

Health PhD Committee (Health PhD Committee  
meeting)

06-03-2026 13:00 - 15:00

Ny Munkegade 118, bldg. 1520, room 731 (Sea View)

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## Punkt 1: Meeting information

### Participants

PhD students: Morten Hulbæk Fog, Nicole Renner, Dennis Vinther, Nina Ziegenbein, Oskar Kjærgaard Hørsdal, Camilla Klinge Renneberg

Academic staff: Stine Sofia Korreman, Stephan Lange, Kasper Hansen, Naiara Santana Codina, Rubens Spin-Neto, Rikke Katrine Jentoft Olsen.

Graduate School of Health: Helene Nørrelund (Head of graduate school), Annika Haarbye Jensen (minute taker).

Guest:

AUPA, Aarhus University PhD Association: Michelle Ølgaard

Absence: Viola Burau, Birgitte Rosenvind Eriksen (Head of department)

## Punkt 2: Constitution of the committee and welcome to new members

### It is recommended that

- Presentation round
- The PhD Committee recommends 1) **a chairperson** (academic staff member) and *perhaps* 2) **a deputy chair** (elected PhD student)
- The PhD Committee points out **members for the advisory committees in 2026**

### Case

Stine Sofia Korremann (retiring chairperson) will welcome all and initiate a presentation round. Next, Stine Sofia Korremann will give a briefing on the committee's work.

### Chair and deputy chair

According to the standard rules of procedure for the PhD Committee (appendix 1), a constituent meeting must be held in the beginning of every year. At the first meeting the PhD Committee recommends a chairperson and perhaps a deputy chair to the Dean. All candidates for the position as chair (academic staff representative) must report their candidacy prior to the meeting (to Stine or Annika) or at the meeting.

*NB! Deputy chair must be an elected member of the committee.*

If desired, the new chairperson can run the rest of the meeting.

### Advisory committees

The following advisory committees need to be formed (see appendices 2 and 3 for more details on the work of the advisory committees):

- Course Committee (*Members will meet once a year (late August) to approve the course portfolio of the coming year. Additionally, course suggestions submitted on an ongoing basis will be evaluated per e-mail*)
- Committee for Credit Transfer and Dispensation (*Members will usually evaluate applications per e-mail*).

### Responsible

Stine Sofia Korremann

Appendices

1. Standard rules of procedure for the PhD Committee
2. Terms of reference, Course Committee
3. Terms of reference, Committee for Credit Transfer and Dispensation

## **Punkt 3: Quality in the PhD Process (QiP) - report and AUPA visit**

### **It is recommended that:**

The PhD Committee takes note of the briefing from AUPA and discuss the main takeaways from the reports (attached).

### **Case:**

QiP, Quality in the PhD Process, is a quadrennial survey conducted among PhD students at Aarhus University. The survey has the aim of providing specific, local knowledge about the university's PhD programmes and the well-being of the PhD students. The survey took place in autumn 2025.

Since the report became available, the results have been discussed in different fora at AU and Health. AUPA, Aarhus University PhD Association, participates with a board member and share their main takeaways with the PhD Committee, and which initiatives based on this AUPA is currently discussing.

Read more about the survey on this page: <https://phd.au.dk/strategy-and-collaboration/quality-in-the-phd-process>

### **Responsible**

Guest: AUPA board member Michelle Ølgaard

### **Appendices:**

1. QiP report for Health
2. QiP report for ClinFO
3. QiP report for Biomedicine
4. QiP report for Public Health

## **Punkt 4: Briefing from the (retiring) chairperson**

### **It is recommended that:**

The PhD Committee takes note of the briefing.

### **Case:**

Retired chair of the PhD Committee, Stine Sofia Korreman, will brief the PhD Committee on status of current tasks and initiatives.

The newly elected chairperson is also welcome to give their input.

### **Responsible**

Stine Sofia Korreman

## **Punkt 5: Briefing from the PhD Association**

### **It is recommended that:**

The PhD Committee takes note of the briefing.

**Case:**

The PhD Association gives a status on their work since the last meeting.

**Responsible**

Dennis Vinther and Nina Ziegenbein from the PhD Association at Health

## **Punkt 6: Briefing from the advisory committees**

**It is recommended that:**

The PhD Committee takes note of the briefings.

**Case:**

The advisory committees give a status on their work since the last meeting.

- Course Committee
- Committee for Credit Transfer and Dispensation

**Responsible**

Advisory committees

## **Punkt 7: Briefing from Head of Graduate School**

**It is recommended that:**

The PhD Committee takes note of the briefing.

**Case:**

The Head of graduate school briefs the PhD Committee on news from the graduate school.

**Responsible**

Helene Nørrelund

## **Punkt 8: Items for the coming PhD Committee meetings in 2026**

**It is recommended that**

- The PhD Committee takes note of the briefing of defined themes/items to be discussed at the coming meetings during 2026.
- The PhD Committee suggests themes/items to be discussed at the coming meetings during 2026.

**Case**

The PhD Committee currently has the following themes/items identified for discussion in 2026:

- Approval of course portfolio (Sept)

- Report from the panel regarding the international evaluation of the Graduate School (Dec)
- Heads of graduate programmes give a status (Sep/Dec)

Prior to the meeting, the PhD Committee members are encouraged to consider themes/items that would be relevant to discuss at the committee meetings during 2026.

Based on the inputs, an annual cycle of work will be made to ensure that all themes/items are addressed during 2026.

**Responsible**

New Chairperson of PhD Committee or Stine Sofia Korreman

**Punkt 9: Any other business**

# Referat

## Punkt 1: Meeting information

Also absent: Rubens, Rikke, Camilla, Oskar

## Punkt 2: Constitution of the committee and welcome to new members

There was a short presentation round for the new members of the PhD Committee.

Stine Sofia Korreman gave a short description of the committee's work and the work of the sub-committees.

Stephan Lange volunteered for the role of chairperson and this was supported by the present committee members.

Morten Hulbæk Fog volunteered to continue as co-chair and this was supported by the present committee members.

Stephan and Morten were congratulated on their roles and Stine was thanked by the committee members for her work as chairperson these past five years.

The sub-committee will in 2026 consist of:

- Credit Transfer and Dispensation: Rikke Katrine Jentoft Olsen (continuing member), Viola Burau, Dennis Vinther
- The Course Committee: Rubens Spin-Neto (continuing member), Naiara Santana Codina (continuing member), Nina Ziegenbein

## Punkt 3: Quality in the PhD Process (QiP) - report and AUPA visit

AUPA member Michelle made her presentation with slides.

The PhD students at AU are mostly happy, but the workload raise concerns. 25 % experience stress symptoms. The teaching requirements vary a lot between the five faculties at AU.

AUPA has some suggestions based on the above, which accommodated some discussions with the PhD Committee members:

Mandatory qualifying courses for supervisors. More on the importance the supervisor has for the PhD student. Both for project and for well-being.

Teaching hours per faculty: BSS 550, Nat and Tech 840, while Health 150. A committee member knew of 50 hour weeks at Nat, 140 teaching hours per semester. Due to the fact

that they lack staff to teach. They can not cover all teaching within the budget if not for the PhD students' teaching.

A suggestion from the PhD Committee was that there could be more focus on cross-faculty teaching. An example is the Physics department, which already does this. The Graduate School of Health has a teaching database, but e.g. BSS does not have such a database.

An issue is also that many international PhD students are struggling, since many courses are in Danish. The supervisors must carry part of the responsibility to find relevant teaching for their PhD students.

Helene will bring it to the forum for Heads of Graduate Schools regarding how to find the teaching better, e.g. a shared website. A committee member suggested that maybe a yearly list could be made, with courses the departments are having trouble finding lecturers for and then all graduate schools can refer to this.

At Health there is the supervisor course. Earlier a bottleneck, since many main supervisors were encouraged to go, but now it is better. There is also a brush-up course for later.

Some PhD students experience an issue in getting a hold on their supervisors, which can mean delays in the daily work. AUPA has a well-being event in the pipeline including work-life balance issues that people are experiencing and how to tackle it.

Health's PhD Association is planning an event about burn-out and imposter syndrome.

Coaching sessions\* were mentioned and whether PhD students have the option of Special Educational Support (SPS-støtte). It could be valuable for the relevant PhD students but unfortunately it is too expensive for the graduate school to offer, instead an option for the departments or supervisor to consider.

Another idea might be some kind of mentoring programme, this should fall within PhD Association with the mentor part, who should be a volunteer. But the mentee needs both a professional and the voluntary mentor.

It was suggested that postdocs might be a group to reach out to for the voluntary mentor, except postdocs are very busy.

The subject-specific programmes have peer-to-peer sessions. Maybe something could be integrated into this.

The PhD Association wrote notes to bring back.

It was noted that there seems to be a gap when diversity and equality is becoming a priority, while at the same time, we're not able to accommodate those with a diagnosis.

\*The graduate school's website on coaching sessions:

<https://phd.health.au.dk/doingaphd/ordinaryphd/coaching-for-phd-students>

#### **Punkt 4: Briefing from the (retiring) chairperson**

Stine gave a status on gender diversity in the assessment committees. The updated text in the form helps, but sometimes the answers are still not good enough.

A member of the committee knew that the way to do it at another international university is that the graduate school or Head of Programme will find the chairperson (or maybe even assessors). However at Graduate School of Health, this falls under the tasks for the main supervisor. If needed, they can reach out to the Head of Programme or graduate school for assistance.

Stine estimates that it is about weekly that she does not at first approve the suggestion due to co-authorship or sometimes due to gender composition.

Stine's assesses that it has not changed the past handful of years.

The graduate school will find the data available on this.

There was a discussion about how many PhD students are going abroad on their research environment change, and whether they should be discouraged to go to the US for the time being. A member of the committee know of a case, where someone was sent back because the grant for the host department was cancelled after they got there. But the main supervisor are likely already aware of the situation with increased uncertainty.

#### **Punkt 5: Briefing from the PhD Association**

The PhD Association had their bi-annual general assembly on 5 March. Dennis Vinther and Joseph Kalisa switched roles, so Dennis is now the chairperson and Joseph co-chair.

The board has gained three new members.

Since the PhD Committee's last meeting the PhD Association has attended PhD Day and

discussed ways of recruiting new members. They have discussed sending out newsletters.

Their social events have not been that successfull but they have reached out to AUPA for assistance and input.

The Association had a suggestion for a Planner (MyPhD) update, as it would be great with a bar for ECTS, just like there is for the research environment change, or a counter of sorts. The graduate school will look into it.

They also had a concern about external courses and the procedure on the gained ECTS for these.

Stine had a specific case, which was a cause for frustration. She will send this to Helene, who can then reach out to the course team to discuss if there should be changes to the current procedure.

## **Punkt 6: Briefing from the advisory committees**

**The Course Committee** approves courses ad hoc via email, the ones since last meeting all sounded very interesting. They asked for more information on a few before approving them.

**The Committee for Credit Transfer and Dispensation** have had two cases since last meeting in December, one of which was very difficult, as it was a very disorganised application and included an article in a predatory journal.

Many applicants are not at fault, since supervisor should have guided them better.

Many applicants say they presented on conferences, so the sub-committee members must look into the conference programmes to confirm. A certificate for this would be very helpful to receive, the sub-committee would like this to become standard procedure asking the applicants to include this, as well as asking applicants to provide links to publications.

## **Punkt 7: Briefing from Head of Graduate School**

On well-being: Stine's welcome letter (discussed on May meeting in 2025) has inspired an early alignment sheet, which has been added to the graduate school homepage and announced in the newsletter.

So please spread the word that it's there to be used, though it is not mandatory.

Find it on this page (box "Expectation alignment sheet"):  
<https://phd.health.au.dk/doingaphd/ordinaryphd/supervision>

## **Punkt 8: Items for the coming PhD Committee meetings in 2026**

An item mentioned earlier on the meeting was concerning maternity/paternity leave, which will be included in the May meeting agenda.

Otherwise the already mentioned items are planned for later agendas.