee meeting

Time: Friday, 11 March 2022 at 12.00-15.00

Place: Ny Munkegade 120, bldg. 1520, room 737

Postponed from 7 February 2022

1. Meeting information:

Participants:

Ernst-Martin Füchtbauer, Anders Møller, Henriette Rübsam, Clémence Rose, Mads Blichfeldt Amdisen, Erik Asbjørn Mikkelsen Jensen, Ragnhild Ørbæk Laursen and David Lundbek Egholm

Apologies for absence:

Henrik Stapelfeldt and Joanna Martin Davies

The secretariat:

Maria Fauerby Iversen and Rikke J. Ljungmann

2. Approval of minutes from the opening and the ordinary PhD committee meeting on 24 January 2022

Approved

3. Approval of agenda

Approved

4. News from the PhD students

It was mentioned that it was really nice to feel that we are at least a bit post-Covid-19 and that people are starting to socialise again.

5. Follow up on any corona-related issues

David Lundbek Egholm mentioned that Covid-19 extensions had been discussed at the recent Wellbeing Committee meeting between all five Heads of school, AUPA and PhD student representatives from the five PhD committees. At the meeting, AUPA asked for more communication on extensions, e.g. through added information on the schools' websites and through news e-mails.

At the present meeting, it was discussed whether to introduce a different procedure for application for an extension, but it was decided to keep the present procedure for now.

It was stressed that the PhD students should use the planner system actively, i.e. mention any issues in connection with being able to finish on time due to Covid-19. That way it will be easier to document any lost time.

David Lundbek Egholm also mentioned that the Graduate School receives 2-3 applications per week, and there are planned applications mentioned in the planner system so there will still be more to come.

GSNS has extended a little over a 100 PhD students – of those who finish now, approx. half of them have received an extension. A typical extension time is 1-3 months.

6. Suggested new template for NAT-TECH transferable skills PhD courses

The template was approved with the added question suggested by the TECH PhD committee.

7. The new GSNS onboarding programme – status

David Lundbek Egholm gave a status on the future onboarding programme, which is to consist of a series of workshops to be held through the PhD studies – most of them before the qualifying exam. The programme is meant to be very flexible with each workshop held twice a year so that the PhD students will be able to participate in the workshops when it fits best with their study. ECTS should be granted for participation. Depending on the number of hours in total, it might e.g. be 3 ECTS.

There will still be an introduction day. During this event, peer groups will be formed to connect PhD students from different programmes. A structure will be introduced to support the peer groups and provide them with ideas to discuss, etc.

The onboarding programme is meant to start as of this autumn.

The format of the onboarding programme was approved.

For next meeting: It was agreed that all committee members should consider the content of the workshop, which at the moment has the title 'Work-life balance'. The secretariat will also make contact with suggested people to get ideas and input.

8. Follow-up on action plan and hearing process

The action plan hearing process ended on 24 January 2022. GSNS had received a number of comments both via committees and from individual people.

At the present meeting, the final wording and revision of the action plan was discussed. It will be sent to the committee members shortly after the meeting for final commenting, and then follows a final approval in the Faculty Management. After that, the action plan will be published at the GSNS website and the implementation process will gather speed.

Some of the implementation process has already started with the onboarding programme (see also item 6) as one and looking into the teaching workload aspect as another.

It was decided to have the planned seminar in September where both status and further implementation will be discussed.

9. FYI:

- The PhD Employment Survey 2021

As the meeting was running out of time, David Lundbek Egholm gave a very short briefing.

10. Any other business

- David Lundbek Egholm informed that there is work going on at the moment on how AU might be able to help Ukrainian PhD students making it to Denmark as refugees.

- A question came up as to whether the GSNS Rules and Regulations might be adjusted with regard to the external examiner's official level of qualification at qualifying exams for 5+3 PhD students, i.e. so focus would be more on scientific qualifications, instead of just official level of qualification (at the moment at the level of at least associate professor/senior researcher).

Action point: The secretariat will prepare a proposal on this to be discussed in the PhD committee.