

## Alignment tool

### Clarifying expectations within the PhD supervisor team



#### Why?

How do you see your own role in this specific PhD supervisor team and how do you expect the collaboration to unfold? By sharing your expectations at a very early stage of the PhD supervision process and making assumptions explicit, you can avoid misunderstandings that very often lead to disappointments and possibly conflicts. Clear agreements save much energy that is often spent on guessing and worrying.

DTU strongly encourage all PhD supervisors involved in the project to meet and discuss issues regarding your collaboration and interests in the PhD project. Using this set of questions will enable you to discuss and clarify how you will work with the student, your contributions to the supervisor team, and how you will handle challenges during the supervision process.

#### How?

The supervisors arrange a meeting within the first month of the PhD project period where you discuss the first set of questions. Please allot 1.5-2 hours and note down important decisions. It is also strongly recommended that you all meet at least once a year to discuss progress, roles and responsibilities. The second set of questions is developed to guide these meetings.

*Adapted to the DTU context by Katrine Søbæk Jagd, Ditte Rytter Krofa & Mirjam Godskesen (2020) from the original by Margaret Kiley (2018). "Possible issues to discuss with co-supervisors and candidate". Workshop handout. [Margaret.kiley@anu.edu.au](mailto:Margaret.kiley@anu.edu.au)*



## Questions for the first meeting in the PhD supervisor team

### 1. What each team member contributes

- 1.1. What professional/research skills do you each bring to the supervisor team (knowledge of the process, the topic, the method)?
- 1.2. What personal skills do you each bring to the team (communication, support, network)?
- 1.3. How will you each define your role as a supervisor for the PhD student?

### 2. Collaboration and feedback

- 2.1. How are different responsibilities distributed among the supervisors?
- 2.2. Where do you see potential different interests and demands from the different supervisors on the PhD student and the project, and how will you deal with this?
- 2.3. How will you discuss concerns about the candidate?
- 2.4. How do you plan to inform each other of decisions taken?

### 3. Responsibilities including research integrity

*The principal supervisor has the overall responsibility for the PhD student and project, and it is part of the principal supervisor's responsibility to train the PhD student in research integrity. It is also the responsibility of the principal supervisor to support the PhD student to reach milestones and to some extent help organize the daily work, yet sometimes these responsibilities are shared in the supervisor team.*

- 3.1. Are any of these responsibilities delegated to any of the other supervisors?
- 3.2. What happens if one supervisor is away for more than a few weeks?
- 3.3. How do you each see your role in ensuring that the PhD student knows and honors DTU's code of conduct, ethical standards and business related interests, if any?
- 3.4. Do you see possible differences in policies related to research integrity in each of your organizations or the activities you carry out together with the PhD student?

### 4. Writing and publishing

- 4.1. How do each of you normally support your PhD students' writing?
- 4.2. How will you share the tasks and responsibility of supporting writing and giving feedback amongst you?
- 4.3. 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?
- 4.4. How and in which cases should the PhD student credit contributions aside from co-authorship?



**Questions for the following meetings in the PhD supervisor team: evaluating progress, responsibilities and interests**

**Please consider...**

- 1.1.** How satisfied are you with the PhD student's progress (research, writing, publication, other)?
- 1.2.** How satisfied are you with your own role in the project?
- 1.3.** Has anything changed regarding your roles and responsibilities in the project?
- 1.4.** 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 delays or jeopardize the PhD project?