

PhD Manual
Department of Economics
University of Copenhagen

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1. Introduction

The purpose of this PhD manual is to provide information and guidelines for PhD students at the Department of Economics, University of Copenhagen. The manual outlines various guidelines and procedures and provides practical information for enrolled PhD students. For more formal rules and regulations, see the current [Curriculum of the PhD program in Economics](#) and the [legal basis](#) for PhD studies in Denmark and at the University of Copenhagen.

2. Organization

The following persons are of particular relevance for PhD students:

- The supervisor handles all matters related to the PhD project and has the responsibility for the PhD education (see more below)
- The Head of the Department is in charge of PhD students' employment relationship
- The [PhD program director](#) runs the weekly PhD seminars, approves travel applications, organizes PhD defenses, have annual performance and development reviews with all PhD students etc.
- The [PhD secretary](#) registers teaching, updates PhD webpages, organizes PhD defense, planning of PhD courses, and performs many other administrative tasks.
- A PhD student is member of the department's [PhD Program Committee](#).

PhD students may always contact the PhD student representatives to discuss issues related with the PhD program. Also, PhD students are welcome to contact the PhD program director or the Head of Department with suggestions to improve the organization of the PhD program.

3. PhD mentor

All newly enrolled PhD students will have a mentor assigned. The mentor is a more senior PhD student, who will help the new student with practical matters about being a PhD student at the Department of Economics.

4. Supervision

All PhD students have a main supervisor, who is appointed in connection with enrolment of the student. Students may also be allocated a co-supervisor if there are good reasons. The co-supervisor assists the principal supervisor, and the main supervisor will in case of co-supervision be expected

to put fewer hours into supervision such that the total number of hours for supervision is unchanged.

Supervision is a crucial element of the PhD program. It is very important that the supervisor and the student are clear and communicative about their goals, demands, expectations and opinions throughout the process. In their first meeting, supervisors and students are advised to have a detailed conversation about the elements of supervision and their mutual expectations from one another. Regarding all aspects of the PhD program, from teaching to planning your future career, the supervisor is the first point of contact for the PhD student, followed by the PhD program director.

PhD students and their supervisors are expected to meet frequently, but it is the students' responsibility to consult with their supervisors regularly. For PhD students, one of the best ways to ensure that progress is taking place in line with mutual expectations and demands is to be as detailed and concrete as possible in their half-year assessment reports that both parties sign. This is of particular importance in the rare cases of problems of various kinds with the PhD project or in the supervision process.

The supervisor is mainly responsible for:

- Reading and commenting on the PhD project
- Supervising the student in relation to the theoretical, methodological and practical planning of the research project
- Staying in regular contact with the PhD student and being an active party in connection with the research activities conducted by the student
- Holding regular conversations with the student about the broader plans regarding the PhD program (i.e. during the submission of half-year evaluation forms) and ensuring that progress is taking place accordingly
- Informing the PhD student about relevant courses, conferences and journals in their field and introducing the student to relevant national and international research networks
- Advising the student about work requirements such as teaching and other knowledge dissemination activities
- Advising the student about future career prospects
- Taking part in the assessment work and the defense of the PhD thesis

The PhD students are expected to:

- Ensure progress is made with regard to the PhD project
- Stay in regular and close dialogue with their supervisor
- Contact the supervisor well in advance in connection with planning of their research activities

- Establish clear goals, demands and expectations about the supervisory function preferably from their first meeting with their supervisor and ensure, through half-year assessment reports, that these goals are met
- Keep the supervisor informed about activities they are engaged with relating to the PhD work and matters affecting the work, such as progress of their project, PhD courses, study abroad, teaching and other knowledge dissemination activities, administrative tasks etc.
- Set aside dates for supervisory meetings, agree on agendas and deadlines and forward texts as agreed by both parties in order to get feedback
- Consult with their supervisors with regard to their future career plans in academia or elsewhere

Under the rare circumstance that the supervisor is not meeting up with the requirements or expectations regarding the PhD program, the students are advised to consult directly with the PhD program director.

The PhD student may apply for a change of supervisor. The first step in this process is to set up a meeting with the PhD program director. Following consultation with the Head of Department, the PhD program director makes the decision on any change of supervisor.

5. Integration into the department's research environment

The PhD project must always be integrated in the department's research environment. This is ensured partly through the contact to the supervisors and their research networks, partly through the student's active participation in the department's seminars, workshops and conferences.

Research in the department is typically organized within [research centers](#), and most PhD students are affiliated with a research center. PhD students should ask the supervisor or the PhD program director whether formal affiliation with a relevant research center is possible.

The PhD student is required to present a paper in at least two seminars in the department, and must when feasible participate in a research student workshop such as those organized by the department's national and [international networks](#) DGPE, EDGE and QED.

The PhD program runs weekly [PhD seminars](#), where all PhD students are expected to participate.

6. PhD Planner

PhD Planner is a system developed to support the administrative workflows and tasks for those involved in the PhD study programme. Besides the PhD students, there are a number of staff who all have roles during the PhD study programme.

PhD Planner is built around a PhD Plan, which consists of the different elements and activities that constitutes the complete programme of a PhD. This could be planned courses, change of research environment, regular assessments, course approval, dissemination, etc. The PhD student enters planned activities at the start, and during studies. The system then helps keeping track of all elements during the PhD study programme. The system is also used for applications during the PhD study programme. This could be an application for extension of enrolment, leave of absence or other types of applications.

Further details here: [PhD Planner - KUnet](#)

Questions regarding PhD Planner should be directed to HRSC (phd@hrsc.ku.dk)

7. PhD plan and regular assessments

Within three months of enrolment in PhD program, the PhD student must have an approved PhD plan. In addition, all PhD students' progress is regularly assessed in relation to the general requirements of this program as well as the individual goals of the PhD plan. For 5+3 students the assessments take place after 6, 14 and 26 months. For 4+4 students the assessments take place after 6, 14, 26 and 38 months. For 3+5 students the assessments take place after 6, 14, 26, 38 and 50 months.

The assessment is a cumulative evaluation of your work as a PhD student, and it is also used to document and plan your work.

PhD Planner will notify you when it is time to hand in the PhD plan or a regular assessment report. More information at [PhD Planner - KUnet](#)

Particular issues for 4+4 students: At the transition to the final two years of the PhD program, the PhD student must obtain approval of a revised PhD plan.

It is a prerequisite for admission to the 5+3 program, that you have completed advanced master courses in microeconomics, macroeconomics and econometrics. However, if you have been granted an exemption and have not completed all three courses upon enrollment, then you must complete the missing course(s) during enrollment. ECTS credits for these missing courses will not count towards the 30 ECTS requirement.

The missing courses must be registered in your PhD plan in PhD Planner. Please add an activity Courses with assigned ECTS credits and in the title, write "Title (prerequisite)" and in the field ECTS you must write 0.01 ECTS. Since it is a prerequisite, the course has to be sent for approval when passed as all other courses in PhD planner.

8. Performance and development reviews

All internally financed PhD students will be offered an annual performance and development review (PDR or in Danish “MUS samtale”), where the student meets with the PhD program director to discuss progress with the PhD project etc. Externally financed PhD students should evaluate progress with their host institution but they are also encouraged to have a PDR with the PhD program director if so desired.

Notice that these evaluations should not focus on research questions or the employment relationship as these are matters for the supervisor or the Head of the Department.

The university has drafted a [PDR form for PhD students](#) (KUnet) that may be used as inspiration for the meeting. However, the following questions may be particularly relevant to discuss:

- Is the PhD project progressing according to plan?
- Are teaching and course requirements being fulfilled according to plan?
- Is the supervision process as expected?
- What are your career plans?

9. Teaching

As part of the PhD program, all PhD students must gain experience with teaching and other types of knowledge dissemination – to the extent possible – related to the student's PhD project. Several options for teaching are available: Lecturing, seminar teaching, teaching assistance, exam marking and BA thesis supervision.

PhD students are required to work 840 hours during the time of enrolment. The workload is distributed over different tasks in the following way:

- Teaching minimum 315 hours (for PhD students enrolled before 2013 the requirement is 300 hours)
- Research assistance minimum 440 hours
- Remaining hours may be used to do other tasks such as exam marking, organizing workshops or conferences and dissemination activities.

In principle externally financed PhD students may have other arrangements regarding work duties – this will often be written in your contract.

The Study Board approaches all internally financed PhD students that have not fulfilled their teaching obligations (For the spring and autumn semester and summer school). You can then let your teaching preferences be known. Sometimes the Study Board may also contact the PhD students directly if there are urgent needs.

When the teaching duties have been carried out, the Study Board and the PhD secretary update your individual teaching accounts. So you can always ask the Study Board or the PhD secretary about the status of your account.

As a rule of thumb, teaching assistance (“holdundervisning”) is credited with 2.5 times the number of teaching hours, while lecturing and seminar teaching are credited with 3.5 times the number of teaching hours (i.e., this follows the rules for external lecturers). Typically, exam marking is worth 30 minutes per written exam. The number of hours credited should be written into the cumulative process evaluation form immediately after having the hours approved.

4+4 students will be offered to teach up to 300 hours during the first two years and be paid for this. At the same time these hours will count against the required 315 hours of teaching.

For “internally” enrolled PhD students the following rules and guidelines apply regarding exam and paper marking:

- Like external lecturers, PhD students must fill in forms that the Study Board forwards to you.
- Next, the Study Board will submit the information to the Payment office, such that 4+4 students receive payment corresponding to the number of hours worked.

10. Conference and course participation

The PhD student is encouraged to present papers at domestic and international conferences and workshops. The PhD student must also satisfactorily complete courses amounting to approximately 30 ECTS credit points beyond the master's degree requirement.

The course requirement may partly be fulfilled by auditing or enrolling in courses during the long-term research stay abroad (see below). Another option is to participate in shorter courses offered by other universities or networks such as the Danish Graduate Programme in Economics ([DGPE](#)). The [national portal](#) for PhD courses allows you to search for PhD courses offered by all Danish Universities. Also, the Graduate School of Social Sciences offers so-called generic courses relevant to all PhD students at the Faculty. The course catalogue is available [here](#).

Finally, PhD students may also organize PhD courses themselves or with the help from your supervisor. This should typically be organized within (and financed by) the DGPE network. The HR department (phd@hrsc.ku.dk) and PhD secretary will participate in organizing such courses (reservation of teaching rooms, hotels, drafting a budget, ordering food etc.) and the PhD student is credited with hours counting against the required 315 hours teaching requirement. Kindly see manual regarding organization of DGPE PhD courses [here](#).

10.1 ECTS credit points

Seminar and conference participation does not count towards the required 30 ECTS points, while generic courses may count for up to a total of 5 ECTS points.

Immediately after completing a course, the student must update the activity in [PhD Planner](#) with documentation for course completion uploaded. They may either be registered as courses with or without preassigned ECTS. If no ECTS credits are preassigned, one should use the following rule of thumb:

One ECTS credit point corresponds to 25-30 hours of workload. Full-day courses will be credited with ½ point per course day, with extra credit awarded for particularly demanding activities such as project writing and a final exam.

10.2 Travel application procedure

To have travel expenses and fees covered, the student must send a travel application to the PhD program director by email. Notice that domestic courses and conferences must also be applied for if they involve expenses. The travel application form may be found [here](#).

You can apply for expenses related to travel, hotel/accommodation, course/conference fee and allowances. Allowance rates, limits for hotel expenses (varies from country to country), etc. can be found on KUnet, but the most inexpensive options for accommodation and travels are expected. Only expenses up to the total amount applied for may be covered. Notice that the form should also be approved by the supervisor and the expected number of ECTS points should be stated (courses only). If the student is externally financed, the host institution should also approve the application.

Contact the Reception in Building 1 to get the insurance card from “Europæiske”. This is proof that you are covered by the department’s travel insurance.

If the travel application is approved, the student may book hotel and arrange travels etc. After returning from the course/conference, the student may be reimbursed through RejsUd (use the codes Sted 20225000 and Alias 5001405001 for the PhD travel account).

The traveller is advised to order UCPH-MasterCard (MC) well in advance of departure. The delivery time for MC is approximately ten working days. Use of the MC is practical in terms of liquidity, since it allows the traveller to avoid paying for the related expenses from own pocket. Please note that invoices must be kept by the traveller in order to provide proof of expenses in RejsUd. The procedure is to fill in the relevant form, which is located on KUnet: [English](#), [Danish](#); and deliver it to Ivan Lyngsaa.

Criteria for approval of travel applications:

Conference applications are more likely to be approved the lower the amount applied for and if the paper is presented for the first time. Also, the total amount previously granted will play a role.

PhD course applications are more likely to be approved the lower the amount applied for, the more ECTS points the course is worth, and the more relevant the course is for the PhD project. Again, the total amount previously granted will play a role.

11. Guidelines for long-term research stay abroad

The PhD student must, as part of the program, participate in other, mainly foreign, research environments. Most commonly, a semester's stay at a foreign university is arranged with the assistance of the supervisor. One aim of this stay is to advance the PhD project, while the student is well integrated in the foreign environment. The activities carried out during a stay at another research institution are usually subject to the pre-approval of the principal supervisor.

Most students will go through a "Visiting Fellow" status, which does not require any registration fees and in many cases this is done through the supervisor or other faculties' personal contacts.

Fund raising is strongly encouraged. This is particularly important for stays at universities with high tuition-fees and where "Visiting Fellow" status is not possible. In cases where fund raising has been unsuccessful, the department may cover expenses. In this case the PhD student should send a travel application to the PhD program director following the guidelines in the previous section. The department only covers travel expenses conditional on the PhD student having applied for external funding. Please note that the department operates by the principle that one has to apply for funding before spending / travelling.

The department may cover the following expenses to the extent possible:

- Cheapest return tickets
- Tuition for up to half a year
- A daily allowance of DKK 2,200 per month for Europe and DKK 2,800 per month for USA¹
- Basic insurance is covered by the University of Copenhagen. You must pick up the insurance card from the Reception before you travel. More information can be found here: [Travel Insurance](#). Please note specific rules apply for the United States. Further details here: [Terms & Conditions](#).

The department only covers the expenses above (with raised external funds subtracted).

¹ Notice there is a distinction between short and long term visits abroad. If the duration exceeds one week then the 2200/2800 DKK per month apply. If the student is abroad for up to one week the usual daily allowance rates apply (dagpengesatsen).

Notice that

- A document with guidelines for how to get reimbursed for the expenses above can be obtained [here](#)
- The long research stay abroad must be coordinated with the contents of the contracts of externally financed PhD students
- It may be more difficult to raise external funds for research stays abroad of medium duration (e.g. two months). So plan well in advance in these cases.
- Experiences with fund raising and a list of possible sponsors may be found in the “[Econ PhD](#)” group room in Absalon
- Taxation: It is possible to receive a tax refund when abroad if the department does not subsidize the housing and living expenses. See <https://phd.ku.dk/english/abroad/> . Please check directly with www.skat.dk
- The International Staff Mobility unit at UCPH provides support for PhD students planning their research stay abroad. They offer guidance regarding, e.g. taxation, insurance, residence and work permits and funding. Check out their web page <http://ism.ku.dk/>
- “Supplement to employment contract for expatriation (PhD)” is to be filled out and signed by the Department Head and finally sent to the PhD secretary, if you plan to stay abroad for more than 28 days. PhD students are welcome to contact the administration, but as a rule of thumb one should always select the option “no per diems will be refunded” as long as fixed daily allowance as stated above is used. This is counterintuitive, but it is the only reliable option for various administrative reasons. It will not affect the payment of agreed allowance of DKK 2200/DKK 2800, as stated above, in any way.
- Please note that the external research stay must be completed before sending for approval in [PhD Planner](#) (Change of research environment). See also information here [Stay abroad - KUnet](#)

12. Guidelines for leave of absence

The [rules of the Graduate School](#) contain details on leave of absence, part-time study, and enrolment period extension.

The PhD student must make an application in [PhD planner](#). Further details can be found here a [KU-net](#).

13. Dissemination

PhD students are required to disseminate parts of their research. The requirement may be broadly interpreted in the sense that dissemination can happen in many different ways (e.g., newspaper articles, relevant web sites or online magazines, radio or TV). If the student finds it difficult to disseminate, he or she must enroll in the generic course offered by the Graduate School on research dissemination. The PhD students must register their knowledge dissemination in [PhD planner](#).

14. Publishing

All PhD students must set up a home page in CURIS (access through [KUnet](#)), which should be updated continuously. If and when you publish – be it journal articles, newspaper articles etc. – you must register it in CURIS (see [KUnet](#)). Also, register any other activity, e.g. appearance in various media, conference presentations, refereeing etc.

You can apply to get journal submission fees reimbursed. The procedure is: You ask your advisor to send a written recommendation by email to the Head of the Department. The recommendation should explain why there is a good chance of publication and why the article is a good fit for the journal in question. The Head of Department may ask for a second opinion from another senior researcher. If approved by the Head of the Department, you go to RejsUd and use the following codes to get reimbursed:

STED 20229900 and ALIAS 5001105001

15. Completing the PhD thesis

Upon completion of the PhD program, the PhD thesis, co-author statement and consent to publish must be uploaded in [PhD Planner](#). The thesis must document that the completion of the PhD project meets the international standard. It must contain research contributions that either have been or can be published in recognized academic publication outlets. The PhD thesis can take the form of either an article collection, including a summary explaining how the articles are linked together and their contribution to the PhD project in its entirety, or a monograph. The PhD program committee must approve in advance if the thesis language is not Danish, Swedish, Norwegian, or English.

For 4+4 PhD students part of the PhD thesis will typically build on the master's thesis. This may also be relevant for 5+3 PhD students in some cases. To avoid problems related to self-plagiarism, PhD students should pay special attention to the conditions under which the master's theses may be used in the PhD thesis, see the PhD curriculum:

<http://www.economics.ku.dk/phd/programme/curriculum/>

More generally, one should be careful when reusing and building on own or other's previous research. For additional guidelines one may consult the following pages:

<http://forskerportalen.dk/?p=597#Self-plagiarism>

For example, to be on safe ground when building on the master's thesis, it is prudent to state in the introduction of the PhD thesis that "chapter X builds on and repeats text from the master's thesis".

As outlined in the PhD curriculum, PhD students using their master's theses must document that new research results subsequently have been achieved. These extensions can for example take as a starting point the supervisor's and censor's comments from the oral defense of the master's thesis.

Approximately three months before the enrolment expires, the student receives further instructions on the thesis submission procedure - if the student wishes to submit sooner than this, the student must give the Graduate School at least one month's notice. The PhD student's enrolment expires upon the submission of the thesis, but the supervisor and the department assist the PhD student in the period up until the defense.

The PhD thesis cannot be submitted for assessment by two or more authors jointly. The thesis must include abstracts in Danish and English. In addition, the thesis may include abstracts in other languages than Danish and English. When submitting the thesis, the PhD student must also enclose a very short summary of 10-20 lines of text for use in connection with the announcement of the thesis defense. If the thesis includes articles or draft articles prepared in collaboration with others, there must be enclosed written declarations from each of the co-authors stating the contribution of the author of the PhD thesis to the work.

In special cases, a thesis may be accepted for assessment without the author having completed a PhD program, if the PhD Study Board assesses that the author has in other ways acquired other comparable qualifications. The procedure is described in the rules of the Graduate School.

An important part of completing a PhD thesis is to write and structure articles in a clear and transparent way. PhD advisors are expected to give PhD students feedback on their English research writing. In rare cases the Department reimburses proof reading expenses, if good arguments are provided. Also, to support PhD students going on the international job market, proof reading expenses may be reimbursed for the job market paper (codes: Sted 20225000 and Alias 5001405001).

For the PhD defense the department subsidizes a reception afterwards by up to DKK 1000. Expenses are reimbursed in RejsUd using the PhD travel account (codes: Sted 20225000 and Alias 5001405001).

16. The international job market

PhD students are strongly encouraged to apply for research positions through the international job market. The international job market is where academic positions are advertised and filled. Most Danish economics departments hire through the international job market. So, if you want to become an Assistant Professor at a university, this is where you should apply. Apart from universities, a number of large organizations post job openings here, including consultancies such as McKinsey, international organizations such as the World Bank, and national central banks such as the Federal Reserve branches in the US.

It is important to keep in mind the timeline. For example, the US job market at the AEA meetings always takes place early January while the European market is in December, but applicants should start positioning themselves in late spring/early summer the previous year. First of all, the job market paper must be ready by late summer, while it may also take time to reach agreements about reference letters.

If you decide to go for the international job market you should always inform the Placement Officer well in advance. The department can provide sample application packages and may review your application package. Also, the department may offer support with sending reference letters (students are not allowed to see their own reference letters).

For students who have been offered fly-outs/job interviews through the international job market, a mock interview may be organized by the department's most recent hiring committee. Also, it will be a good idea to set up an internal seminar before fly-outs/job interviews to improve your presentation.

Some PhD students may not feel they are ready for the international job market in their final year of the PhD program. If this is the case, you may want to consider applying for a Post doc position for example through The Danish Council for Independent Research | Social Sciences or "FSE" (notice that for each application round in FSE, the department has an internal refereeing process, where applicants should participate) or the Carlsberg Foundation.