

# Introductory Dialog between Newly Accepted PhD-candidates and Their Supervisors

*Suggestion for the content of the conversation*

## **The aim and goals of a PhD and aftermath**

1. Discuss the aim of the PhD. Clarify what the expectations are and the purpose of the PhD education.
  - Especially applicable to PhD-projects that are a part of a bigger research project with the concrete “task-part” of the PhD-project: discuss the view of a PhD seen as an employment vs. education.

2. Discuss the answer to the following question:

The goal of a PhD is (multiple answers are possible):

- 1) To write a thesis and get teaching experience
- 2) To prepare for active research career outside of academia
- 3) To prepare for active research career within academia
- 4) To get an advanced knowledge on a specific subject
- 5) Implement any knowledge acquired to a non-research position

The candidate can be encouraged to formulate or come up with other aims and goals related to PhD.

3. Use also the answers from the above-mentioned question to discuss career plans the candidate might have.

## Supervision, project description, application and implementation of the PhD components

1. Discuss the form and frequency of supervision (how often, involvement of co-supervisors, initiative taking, spontaneous vs. planned meetings).
2. Discuss the timeframe and the form of desired feedback on the manuscripts sent in.
3. Inform your PhD-student that the [application for the admission](#) to the PhD-programme is written in cooperation with the supervisor(s). That also includes discussing a plan for implementation of the PhD-project and project description. Agree on the elements mentioned above.
4. Discuss theoretical curriculum in the light of the [Supplementary rules for the educational component](#) and the departmental course portfolio.
5. Occasionally, project description is closely related to announced position and position assessment. Where this is not the case, it is expected that supervisor(s) and candidate collaborate on research project and its description. Start talking about formulation of research questions, work-load partition and distribution: what is expected of the candidate to do on her/his own and what is possible to get help with.
6. Discuss potential stays abroad and how they potentially contribute to the project. Discuss the timing and the duration of potential stays abroad.
7. Discuss the research deadlines and schedules as well as who should define those and who should come up with/give the assignments.
8. Inform about the 3<sup>rd</sup> semester meeting.

## Thesis

1. Discuss the difference between monograph- and article-based thesis. Go in depth about what are the expectations and traditions within the field when it comes to the length of a PhD-thesis. Discuss involvement of other peers/supervisors. This topic is closely related to the projects nature and its description.
2. Discuss co-authorship issues in general. This discussion should be repeated and adjusted during the whole PhD-period and especially after the work is about to be

published. It can be wise to recommend the use of [co-author-forms](#) to agree on definition of contributions.

3. Discuss ethical questions related to the potential project if applicable. [Ethical guidelines](#) might help in the process.

### **Extras:**

Discuss with the candidate if the following is important and why:

1. Taking part in the department/institution's common scientific work (seminars/meetings etc.).
2. Mingling with other PhD candidates and researchers at the department/institution.
3. Taking part in the common social activities in the department/institution (coffee breaks, discussions, parties etc.).