Annual Recruitment Day at the PhD degree programme at Health 2018/2019

Processing of calls for applications, applications for admission and the awarding of fellowships/scholarships at the Annual Recruitment Day at the Graduate School, Health

2018

Damian A. Hertoft Goldberg
Content

1.0 Types of fellowships

1.1/ Correlation between admission and the granting of fellowships/scholarships/supplements

1.2/ Evaluation of applications for enrolment

1.3/ Types of financial support

1.4/ Full fellowships

1.5/ Call for applications and the processing of applications for enrolment and full fellowships in connection with the Annual Recruitment Day

1.5.1/ Call for applications

1.5.2/ Content of the application

1.5.3/ Submission of application

1.5.4/ Checks in connection with the application for admission

1.5.5/ Assessment of application/selection of candidate

1.5.6/ Workshops

1.5.7/ Coupling of projects and candidates

1.5.8/ Preparation of the project description

1.5.9/ The process
1.0 Types of fellowships

1.1/ Correlation between admission and the granting of fellowships/scholarships/supplements

The prerequisite for granting a fellowship or supplement is that the applicant is approved for admission to the PhD degree programme.

As a starting point, the call for applications and the processing of applications for admission, together with the granting of PhD supplements, takes place in the same coherent process as described below.

In two of the four annual application rounds, full fellowships are offered in addition to enrolment and the awarding of PhD supplements. The faculty offers 30 full fellowships annually. These are distributed as follows:

- 14 full fellowships are offered together with PhD supplements in February and April.
- 16 full fellowships are offered together with an annual round that runs from August to November and is dedicated to open applications.

1.2/ Evaluation of applications for enrolment

In connection with applications for enrolment, an assessment is carried out by a research programme director, a preliminary assessor and a member of the recruitment committee. The preliminary assessor is found via a research programme affiliated preliminary assessor panel. Offers of admission and any award of PhD supplements are determined by the head of graduate school after recommendation from an allocation meeting, at which heads of graduate school and members of the recruitment committee compare assessments of all the applications received. PhD supplements are allocated among the best qualified applicants. Allocation of PhD supplements requires enrolment at the graduate school.

Similarly, the awarding of full fellowships is also conditional on enrolment at the graduate school, and that specific applications are made for these.

Two types of full fellowships are offered:

a. Via an “Annual Recruitment Day” in the autumn, where selection of applicants for full fellowships is assessed by a principal supervisor, the research programme director and a preliminary assessor.
   The selected candidates are invited to participate in a workshop at which the final allocation of fellowships as well as offers of admission are decided.¹

b. Two annual application rounds in February and April respectively, where applicants for strategic fellowships are assessed by a preliminary assessor, a member of the recruitment committee and a research programme director, after which interviews are conducted.²

¹ Further details are described in Section 2.2.
² Further details are described in Section 2.3.
1.3/ Types of financial support:
There are two types of financial support from HE:

- PhD supplements (research training supplements)
- Full fellowships (ordinary and integrated PhD fellowships)

The size of financial support will always be dependent on the graduate school’s budget. Based on the financial framework for 2018, it will be possible to award 16 full fellowships at the Annual Recruitment Day, 14 fellowships in the spring application round, as well as a number of PhD supplements.

1.4/ Full fellowships

- A full fellowship amounts to DKK 1,350,000 for an ordinary PhD and DKK 1,200,000 for an integrated PhD. The amounts are stated at 2017 level and are indexed. The amounts are based on the average cost of a PhD fellow employed under the Danish PhD collective agreement.
- Prior to a budget year, the graduate school decides how many full fellowships are to be offered.
- Free place for a three-year period (i.e. exemption from the payment of tuition fees).
- The fellowship payments are transferred to the enrolling institution in annual instalments.
- The fellowship is personal and may not be used for other purposes or by other PhD students.
- The full fellowships are advertised within the faculty’s strategic focus areas. In 2017, focus is on the following: early recruitment; mobility; interdisciplinarity; collaboration with business and industry and public institutions.
- Approximately half of the full fellowships are allocated to carry out predefined project ideas which are selected by the departmental management.
- Full fellowships given via open calls for applications are awarded to the best applicant in each round of applications on the basis of an overall assessment and based on the workshops or interviews that are held.

The assessment of applications is described below.

The fellowships that are advertised in connection with the Annual Recruitment Day are distributed among the departments according to the following key:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Number of full fellowships:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Department of Clinical Medicine</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Biomedicine</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Public Health</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Dentistry and Oral Health</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Forensic Medicine</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The departments’ management (in collaboration with the research programme directors) select the project proposals that they wish to see advertised in the rounds. Each department may appoint a number of projects per round corresponding to the number of fellowship’s the department has.

The full fellowships which are awarded in the spring application rounds are not distributed among the departments in the same way.
1.5/ Call for applications and the processing of applications for enrolment and full fellowships in connection with the Annual Recruitment Day

1.5.1/ Call for applications

Once annually, a certain number of project titles for future PhD degree programmes are advertised which are financed with a full fellowship.

Calls for applications are advertised on the university’s and the graduate school’s website, in the AU job bank and via relevant international media.

Prior to the call for applications, the graduate school invites project ideas (title and abstract) from the departments:

- In collaboration with the research programme director, the department heads select and submit a range of suitable project ideas which correspond to the number of fellowships that the department may have at its disposal in the round of applications in question.

The following must be stated in the individual project proposal:

1. Specification of which of the faculty’s strategic focus areas the project falls within.
2. Specification of subject area.
3. Name of the project owner (future principal supervisor).
   This person must meet the formal conditions for being able to act as principal supervisor, including permanent tenure at AU at least at associate professor level.
4. An abstract which briefly describes the scientific issue that will be expounded upon.
5. Any clarification of project-specific qualification requirements.

A combined call for applications is formulated by the graduate school based on the project ideas/suggestions/themes submitted by the departments and is prepared so that it can be accessed via a link.

The call for applications will contain the date and a brief description of the subsequent workshop.

An applicant can apply for a maximum of three concurrent projects.

1.5.2/ Content of the application

As a starting point, an application should consist of:

1. Statement of which projects are being applied for.
2. Documentation for compliance with project-specific qualification requirements.
3. Exam certificates and transcripts.
4. CV:
   a. With documentation of relevant extracurricular activities (teaching, participation in organisational work and participation in research work).
   b. Any documentation of language skills.
   c. Satisfactory TOEFL, IELTS test or ESOL Certification (for international applicants).3
5. Personal reasoning for the application for admission to the PhD degree programme (1 standard page):
   a. Including own competences.
   b. Consideration of the specific qualification requirements from the project proposal.
6. Proposal for how the project will be tackled (2 standard pages).

1.5.3/ Submission of application

All applications must be submitted electronically to the PeopleXS recruitment system via an online application system.

3 http://phd.health.au.dk/application/applicationguide/
In connection with the application, it must be possible for the applicant to clearly specify which of the advertised project descriptions he or she is applying for (one applicant may apply for a maximum of three projects).

**Applicants who have applied for more than three projects will be rejected administratively.**

1.5.4/ Checks in connection with the application for admission

The graduate school carries out checks that involve:

- Assessment of whether the applicant fulfils the educational requirements for enrolment on the PhD degree programme. For foreign applicants, this entails a separate assessment of whether their educational background can be regarded as comparable with a Danish Master’s degree.
- Checking whether all compulsory documents are present, including any documentation of language skills.
- Checking that documentation for any project-specific qualification requirements is present.

1.5.5/ Assessment of application/selection of candidate

After these checks have been carried out, the graduate school initiates the following process:

1. The research programme directors have access to the applications via the PeopleXS (PXS) management portal.
2. The research programme director forwards the application to a minimum of one preliminary assessor (in PXS) from the panel of preliminary assessors. This person has relevant academic insight into the project’s topic and the project owner (the coming principal supervisor). This assessment of the applicant must consist of a brief written assessment.
3. The research programme director involves a member of the recruitment committee (in PXS) in the assessment of the applicant’s qualifications and motivation based on the recommendations for assessment of the applicant (appendix 1).
4. The preliminary assessor, project owner and member of the recruitment committee send their assessment to the research programme director within 14 days (in PXS).

Based on the recommendations, the research programme director assesses whether the PhD applicant should be invited to take part in the workshop. The total number of candidates who are invited to a workshop is estimated to be twice the number of project proposals.

1.5.6/ Workshops

The objective of holding workshops is:

- To present the principal supervisors, allocation committee and the candidates for one another.
- To reconcile expectations towards each other and the projects.
- To connect applicants with projects.

The goal is for the quality of applicants and projects across the departments to be strengthened and maintained and to ensure there is a reasoned, independent selection.

To ensure quality and transparency in the decision-making process, workshops will be held on a single day with the following agenda:

- Presentation of project proposal in plenum:
  - Presentation of 16 project proposals.
  - All project proposals presented to all candidates.4

---

4 The principal supervisors will have the same opportunities to promote projects/research.
• Presentation and interviews with the candidates in groups:
  o Approx. 32 candidates.
  o Divided into three groups according to subject areas.
  o Candidates give a short presentation focusing on academic strengths, experience and motivation in front of the other candidates and principal supervisors.
  o Participation of relevant principal supervisors, research programme directors and members of the recruitment committee, who can question the candidates.
  o The research programme director acts as moderator.
• Prioritisation of wishes from the principal supervisors (owners) and candidates, respectively:
  o Before the workshop ends, priorities must have been made (electronically).
  o Both candidates and supervisors should be able to prioritise (project and candidate, respectively) based on the presentations and interviews.

1.5.7/ Coupling of projects and candidates
On the basis of the prioritising from the principal supervisors and candidates respectively, and together with the interviews that are held, the recruitment committee undertakes the final selection of candidates and the coupling to the respective project proposals. The selection is carried out on the basis of the stated prioritised wishes from the candidate and supervisor. Projects or candidates that have not been prioritised are not considered. Selected candidates subsequently receive an offer of enrolment.

Enrolment must begin no later than six months after the receipt of an enrolment offer.

1.5.8/ Preparation of the project description
The project description (5 standard pages) must be completed in collaboration between the principal supervisor and the candidate. The final project description must be completed before enrolment begins, however no later than six months after the receipt of an enrolment offer (the project description must be approved by the graduate school).

Approval of the project description takes place according to the same guidelines as those which apply to project descriptions for the application for enrolment.
1.5.9/ The process

1 June
Deadline for submission of project proposal from the departments
- Sent to the Graduate School

1 August - 17 September
The application system is open

18 September - 21 October
Applications are assessed and prioritised

22 October - 26 October
Invitations to the workshops are sent to the selected candidates

14 November
Workshop held (in Stakladen)

Mid-December
Decisions on offers and rejections are sent to the candidates