

Dear PhD student,

Aarhus University cares about your wellbeing. The latest “Quality in the PhD Process 2021” and Workplace Risk Assessment emphasize a continuously high prevalence of stress, loneliness, and insecurity among PhD students. Often, academic, social, and mental health challenges can be handled in close cooperation with your supervisor and colleagues – but other times, you may need external assistance and support. In those cases, you can find more information about who to contact below. If you are dealing with academic, social, and/or mental health challenges, Aarhus University offers a variety of services to help and support PhD students.

Find your PhD programme chair or PhD partner

[Arts](#)

Aarhus BSS: [PhD degree programme director](#), [PhD partner](#).

[Health](#)

[Natural Sciences](#)

[Technical Sciences](#)

You can access all of these services through your graduate school or PhD programme: it is always a good idea to start by contacting your PhD supervisor, programme director, or another staff member at your graduate school to initiate a dialogue about your situation and find out how the university can help you.

Stress, loneliness, and insecurity

At one point or another in their PhD programmes, most PhD students struggle: it is very common to feel unsure about your abilities, lack of motivation, feel burned out, get writer’s block, or suffer from loneliness. If you are struggling with personal or academic challenges that are affecting your work on your PhD project, it is a really good idea to talk about it – especially with your supervisors and/or colleagues. It is helpful to be as open and honest about your situation as possible – and to do some thinking about what kind of help and support you need. Discussing your challenges will help clarify whether the root of the problem is academic, personal, social or something else entirely. The next step might be to involve your PhD programme chair and perhaps other sources of support, for example psychological counselling, depending on your situation.

Psychological counselling

Psychological counselling is available to all members of AU staff who experience work-related psychological problems. You can either contact AU’s [psychological counselling service](#) anonymously or by referral after dialogue with your manager.

Who should I contact if I need longer-term psychological counselling?

It depends on which graduate school you are employed by. If you are an Aarhus University employee, see the fact box to find out who to contact.

PhD students employed by external companies/institutions should contact their place of employment.

Referral to the psychological counselling service?

Arts: Heads of department can refer staff to psychological counselling.

Aarhus BSS: PhD programme directors and/or heads of department can refer staff to psychological counselling.

Health: Heads of department or principal supervisors can refer staff to psychological counselling.

Nat: Contact the PhD administration office.

Tech: Contact the PhD administration office.

If you are enrolled in part A of a flexible PhD programme, find information under [counselling services for students](#).

Where can I get help if there are problems in the working relationship with my supervisor?

If you continuously experience problems or issues in your working relationship with your PhD supervisor, you have the option of discussing it with your PhD programme director or the head of your department/school, who will work with you to find a solution. If it is not possible to resolve the problem in this way, switching to a different supervisor is also an option.

[Arts](#) Download the application form for changing supervisors [here](#)

[Aarhus BSS](#) (cf. 10,4)

[Health](#)

[Natural Sciences](#)

[Technical Sciences](#)

Help and support if you experience offensive, discriminatory, or inappropriate behaviour

If someone behaves in an offensive, discriminating, or inappropriate way towards you, even though you have let the other person know that you find their behaviour inappropriate, you can contact your PhD supervisor, programme director or manager for help and support; they will help you tackle the situation.

AU has guidelines to help staff members deal with situations involving inappropriate or offensive behaviour. If you are a PhD student employed by the university, find out more about these guidelines [here](#).

Information from the graduate schools about dealing with inappropriate behaviour

Arts

Aarhus BSS

[Health](#)

[Natural Sciences](#)

[Technical Sciences](#)

If you are enrolled in part A of a flexible PhD programme, you can find more information [here](#).

Career guidance

[AU offers career guidance services for enrolled PhD students](#). You can book an individual session with a career guidance counsellor, or you can participate in events with other PhD students. AU's career guidance counsellors can help you clarify what career opportunities are available to you, what career path will suit you best, and how to apply and communicate the competencies and expertise you gain from your PhD studies in careers outside academia.

Doubts and uncertainty about choice of career can have a negative impact on your overall well-being. These are also issues you can discuss with your supervisor.

Responsible conduct of research co-authorship, research ideas, and data rights

If you are in a situation involving threats to freedom of research or responsible conduct of research, you can contact one of the university's research conduct advisers. You can discuss the nature and severity of the problem with an adviser, who will help you decide on what course of action to take to address it.

Contact your faculty's research conduct adviser [here](#).