Conclusion of the
ORPHEUS Pre-conference PhD candidates’ Mini-Symposium
Wednesday 15\textsuperscript{th} - Thursday 16\textsuperscript{th} April 2015 in Belgrade, Serbia

"Future Perspectives for PhD Studies in Europe: Training and Supervision Agreements"

Training and supervision agreements (TSA) are clarifying the rights and duties of PhD candidates and their supervisors. There are different types of TSA already in place at different European universities. Using different existing TSAs and other references (see page 9) the participants of the workshop discussed the various elements that a TSA can have and agreed on the optimal TSA from the PhD candidates' point of view.

The points stated in this consensus document are the results of different experiences, opinions and the national regulations as well as the research environment of the of the participants. Participants of the PhD candidates' Mini-Symposium support the below document with their signature (see attachment). This consensus document represents their personal opinions, not the opinion of their university per se.

The optimal Training and Supervision Agreement from the PhD candidates' point of view

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1. **Introduction**

Dear PhD candidate and supervisor(s),

The goal of the Training and Supervision Agreement (TSA) is to actively discuss the choices to be made concerning supervision, courses and career perspective. Therefore, we developed a form in which relevant agreements to be made during the PhD project are recorded and tailored to the individual PhD candidate. The instrument aims to stimulate regular discussion, progression and satisfaction of both the PhD candidate and supervisors.

The process of deliberation and discussion is of greater importance than the actual arrangements, as they are highly personal and may change over time.

The TSA is to be filled out within the first three months after the start of the PhD project. A copy of the signed and approved agreement should be sent to PhD candidate, (co-)supervisor(s), mentor, director/coordinator of PhD program/Dean of postgraduate studies and head of department.

Additional agreements between PhD candidate and supervisor(s) can be attached to this TSA upon mutual agreement.

All persons involved shall review and, if necessary, modify the TSA during the annual meeting of the Supervisory Committee. If necessary any of the involved persons can initiate and suggest adjustments of the agreement at any other time.

2. **Doctoral candidate**

   Name:
   Academic education:
   Date of birth:
   E-mail address:
   Preliminary title of the PhD project:

3. **Supervisory Committee**

   Each PhD candidate should have a supervision committee including:
   Supervisor(s)¹ (at least PhD or equivalent):
   Expertise²:

   Internal co-supervisor(s) at the research facility (at least PhD or equivalent):
   Expertise:

¹ When acting as supervisor for the first time, there should be obligatory minimum formal training for the supervisor focusing on leadership, guidance, university regulations and PhD candidate training and development.
² What is the scope of the supervisors’ expertise in this specific PhD project?
External co-supervisor(s) from another department/university:
Expertise:

The composition of the Supervisory Committee can be adjusted if necessary. The PhD candidate can expect the faculty to make provisions ensuring that he or she will be able to complete the PhD project even if the supervisor can no longer comply with his or her commitments, e.g. due to moving to a different location, illness, death, etc.

4. Proposed financing
A PhD Project must not be initiated unless the resources for completion of the PhD research project are available (Section 3 "Admission policy and criteria", ORPHEUS standards). Please shortly describe the current financing plan:

5. Research project and time plan
The PhD candidate and the supervisors need to define project(s), which are primarily assigned to the PhD candidate, where he/she has the major responsibility to pursue and present the given project. This should be intended to lead to a first-author paper.

Attached to this agreement:
- The supervisor and the PhD candidate will provide a brief summary (max. 1 page) of the intended first year of the project (background, objectives and possibly the methodology of the research project).
- The supervisor and the PhD candidate will provide a concrete plan for the first year. Briefly describe the activities contributing to the progress of the PhD project, as well as activities that support personal development as a researcher-in-training.

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3 External co-supervisor engaging in a dynamic, collaborative, reciprocal and sustained relationship focused on a PhD candidate’s acquisition of the values and attitudes, knowledge and skills, and behaviours necessary to develop into a successful independent researcher. This can mean advice on non-research related topics such as career development.
6. **Supervision**
The PhD candidate informally reports on the progress, methodology, form, content and possible problematic parts of the PhD project.
The supervisor shall support the PhD candidate in achieving his or her research goals, more precisely:

- provide subject specific advice
- discussion of dissertation project and provide necessary feedback
- advice on structure and presentation of thesis
- support scientific autonomy of PhD candidate
- encourage participation in scientific conferences and scientific publications, depending on available funds
- support for applications to grants, scholarships
- etc.

Informal meetings with the supervisor will occur at intervals of …… weeks (ideally once a week, at least once a month).

7. **Training program**
The courses offered by the PhD programs should prepare the PhD candidates for the job market. They should prepare PhD candidates not only for academic but also for alternative careers.

Career counseling should be available during the PhD program.

At the beginning of the PhD a portfolio of the PhD candidate’s skills should be setup that can be further developed during the PhD project.

PhD candidate and the supervisor agree that a minimum of one third of the training courses of the PhD project should be dedicated to the development of transferable skills.

Offered training courses/workshops/internships should support and help develop transferable skills and experiences, chosen individually by the PhD candidate in agreement with the supervisor, such as:

- Talent development
- Communication
- Team work/spirit
- Responsibility
- Leadership
- Teaching
- Project/Budget planning
- Career opportunities
- Self awareness
- Academia–Industry internship/rotations (spend a few months in industry during PhD project)
- Extracurricular activities such as organization of conferences, student representation
- Etc.

The PhD candidate should have the opportunity to present his/her results themselves at international conferences and meetings at the field of research at least twice during their PhD project.
8. **Assessment**

The Supervisory Committee should meet every ___ months (at least once a year) during the PhD project and evaluate the scientific development of the project and candidate. They document and report to the Dean of Doctoral Studies/Head of the PhD school. They should create a comfortable environment for candidates to give feedback about the supervision, while the supervisor is not personally present.

To ensure efficient and valuable feedback on the PhD candidate's progress performance and research perspective, a written report by the PhD candidate should be submitted to the supervisory committee at least 3 weeks prior to the annual meeting. This report should include:

- a brief presentation and discussion of the results obtained during the past year
- further perspectives and plans for the forthcoming year of the PhD project
- planned activities/coursework as previously described in section No 5. “Research project and time plan”

During the annual meeting the content of the report shall be discussed and constructive feedback and advice should be given to the PhD candidate.

The PhD candidate and the Supervisory Committee should reassess the project proposal and time plan.

9. **Working environment**

The facilities available to the PhD candidate must be compatible with the requirements of completing the PhD project. Institutions lacking facilities should collaborate with stronger institutions to ensure realization of the research project. (*Section 1 "Research Environment", ORPHEUS standards*).

Please specify the required resources and facilities and by whom they will be provided.

The supervisor can expect the PhD candidate to play an active role in a working group or in a team headed by a professor in the faculty (participation in progress reports, journal clubs, internal collaborations, etc.)

If not employed on a full time basis, possible side jobs should not exceed 50% of a full time job and should not interfere with the progress of the PhD project.

Duration of the PhD project in accordance with university regulations is estimated to be __________ years (3-4 years research time proposed by ORPHEUS).

The supervisor has to consider special commitments of the candidate, in particular the balance of family and academic work as far as time management, work on the topic and the organization of the doctoral procedure are concerned. The PhD candidate has to inform the supervisor when such a situation arises.
The university expects that all of its members and all PhD candidates shall treat each other with fairness and respect. The university strives for an environment that is free of discrimination. It shall therefore not tolerate any discrimination by reasons of gender, nationality, race, sexual orientation or physical disability.

10. **Good scientific practice**
The PhD candidate and the supervisors commit themselves to adhere to the principles of proper scientific conduct. Consequently, both parties are obliged to observe copyright and authorship rights regarding their respective texts or findings, particularly in case of joint publications.

11. **Authorship agreement**
The PhD candidate has to be responsible of writing a draft for the first-author manuscript for publication, where supervisors give advice and correct the work.

The PhD candidate and supervisor should reach agreement about authorship of any published results of the research work. Matters to be considered include whether supervisors are to be co-authors, and under what circumstances (such as the failure of the PhD candidate to prepare the work for publication in an agreed time-frame) the supervisors may publish any of the work, with the PhD candidate as co-author.

Please specify this agreement:

12. **Data management**
The PhD candidate and supervisor should reach agreement about data access and storage. Please specify the agreement:

13. **In the case of conflict**
If the PhD candidate or the supervisor(s) perceives difficulties or problems, it is in everyone's interest to resolve these as quickly as possible. Obstacles should be removed by informal action whenever possible. The faculty shall appoint an additional supervisor and/or Ombudsman for confidential conflict counseling. The latter individual, as a person not involved in the subject matter of the PhD project, should be able to resolve conflicts and ensure the progress of the scholarly work. Should the problems prove to be insolvable, the PhD candidate or the supervisor is entitled to lodge a formal complaint. All parties are entitled to be kept constantly informed on the handling of his/her complaint.

Following the above-mentioned procedure, if the cooperation between the PhD candidate and supervisor is inadequate, the PhD candidate has the opportunity to change supervision within the university and still keep the position as a PhD candidate.
14. **Interruption of PhD studies**
The supervisor and the PhD candidate are both responsible to ensure that the PhD candidate finishes his/her project in time (*according to the ORPHEUS Standards 3-4 years full-time research or equivalent*).

If the PhD candidate stops the PhD project before finishing it or if prolongation of the PhD project is required, the supervisor and the PhD candidate have to justify this to the department/doctoral school. It has to be ensured that the PhD candidate may continue his/her research, when reasonable.

15. **Compliance**
This agreement should comply with the PhD degree regulations of the university and with the national law.

Should one or several provisions of this agreement prove to be invalid, in whole or in part, the validity of the other terms remains unaffected.

16. **Termination of agreement**
This TSA terminates if the PhD candidature stops prematurely or automatically after obtaining the PhD degree.
17. Signatures

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<td>PhD candidate</td>
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<td>Supervisor</td>
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| Internal co-supervisor(s) |          |                |
| External co-supervisor(s) |          |                |

18. Approval of training and supervision agreement

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<td>Director of PhD program</td>
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<td>Dean of faculty</td>
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*(specify faculty)*
References

1. Training & Supervision Agreement for PhD candidates of the Utrecht University Graduate School of Life Sciences, v. September 2013

2. Agreement of Doctorate Supervision at the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences of Heinrich Heine University Düsseldorf, Version for members of iGRAD, v_iG_1_e_140414

3. Advising Agreement Between Doctoral Candidate and Supervisors, Universität Mannheim

4. Supervisor Agreement according to Section 6, paragraph 5 of the Rules and Regulations governing Doctoral Studies Program Biomedical Sciences at Dahlem Research School of Freie Universität Berlin

5. Doctoral Supervisory Agreement Form (6 months post-enrolment), Postgraduate Office of the University of Canterbury, Version: November 2014


7. Supervision Agreement of the Graduate Academy of the Technische Universität Dresden

8. Supervisor Agreement (Betreuungsvereinbarung nach §5 der Promotionsordnung) for Doctoral Candidates in the International Max Planck Research School on Gravitational Wave Astronomy (IMPRS-GW) at the Max Planck Institute for Gravitational Physics and the Leibniz Universität Hannover


10. Individual Training and Supervision Agreement of the AMC Graduate School for Medical Sciences, Version: iTSA_2015___definitief_bestand

11. Training and Supervision Plan of the Groningen Graduate School of Medical Sciences, Version: GGS-MS Training & Supervision Plan - November 2009

12. Standards for PhD Education in Biomedicine and Health Sciences in Europe, A publication from ORPHEUS-AMSE-WFME, Aarhus University Press, Denmark 2012

13. Graz Declaration, Consensus document of the ORPHEUS PhD candidates workshop "Standards for PhD Education in Europe - Implementation and Ameliorations from the PhD Candidates point of view", Graz, Austria, 19.10.2013

14. White paper of the pre-conference workshop "Improve Biomedical PhD programs for non-academic careers", page 15 of the Conference report of the 9th ORPHEUS conference "Creating career opportunities for PhDs in Life and Health Sciences", 2014
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All PhD candidates listed above participated, drafted, finalized and approved the proposed TSA.

Belgrade, Serbia, April 16th 2015.
Participants of the PhD candidates' mini-symposium