

## **Internal guidelines for assessing PhD applications and enrolling and employing PhD students at the Faculty of Humanities**

The following procedure - which applies to PhD scholarships that are internally financed in-full or jointly financed, such that the partner does not demand participation in assessment or employment committees - replaces the May 26<sup>th</sup>, 2008 memorandum (with in turn replaced the June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2007 memorandum: "*Procedure for nedsættelse af bedømmelsesudvalg og udarbejdelse af bedømmelser ved ansættelse af internt finansierede ph.d.-stipendiater på Det Humanistiske Fakultet*").

Furthermore, the following memorandum incorporates information from the March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2008 memorandum regarding: "*Indskrivnings- og ansættelsesprocedure for ph.d.-stipendiater ved Det Humanistiske Fakultet*", which is hereby annulled.

### **Introduction**

A PhD scholarship is – in regard to employment – included as academic staff at the university and comprised in the Appointment Order (Ministerial Order on the Appointment of Academic Staff at Universities) as well as the union agreement regarding academics in the state. The enrolment is covered by the *Ministerial order on the PhD programme at the universities*. Employment and assessment of PhD scholarships must take place in correspondence with these. Links to these rules are found on the last page of this memorandum.

Members of the assessment committees and additional staff who have access to pertinent information are covered by requirements of professional secrecy and unjustified transmission of information is a criminal offence. The assessments, names of applicants, bibliographies and so forth are all considered confidential. However, information regarding the number of applicants and the composition of the committees is not confidential.

Regardless that planning takes into account time used for various hearings ect., the schedule is tight. It is therefore important to stress the observance of deadlines in consideration of the applicants.

### **The course of events:**

1. Composition and appointment of academic assessment committees and consultation of interested parties
2. The academic assessment
3. Consultation of interested parties in regard to the assessment
4. Departmental recommendation to the Dean regarding *employment*
5. The Dean's selection for employment
6. Consultation with The Danish Agency for International Education
7. PhD Committee recommendation for enrolment
8. Head of the Graduate School authorization of enrolment
9. Enrolment and employment

## **Composition and appointment of academic assessment committee and consultation of interested parties**

Following the deadline for application, the PhD centre, on behalf of the Dean, asks the heads of departments for recommendations regarding members on the academic assessment committees for each PhD programme. Heads of the Graduate School programmes will typically also be chairs of assessment committees. They are responsible for punctual and correct presentation of the assessment in correspondence with the procedure given in this memorandum.

The assessment committees must be composed of an odd number (at least 3) of tenured assistant professors or professors, who are knowledgeable within the field of study that applies to the position.

The assessment committee must, as a rule of thumb, be comprised of researchers who are tenured at the faculty. The distribution of women and men must be balanced. If this requirement cannot be seen through there must be given a special explanation.

Researchers who have previously been supervisors for applicant Masters Degrees or are potential supervisors in upcoming projects, should as far as possible not be appointed membership of the assessment committee. In addition, it is necessary to consider issues of conflicted interest for each individual case. See § 3 of The Danish Public Administration Act (Forvaltningsloven) and the internal guidelines on treating conflicts of interest at the University of Copenhagen.

On behalf of the Dean, the PhD centre will, no more than 4 weeks after the deadline, inform the applicants on the composition of the committee. The applicants will be given at least 1 week to comment thereupon.

Following this, the Dean establishes the assessment committees, unless the hearings have given rise to changes in the composition of one or more of these.

Establishing the committees will usually not happen till at least 5 weeks after the expiry of the closing date for applications.

Members of the assessment committees may not have direct contact with the applicants regarding the assessment process.

### **The academic assessment**

For every applicant, the assessment committee must consider whether the character of the project, educational and personal backgrounds qualify for employment in a PhD scholarship at the Faculty of Humanities.

The assessment committees are responsible for formulating the best possible basis for the Dean's decision on conferring PhD scholarships. The assessment of applicants and their projects – along with recommendations from the Heads of Department – constitutes the basis from which the Dean employs PhD scholars. The assessments must therefore be as comparable and informative as possible and characterized by a sufficient level of detail and objectivity. However, it must be

emphasized that the assessment committee may not suggest any guidance in prioritizing the applicants.

Material which is submitted after the deadline cannot under normal circumstances be included for assessment. Applications, which do not fulfil the formal criteria (i.e. transgressing the word count limit or insufficient certification of diplomas) will be rejected on administrative grounds and are therefore not submitted for assessment.

The project assessment, supplementary comments and conclusion should be no longer than 2500 keystrokes per applicant.

**Within 6-8 weeks of the assessment committee receiving the applications** the head of the committee will – on behalf of the committee – present the assessment to the Dean. It should be mentioned if the assessment was not unanimous.

Usually 3½ to 4 months will pass from the application deadline till the assessment has been completed by the assessment committee.

### **The assessment form**

The applications are submitted using an electronic application system. The individual assessments are given on individual assessment forms, such that the applicants may be heard individually about the assessment.

### ***Introduction***

The statement made by the assessment committee is, for each applicant, initiated with mentions of the job description, deadline for application, number of applicants (but not by mention of names or other information) and the composition of the assessment committee. Following this is given the applicants name, address, gender, date of birth, citizenship,<sup>1</sup> the PhD programme applied and details regarding the basis for employment. The applicant is forwarded this information along with the individual assessment.

### ***Required qualifications***

#### ***The applicant***

The applicant's qualifications for the scholarship are evaluated by taking into account candidate's general educational and academic background.

As an outset, the applicant must usually have a Master of Arts (Cand. Mag.) in a relevant subject. The Master's Degree has (according to the memorandum on appendix 5 of the AC-agreement) been attained when all grades have been given. This must furthermore be documented in a diploma or other formal declaration given by the academic institution. In cases where the degree is attained by

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<sup>1</sup> For statistic uses.

completing a thesis, it is sufficient with a preliminary approval.<sup>2</sup> The applicant's grade average, thesis grade, language competencies, publications and other academic activities given by the *curriculum vitae* or bibliography, should be included in the assessment of personal competencies.

### ***The project***

A short synopsis of the proposed PhD project and plan must be given and evaluated for originality, choice of theory and method, disciplinary relevance and prospects for completion within the required timeframe of 36 months.

### ***Supplementary comments***

Supplementary comments may relate to content from the curriculum vitae, such as study related foreign stays, teaching experience, employment in research related positions, agreements made in regard to completing the project, academic contacts, publications other than the thesis and so forth.

Leaves, stays abroad, fieldwork and other issues, which may extend the time used on the MA beyond normal, may also be commented upon.

Recommendations may not be included in the assessment given by the committee.

### ***Overall conclusion***

The points above must be comprised in a conclusion, which should as a minimum univocally express whether the applicant's qualifications as they relate to the project, qualify or not for a scholarship at the faculty. The committees must give warrant for the individual assessments. According to the memorandum on employment, the assessments must **non-prioritized**. It is thus not permitted to assign rank through terms such as "very qualified" or "highly qualified".

If there is disagreement on the assessment, the composition of the majority and minority must be clearly stated and their respective positions clarified.

### **Consultation of interested parties in regard to the assessment**

The PhD centre will, on behalf of the Dean, forward the assessments for consultation with the applicants, giving these at least one week to respond. If an applicant's comments give reason therefore, the PhD centre will, on behalf of the Dean, request of the assessment committee that it respond to the applicant's objections and quickly present a revised assessment or inform whether the existing assessment is retained.

On behalf of the Dean, the PhD centre will forward the assessment committee's response and or revised assessment to the applicant as soon as it receives these. It is only in case of the revised assessment giving rise to new information that the applicant is given the possibility of a new hearing. In that case the deadline at least one week.

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<sup>2</sup> Cirkulære nr. 9674 af 1. oktober 2008 om overenskomst for akademikere i staten (Danish only)

### **Departmental recommendation to the Dean regarding *employment***

Following the hearing of interested parties and possible revisions to the assessments, these are sent by the PhD centre, on behalf of the Dean, to the involved Heads of department, who may give a recommendation to the Dean. The departmental assessment of who should be recommended for employment must take into account **applicant qualifications, project quality, project suitability for departmental research strategy, the ability of the department to provide a supervisor, future recruitment for the department as well as faculty and university visions and goals.** The number of applicants for each scholarship that are to be recommended to the Dean will be found in the PhD Centre's request to the departments. The Heads of department are given at least one week to respond. The Heads of department will forward departmental recommendations to the Dean via the PhD centre.

### **The Dean's selection for employment**

Based on the assessment committees' work, the recommendations given by the Heads of department and taking into account faculty and university visions and goals, *the Dean* selects applicants for *employment*.

In regard to applicants with a foreign education, the Dean must take into account the recommendations given by the *The Danish Agency for International Education* concerning assessment of degree-equivalency (see section 6).

### **Consultation with The Danish Agency for International Education**

1. Prior to employing applicants with a foreign diploma, the PhD centre will, on behalf of the Dean, request an assessment from the agency of whether the applicant's educational qualifications are on par with a Danish Masters degree (Kandidat). This permits employment in a PhD scholarship under the AC-agreement. Indeed, it is a prerequisite for employment in a PhD scholarship under the AC-agreement that the consultation with The Danish Agency for International Education determines the Masters Degree equivalency of the applicant's diploma, regardless of whether the university assesses the applicant's qualifications in regard to enrolment as being on par with a Masters Degree.

### **PhD Committee recommendation for enrolment**

Following the Dean's selection of applicants and along with the PhD centre's consultation of The Danish Agency for International Education, the PhD centre will, on behalf of the Head of the Graduate School, ask the VIP members of the PhD committee – in extension of §16b, section 4 of *Universitetsloven* (The University Act) and with a deadline of 2-3 weeks – to consider whether the applicants selected for employment by the Dean can be recommended for *enrolment*.

The PhD centre will grant the VIP members of the PhD committee access to the electronic application system, which contains all applications, academic assessments and

recommendations by the Heads of department as well as possible recommendations by the The Danish Agency for International Education.

The PhD committee VIP members will then – in correspondence with the criteria for enrolment given by the PhD committee on the basis of § 6 of the Ministerial Order on the PhD Programme at the Universities – give a recommendation.

If, among the recommended, there are applicants whom The Danish Agency for International Education considers *not* on par with a Danish Masters Degree, the PhD committee must, in its recommendation, explain why it views the recommended applicant(s) to possess general qualifications that are equivalent with a Danish Masters Degree. Access to enrolment in the Graduate School must, according to §5, section 1 of the ministerial order on PhD programmes, be based upon a completed Masters degree. It is the university, which (in regard to enrolment) has the competency to assess whether the applicant's educational level is equivalent with a Danish Masters Degree. In performing this assessment, the PhD committee can (unlike The Danish Agency for International Education, which assesses equivalence in regard to employment), in addition to the documented educational competencies, emphasize *real acquired competencies* (i.e. uncompleted degrees, participation in academic activities such as conferences as well as publication in recognized academic journals).

#### **Head of the Graduate School authorization for enrolment**

Based on the recommendations given by the PhD committee VIP members, the *Head of the graduate school* authorizes applicants for *enrolment*.

#### **Enrolment and employment**

The PhD centre takes care of further case work in regard to enrolment and employment.

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May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2010

#### **Legal Basis**

-Ministerial Order concerning the Act on Universities (the University Act) Consolidation Act no. 1368 of 7 December 2007 (Translation) ([http://www.ubst.dk/en/laws-and-decrees/Ministerial%20Order%20concerning%20the%20Act%20on%20Universities%20\(The%20University%20Act\).pdf](http://www.ubst.dk/en/laws-and-decrees/Ministerial%20Order%20concerning%20the%20Act%20on%20Universities%20(The%20University%20Act).pdf))

- Forvaltningsloven (lovbekendtgørelse nr. 1365 af 7. december 2007) (Danish only)

- Ligestillingsloven (lovbekendtgørelse nr. 1095 af 19. september 2007 som senest ændret ved lov nr. 484 af 12. juni 2009) (Danish only)
- Ministerial Order on the PhD Programme at the Universities of 7 December 2007 ([http://www.ubst.dk/en/laws-and-decrees/Ministerial%20Order%20on%20the%20PhD%20Programme%20at%20the%20Universities%20\(PhD%20order\)%20.pdf](http://www.ubst.dk/en/laws-and-decrees/Ministerial%20Order%20on%20the%20PhD%20Programme%20at%20the%20Universities%20(PhD%20order)%20.pdf))
- Ministerial Order no. 284 of 25 April 2008 on the Appointment of Academic Staff at Universities (the Appointment Order) (Translation) [http://www.ubst.dk/en/laws-and-decrees/Ministerial%20Order%20on%20the%20Appointment%20of%20Academic%20Staff%20at%20Universities%20\(The%20Appointment%20Order\).pdf](http://www.ubst.dk/en/laws-and-decrees/Ministerial%20Order%20on%20the%20Appointment%20of%20Academic%20Staff%20at%20Universities%20(The%20Appointment%20Order).pdf)
- Cirkulære om overenskomst for akademikere i staten 2005 (Cirkulære nr. 9674 af 1. oktober 2008) (Danish only)
- Memorandum on Job Structure for Academic Staff at Universities (Translation) <http://www.ubst.dk/en/laws-and-decrees/Memorandum%20on%20Job%20Structure%20for%20Academic%20Staff%20at%20Universities%202007.pdf>
- KUs interne retningslinier nr. 20.20 (marts 1994) for behandling af habilitetsproblemer (Danish only)
- Vedtægt for Københavns Universitet (2008)

Disclaimer: Decisions will always be based on the Danish version of the legal matter.