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Guidelines for the Research Year  
Graduate School of Health,  
Aarhus University

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2017

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## 1. Introduction

A Research Year gives medical and dentistry students at Aarhus University a unique opportunity to learn and become acquainted with relevant research methods, scientific literature and research in general.

A Research Year at the Graduate School of Health, Aarhus University, consists of 6-12 months of fulltime research in one of the departments at the Faculty of Health.

During the Research Year, the student completes a predefined project under supervision. Medical and Dentistry students enrolled at Aarhus University can apply for a Research Year anytime during their education, when having gained enough knowledge, to be able to complete a Research Year.

No later than 3 months after the completion of the Research Year, a Research Year report must be written and handed in to the Graduate School of Health.

It is possible to do a Research Year anywhere, in Denmark or abroad. The only prerequisites are that the student is enrolled as medical or dentistry student at Aarhus University and that the student's main supervisor is employed at Faculty of Health at Aarhus University.

It is also possible to apply for enrolment for less than 12 months. However, the student must be enrolled for minimum 6 months, and the outcome presented in the Research Year report must be equivalent to 12 months of fulltime research, in order to complete the Research Year.

## 2. Application

In order to become a Research Year student, the student must apply and be approved for enrolment at the Graduate School of Health.

Before applying for enrolment, the student needs to find [a main supervisor, a research project and consider how to fund the project](#).

### 2.1 Open calls

Calls for application for enrolment and/or scholarship are announced twice a year; the deadlines are mid-April and mid-October.

The [open call](#) provides an online application form, which must be completed by the student, in cooperation with the main supervisor.

Before filling in the online application, please ensure to read the [application guide](#). All relevant information and templates can be found on the [webpage](#).

It is recommended to fill in the application form and all mandatory attachments in English. The call opens approximately one month before deadline.

During the application process, the Graduate School of Health informs AU Study about who has applied for a Research Year, and who is accepted.

### 2.2 Supervisors

There must be one main supervisor affiliated with the Research Year project, and preferably one or two co-supervisors.

Main supervisors must be employed at Faculty of Health at Aarhus University (minimum at associate professor level). Co-supervisors must have a Master's degree or higher, e.g. be a PhD-student.

Only a limited number of applicants can be enrolled in each application round.  
Only one applicant from each main supervisor can be approved in each application round.

### 2.3 When to start?

It is recommended that a Research Year starts either 1 September or 1 February, and thereby follows the ordinary semesters at Aarhus University.

It is furthermore recommended that the student apply for [special leave](#) during the enrolment period, to ensure that the student's education is not influenced by the [Study Progress Reform](#). Starting a Research Year at other dates can have consequences for the student's education, the mandatory registration for exams and the right to receive SU.

### 2.4 Approved projects

An approval of the project is valid for 12 months.

Students who get their projects approved but do not, at the time of application, have funding to be enrolled as Research Year students, can start their Research Year when submitting a financial statement or obtaining a scholarship in a following application round.

If applying for a scholarship in a following application round, please choose 'scholarship' in the application form.

It is not possible to apply for a scholarship if the student has received funding from other sources.

If the student receives funding from other sources, a financial statement must be sent to the Graduate School of Health no later than 14 days before the student wishes to start their Research Year.

## 3. Assessment

When applying for enrolment and/or scholarship, the student has to choose the relevant Graduate Programme (GP); the GP that represents the department at Aarhus University where the main supervisor is employed.

Applications are assessed by the Head of GP in collaboration with a member of the recruitment committee, based on the [assessment criteria](#).

All applications are evaluated on the material submitted within the deadline, focusing on the applicant and the research environment.

The project is assessed on its feasibility, level, whether it is suitable to 12 months research and if all the necessary permissions are present.

The assessment of the student counts for 50 % of the total evaluation and the research environment counts for the remaining 50 % of the total evaluation.

Only a limited number of students can be enrolled as Research Year students, and therefore applicants who are qualified may be rejected.

Applications containing a financial statement are not more likely to be approved for enrolment than applications without.

All applications will be discussed at a meeting with the Heads of GPs, the recruitment committee and the Vice Dean. The final decision regarding both enrolment and scholarship is made by the Vice-dean of Talent, Health.

#### **4. SU**

The student must unregister his/her SU while on special leave. When the special leave is registered in STADS, the SU system will be notified.

It is the student's own responsibility to make sure that the SU system has the correct dates and that the SU system has unregistered the student while on special leave.

#### **5. Funding**

Funding is a requirement for enrolment, and the student needs to have adequate funding (12 x 10.000 DKK) for a personal scholarship.

A Research Year can be funded by a scholarship administered by Aarhus University or by private or public funds. The Graduate School of Health administers a number of scholarships that can be applied for in the ordinary application rounds in April and October.

In order to apply for an AU scholarship, it must be documented that the student has also applied for other funds.

If the student obtains funding from other sources, the application for a scholarship is withdrawn. The student is obliged to inform the Graduate School of Health of any other funds. It is furthermore not possible to apply for a scholarship once the student is enrolled.

If the student does not obtain a scholarship, a financial statement, signed by the main supervisor and the department, must be submitted, in order for the student to be enrolled.

##### **5.1 Payment of Scholarship**

Research Year students who are granted a scholarship from the Graduate School of Health will receive a letter confirming the scholarship and the money will be paid directly to the student's "NEM-konto".

If the Research Year student will be paid via other funds from an account at Aarhus University, a [recommendation for payment of scholarship](#) has to be submitted to the Graduate School of Health in order for the scholarship to be paid directly to the student's "NEM-konto".

#### **6. Sickness, maternity/paternity leave**

The Graduate School of Health must be informed about all long-term absence during a Research Year.

Leave due to long-term sickness or maternity/paternity does not automatically extend the enrolment as a Research Year student.

If the Research Year is delayed due to long-term illness or maternity/paternity leave, the student has following options:

- Resume the education as planned, completing the Research Year concurrently and thereby being both fulltime student and a fulltime Research Year student at the same time. During this, the student cannot receive scholarship, but can get SU while actively studying.
- Extend the special leave from the study to complete the Research Year. Returning to the education in the middle of a semester, causes the semester to be 'locked' and the student cannot enrol for courses or take an exam in this period. The leave is, however, for the student's own account as payment of scholarship cannot be more than 12 months, and the student cannot receive SU while on this leave.
- Abort the Research Year and resume the education.
- Complete the Research Year with a report based upon the results obtained.

In the event of sickness or maternity/paternity leave, the student may have to cancel the special leave in order to obtain the right to receive SU during the absence.

Please notice that giving birth while on special leave may lead to the annulment of the extra SU grants. For more information, please contact the [SU Office at AU](#).

In case of long-term absence, please contact the Graduate School of Health and AU Study in order to find the best possible solution.

## 7. The Research Year report

After completing the 12 months of research, the student must prepare the Research Year report.

The report must be written in English, and should contain a total of 20-25 pages, consisting of two parts: a manuscript and supplementary information.

The manuscript must be approximately 10 pages, and contain a half page summary in Danish and a half page summary in English.

The summaries, reference list and table of contents are not included in the 10 pages.

The manuscript should follow the IMRAD model (introduction, methodology, results and discussion). The student must be the only author on the manuscript. The manuscript must furthermore be designed according to the guidelines for the thesis in the [academic regulations](#).

The part containing the supplementary information must be 10-15 pages and should include argumentation for the choice of methods, discussion of sources of error and strengths/weaknesses. The student can also choose to include additional methods and results, ethical considerations, statistical considerations, the expansion of perspectives, including future studies and a discussion of the results.

There are no further requirements regarding layout and content, and it is therefore recommended to follow the general guidelines in the [academic regulations](#) and consult with your main supervisor.

### 7.1 Submission

The report must be submitted to the Graduate School of Health no later than 3 months after the end of the 12 months of research. The report must be sent to [graduateschoolhealth@au.dk](mailto:graduateschoolhealth@au.dk), converted to pdf.

After submission, the Graduate School of Health forwards the report to the main supervisor, with information regarding the defence.

The submission date can only be postponed due to long-term illness or maternity/paternity leave.

The oral defence must be arranged by the main supervisor, and must be held no later than one month after the submission date. It is also the main supervisor's responsibility to find the internal examiner.

The internal examiner must be employed in a scientific position at Aarhus University and cannot be a part of the research group.

## 7.2 Using the Research Year report as a Bachelor's or Master's thesis

Medical students can choose to use the Research Year report as their Bachelor's project cf. the [academic regulations](#).

Students who have passed at least the first year of the Master's degree programme may choose to write their Master's thesis based on the Research Year, cf. the [academic regulations](#). Signing up for the Bachelor's or Master's thesis must be done according to the relevant deadlines.

Apart from handing in the Research Year report, as described above, the student must hand in the manuscript and summaries to AU Study that meet the requirements of the Bachelor's or Master's programme. More information about the thesis can be found in the [academic regulations](#).

The main supervisor will be contacted by AU Study regarding the external examination.

## 8. Defence

The defence is subject to internal censorship and must be graded by pass/fail.

The defence should last approximately one hour, where the student uses the first 25-30 minutes to present the report and then subsequently are examined.

After the defence, the main supervisor and examiner prepares a written evaluation (approximately 1 page) of the project, the report and the oral defence. The written and oral impressions are part of the assessment.

The written evaluation must send to the Graduate School of Health, hereafter the student receives a diploma as documentation for completing the Research Year.

The defence may, if the student requests, be postponed for a maximum of two months after the submission date, in agreement with the main supervisor and examiner.

### 8.1 Defence, Bachelor's or Master's thesis

For medical students who wish to submit their Research Year thesis as their Bachelor project, the manuscript is further assessed by an external examiner on the grading scale.

For medical students who wish to submit their Master's thesis based on the Research Year thesis must have their written manuscript further assessed by an external examiner on the grading scale.

## 8.2 Evaluation of the defence

After the defence, the main supervisor and examiner must write a short evaluation of the Research Year report and the oral defence. The evaluation must be signed by both the main supervisor and the internal examiner, and send to [graduateschoolhealth@au.dk](mailto:graduateschoolhealth@au.dk).

The Graduate School of Health then issues a diploma for the student.

## 9. Other information

Courses taken during the Research Year can be credited if the student afterwards is enrolled as a PhD student.

Students, who after a Research Year becomes a PhD student, can also apply for up to 6 months credit transfer, and thereby shorten the enrolment for the PhD study to 2½ years.

A Research Year is a fulltime activity, and it is therefore strongly recommended that the student does not have other work or studies at the same time.