



## Doctoral Student–Supervisor Dialogue

Authored by the NVS Doctoral Student Council

### Introduction

This dialogue is designed to guide **the yearly follow-up talk** between the doctoral student and the student's main supervisor. **Relevant parts of the document can be selected** to help facilitate the discussion between the doctoral student and supervisor relating to the doctoral student's study and work situation and it can be used in a flexible and tailored way. The aims are to promote trusting collaboration; to clarify expectations, roles and realistic plans; and to facilitate the development of both parties. The discussion includes both past, present and future aims, goals and issues relating to the doctoral student's studies and work. For example, capacity for study and work, results, study and work environment and personal development. It should be considered as a launch pad or as a guidance for discussions.

### Brief instruction

#### Preparation

- **Prior to the meeting, it is recommended that both the student and the supervisor read and consider all of the questions, and highlight the parts on which to focus. You are not required to follow this dialogue word for word.**
- The student should (if existing) bring the most recent individual study plan, research plan, and previous performance dialogue summary to the meeting.
- Bring a copy of the table on page 4 of this dialogue or any document you prefer to use for recording the summary of this dialogue.

#### Process

- If not specified, all questions are designed for both the student and the supervisor, with a recommendation that the student initiates.
- Begin the discussion by following up on the goals from the last performance dialogue.
- The discussion should end with a joint written summary of your conclusions (for example 'Documentation of the dialogue with the doctoral student' on page 4), which you both sign.
- Book a time to follow up goals in this dialogue.

#### Environment (social/physical)

- The discussion should take place in a private, and preferably, neutral venue.
- **Make sure to set aside enough time** to cover all aspects of the discussion that you choose. (We recommend around 90 minutes, depending on the how much there is to be discussed between the supervisor and student)
- Maintain a good atmosphere for discussion, encourage openness, give each other feedback during the discussion and do not be afraid of differences in perspective or opinions.

## 1. Duties and responsibilities (retrospective of last year)

**General** – cooperation/collaborations, study environment, courses

**Research** – productivity, results, publications

**Others** – seminars/conferences (poster and oral presentations), half-time seminar

### Achievements of student

#### Supervisor and student:

- What did the student do well?
- What did the student achieve? Are we (the supervisor/student) satisfied with the student's achievements and how they were achieved? Which goals are still not achieved?
- What and how could the student improve?
- How did the supervisor support the student before/during/after the events during the past year (e.g. seminars/conferences (poster and oral presentations), half-time seminar)?

### Supervision

#### Supervisor and student:

- Was the supervisor available?
- Was there enough supervision and guidance provided for the student during the planning and execution of the research?
- Did we listen to each other's opinions and suggestions?
- Did we give feedback on each other's work, opinions and suggestions?

#### Student:

- What specifically do I appreciate about the supervision?
- What do I think is missing or want to see improved about the supervision?

## 2. Objectives and expected results

- Have the expectations and objectives from the last year been clear to the student? Were they reasonable?
- Is the student becoming more independent? Is there anything that can be improved?
- How is the progress on achieving the Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) and taking the courses included in the individual study plan? Has the student been able to apply or practice his/her old/new knowledge and skills?
- How is the progress of the PhD project? Are you (both student and supervisor) satisfied with the overall direction of the PhD project? Is it within the time plan? Are there any foreseeable challenges and risks in the long term?
- If so, do you have a plan or strategy to deal with the aforementioned challenges and risks? Any other changes needed in the current plan?
- Are the objectives for the next 6 months/one year feasible?

## 3. Development

- What do you need to supplement/develop (courses/training, special tasks, personal development)?
- Are there any circumstances (personal or study related) that might affect the PhD studies and/or research (concerns both supervisor and student, e.g. parental leave, family crisis, research opportunity abroad, etc.)?

#### **4. Conditions for achieving expected results**

- Are there enough resources/equipment/administrative support, or is more needed?
- Does the student have access to appropriate information and knowledge to carry out the project?
- Which concrete competencies/abilities does the student need to reinforce/develop? How can that be achieved?
- What is the status of the contract or stipend of the student? Should anything be updated or changed?
- Are there enough financial resources for the student to carry out the project? For example, enough money for equipment to perform experiments and so on?
- Are there any small grants e.g. travel grants to apply for? Shall we apply?
- How are the funds that the student him/herself was granted being managed?

#### **5. Study and work environment**

*“KI is to be an inclusive university with a good work and study environment that is free of discrimination, harassment, victimisation and bullying. Its work is to be characterised by a mutual respect between employees, students and anyone else with whom the university comes into contact. KI wants to promote an environment where faults can be openly pointed out.” – KI guidelines*

- Have you read the Code of Conduct of KI? Any comments?
- What is your opinion on the study and work environment you are in (physically, organisationally, and psycho-socially)?
- What are some positive/negative aspects? How is the study and work climate, and the conditions for equal treatment?
- Do you feel any type of discrimination or have you seen/are aware of any type of discrimination?
- Is there any other issue hindering you from experiencing a good study and work environment? How do you suggest the negative points can be improved?
- Are there any practical points regarding your employment that you find stressful (e.g. hours, workload, vacation, leave of absence, salary)?
- If based within a clinic, are there any challenges that impede you from experiencing a good study and work environment, in either the setting or your relationship between colleagues/supervisors? Are you getting enough support for doctoral education in your study and work environment?

#### **6. Future career plan (questions for the student)**

- What are your plans after the PhD (e.g. post-doc, teaching, clinical job, industry)?
- If it is research, would you like to continue in the same research subject or discipline area? Would you like to shift to another research subject or discipline area? Are you interested in a specific research groups/PIs? What grants can you apply for?
- How can the supervisor/co-supervisors help you to successfully achieve your future plans and goal (e.g. planning an exchange period abroad, providing a network or suggestions for external research collaborations, courses, conferences, teaching, clinical practice, etc.)? What can we do now?

#### **7. Conclusion**

- Summarise the discussion by completing the table on page 4 or record it in a document you prefer.
- Prioritise duties and tasks in the end and sign the form.
- Schedule next meeting, as required.

**Documentation of the doctoral student—supervisor dialogue:**

Objective/aim	Duty/activity	Expected Results/effect	Responsible	When shall it be completed?	Priority Low Medium High	Follow-up

**Supervisor:**

**Doctoral Student:**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Department/Division:** \_\_\_\_\_