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RESEARCH & INFORMATION

SECURITY

# University guidelines for skills development of PhD supervisors

## Introduction and background

The purpose of these guidelines for skills development of PhD supervisors is to strengthen PhD supervisors' skills to help lift the quality of PhD programmes.

The guidelines for skills development of PhD supervisors at UCPH is a framework within which the faculties can work. According to the University's Code of Conduct for Responsible Research, principal PhD supervisors must complete a course in responsible research.

## Common guidelines

- All new principal PhD supervisors must complete a PhD supervision course, including instruction in responsible research, within the first year of being a PhD supervisor.
- All other PhD supervisors are offered a supervision course, including instruction in responsible research, or equivalent skills development as a PhD supervisor.
- The model and scope of PhD supervision courses, including instruction in responsible research and other skills development, are determined by the faculty.
- The faculty ensures systematic quality assurance of its skills development courses for PhD supervisors.
- The faculty ensures that PhD students are included in an evaluation of the PhD programme, which must include the supervision.

New principal PhD supervisors are defined as individuals who have not previously been principal supervisors at the University of Copenhagen. Those who have completed a PhD supervision course at another Danish

university can apply to their faculty for a dispensation from the requirement to complete the UCPH course.

A course in PhD supervision does not replace other skills development initiatives at the faculties. It is, however, a compulsory element in the faculties' skills development of principal PhD supervisors and an optional element for other PhD supervisors.

Based on these guidelines, each faculty lays down its own guidelines for skills development of PhD supervisors. The above is a minimum requirement, and the faculties may choose to set more extensive requirements, e.g., that all PhD supervisors must participate in skills development on an ongoing basis.

### **Skills development**

The guidelines highlight skills development, and each faculty, if relevant in collaboration with each other, should work to develop high-quality courses that take into account the variation in PhD supervisors' skills and experience.

### **Model for skills development**

The faculties each decide which skills development activities will be most appropriate. The faculties are encouraged to work together to develop and offer cross-faculty courses as it will be instructive for PhD supervisors to learn about practices in other academic environments. Collaboration will also ensure more knowledge sharing across faculties.

Skills development options for PhD supervisors should be tailored to the various target groups. The faculties are encouraged to set up boards of supervisors to facilitate open exchanges of experience which can contribute to more awareness of supervision, also among experienced PhD supervisors, and to generally highlight PhD supervision. To ensure a quality boost in PhD supervision, it is important to focus on both new and experienced supervisors.

### **Skills development elements**

Each faculty decides which elements should be included in skills development courses. The aim is to give all principal PhD supervisors an introduction to current PhD legislation and rules. With the growing number of international PhD students, intercultural understanding and communication should be given a greater focus. The faculty must also make sure to inform principal PhD supervisors about their obligation to ensure that PhD students are aware of current policies and guidelines. For example, the UCPH Policy for Research Data Management.

**Evaluation**

The introduction of evaluations by PhD students means that there are assessments of PhD supervision available, which are used to further enhance PhD supervision and skills development of PhD supervisors. Evaluations may be done as a final evaluation.