



DM · Dansk Magisterforening

PHD

Advice and guidelines

dm.dk/phd

Advice

before, during and after

Considering pursuing a PhD?

- Get the overview of what it takes to get started
- Find out whether a PhD is for you
- Get help preparing your application and CV
- Get help setting expectations with your future supervisor
- Be inspired by other PhDs
- Get on top of the Danish PhD Order
- Get ideas on how to apply for research funding

Already pursuing a PhD?

- Take control of and get feedback on your PhD plan
- Get help setting expectations with your supervisor
- Use your DM employee representative at your workplace for day-to-day advice and counselling
- Get advice on maternity/paternity leave, holiday and employment conditions
- Get help in case of disagreement and if you need to change supervisor
- Get advice about your psychological work environment and stress coping
- Get inspiration from DM's workshops about the work life and careers of PhDs

Do you have a PhD degree?

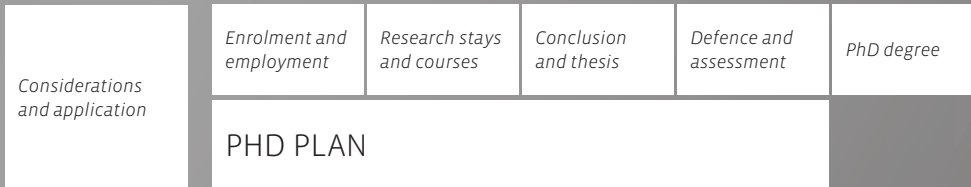
- Use your DM employee representative at your workplace for day-to-day advice and counselling
 - Find PhD job vacancies in our professional journal "Magisterbladet" and at our job portal magisterjob.dk
 - Get help for salary negotiation and employment conditions
 - Get advice about your psychological work environment and stress coping
 - Learn about new and alternative career paths
 - Benefit from career coaching and job hunting advice
 - Take advantage of your DM network, and get inspiration from expert articles and forums
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A network of more than 3,000 other phds

DM provides services to more than 3,000 members either pursuing or holding a PhD degree. No other professional association in Denmark knows as much as we do about the employment conditions and work environment of PhD students and PhD graduates. We understand the educational programme and the working conditions and strive continually to improve the PhDs' work life through surveys, political influence and daily guidance.

A phd programme at a glance

PHD STAGES



CAREER WITH A PHD

DANISH PHD ORDER*

Employed under the AC Agreement**

Or individual contract in the private sector

* Danish PhD Order: Ministerial Order on the PhD Degree Programme at the Universities and Certain Higher Artistic Educational Institutions

**AC Agreement: Collective Agreement between the Danish Confederation of Professional Associations and the Danish Ministry of Finance

glance

“80 per cent of
PhD students work more
than 37 hours
a week”

Source: DM's PhD survey

Before

Thoughts before embarking on a phd

Before embarking on a PhD programme, stop a while to think about your career opportunities. How do you intend to use your PhD degree? Will a PhD degree limit your future job opportunities, or will it increase your chances of landing your dream job?

At DM, our consultants stand ready to help you decide if a PhD is right for you. We can help you put challenges and thoughts into perspective based on our many years' experience. You can sign up for one of our workshops, e.g. "En fremtid som forsker" (literally: A future as a researcher) to hear about the admission rules, get ideas about funding and learn more about the programme content and the conditions of employment. You will also get insights into the PhD career opportunities available at universities and research institutions as well as in the private sector.

If you are considering doing a PhD, you have probably already met with a potential supervisor. But have you and your supervisor matched expectations relative to your project? Many of our members experience that disagreement about expectations arise when it comes to number of meetings, minute-taking, meeting form and framework. We can help you set these mutual expectations.

How to get started?

The universities regularly announce scholarships that you can apply for. We also post PhD vacancies in our professional journal "Magisterbladet" and on our job portal magisterjob.dk where you can set up job alerts. When you apply for a PhD, we offer feedback on your application and CV and help you along the next steps.

PhD fellow

Most often, a PhD programme is completed under an employment relationship, implying that you are employed as a PhD fellow and enrolled at a university.

Industrial PhD fellow

An industrial PhD fellow is enrolled at a university while being employed in a private or public company at the same time. The industrial PhD programme has a particularly industrial focus, and the company can receive a wage subsidy while you are completing the programme.

You can also complete a PhD programme while you are employed in an ordinary job (e.g. as a lecturer at the university colleges in Denmark) without it being an industrial PhD project.

Independent PhD student

The independent PhD student completes a PhD programme without being employed, and it is rare. You can choose this option either if you have a job that has nothing to do with your PhD or if you are paying for your PhD programme yourself. Either way, you must meet the conditions of the Danish PhD Order before you can be awarded a PhD degree.

Your phd programme

If you want to obtain a PhD degree in Denmark, you must complete a formal research programme, which is regulated by the Danish PhD Order. This order details the contents of the PhD programme, supervisor(s) and supervision, the role of the assessment committee, the thesis and the defence and more.

Enrolment and employment are not the same

You should note that enrolment and employment are two different things. Enrolment is the administrative procedure resulting from your admission as PhD student and concerns the educational aspects of the PhD programme. Salary will be paid to you by virtue of your employment, not your enrolment.

It is possible to be a PhD student without being employed as a PhD fellow, for example if you are employed elsewhere and given time off from your regular job tasks to complete your PhD programme during working hours. But you must still be enrolled at a university.

At DM, we can help you if you run into problems during your enrolment or employment. Maybe you have problems with your supervisor or even need to change supervisor, or

perhaps you need advice and guidance on maternity/paternity leave, holiday and termination of employment.

Employment under the AC Agreement or an individual contract

If you are both enrolled and employed at a university, your education is governed by the Danish PhD Order. Your employment is subject to the Collective Agreement for Academics in the State between the Danish Confederation of Professional Associations and the Danish Ministry of Finance (the AC Agreement). The AC Agreement contains a base pay scale, and you will be placed on a pay grade according to your education and seniority as well as rules on working hours. A separate schedule for PhD fellows is attached to the Agreement. It regulates their rights related to pension, maternity/paternity leave and illness, etc.

You can also be employed under the Collective Agreement for Academics in the Municipalities, the Collective Agreement for Academics in the Regions or under an individual contract depending on where you work.

At DM, we can help you interpret the collective agreement or your contract and advise you in case of disputes or uncertainties during your employment, e.g. if the planning of your

“Nine out of ten
PhDs find a job
within 12 months
after graduation”

Source: DM's PhD survey

Through

work tasks does not fit your other obligations. We also offer advice on the challenges that may arise in relation to holiday during your employment.

Work environment and appraisal interviews at your workplace

As an employee you are protected by work environment rules, which means you should not put up with situations

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Enrolment

When you enrol, you and your university will prepare a PhD plan together. This plan will include a time line, a plan for course participation and a funding plan. Throughout the programme, you and your supervisor will regularly review and adjust the PhD plan as necessary. If you do not follow the plan, you will need time to recover lost ground, which is absolutely crucial. If you fail to do so, your enrolment will cease – as will your employment if you are employed at a university. DM can help you, for example if your rights under the Danish PhD Order are not protected.

Your supervisor's role

You must have a principal supervisor, and additional supervisors can be attached to your PhD programme as well. This is determined in the Danish PhD Order. If you cannot collaborate with your supervisor, DM can help you with changing supervisor – for example by supporting you in your communication with the university.

Work environment and appraisal interviews at your workplace

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PHD PROGRAMME AND PHD PLAN

Generally, the PhD programme will consist of the following elements:

- Independent research work with supervision (the PhD project)
- PhD courses equivalent to approx. 30 ECTS points in total
- Participation in active research environments, including stays at other, primarily foreign, research institutions, private research companies, etc.
- Attainment of teaching experience or other knowledge dissemination experience related to your PhD project
- PhD thesis

of being crowded with 10 other PhD students in very little space. Your workplace must prepare recurrent workplace assessments, and like all your other employees, you are covered by the rules on appraisal interviews. In autumn 2013, it was adopted that the managements across the universities should “present career perspectives to research staff members, including particularly employees in fixed-term positions”. This could take place by discussing career opportunities with the individual employee.

The psychological work environment is very important. At DM, we experience that many PhD students come under stress during their PhD studies. We can help you in this situation, and we would be happy to visit your workplace to speak about the physical and psychological work environment. If you are stressed, DM will help you and will refer you to sessions at a psychologist if necessary.

The role of the employee representative

Your employee representative represents DM and you at your workplace. The employee representative knows the local routines and conditions, and it is a good place to start if something is wrong. The employee representative is in close contact with the DM secretariat in case of doubt. If there is no employee representative where you work, the DM secretariat will help you.

Dismissal

As an employee you can get dismissed. The reasons behind a dismissal can be related to you or your employer. On the employer’s part, shortage of work or cutbacks could be the reasons. On your part, long-term illness or collaborative problems could be the case. If your employer wants to dismiss you, usually a certain procedure needs to be followed, and we therefore advise you to contact DM as soon as possible. We help you make sure your rights are respected.

Assessment and defence of your PhD thesis

When you hand in your PhD thesis, an expert assessment committee is then appointed. Note that the Danish PhD Order obliges the university to inform you about the composition of the assessment committee and that you can object to the members appointed within at least one week.

“More than
I have a

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You have been awarded your phd degree

When you have completed your PhD, we offer advice on how to find a job where you can make use of your acquired knowledge and skills as a PhD. No matter what you decide or have decided, DM will support you.

The private sector

In 2014, a PhD with a background in the arts earned DKK 49,559 (gross salary), and a PhD with a scientific background earned DKK 55,911 (gross salary)

Your DM employee representative at your workplace or the DM secretariat will help you negotiate your salary and employment conditions when you are to be employed as a PhD graduate. We know the pay level as well as the working conditions for both publically and privately employed PhDs.

You can also get good advice and career coaching after you have earned your PhD degree, e.g. by joining the workshop “Fra ph.d. og specialist til generalist” (literally: “From PhD and specialist to generalist”). At this workshop, we focus on your particular situation, and we elucidate your knowledge and skills. We look at new career opportunities and give you valuable insight into the newest surveys about PhDs.

We post jobs and PhD vacancies in our professional journal “Magisterbladet” and at our job portal magisterjob.dk where you can set up job alerts to be informed of the newest openings. We give you feedback and advice on your application and CV before you send it off.

In DM’s network, you can exchange professional challenges and be inspired by other peers. In our expert forum “Fagligt forum” on our website, it is often PhDs who publish articles about exciting expert areas. Every year, we grant our DM research award in celebration of excellent research initiatives.

More than 50 per cent
of monthly salary
of DKK 40,000
including pension”

Source: DM’s PhD survey

After

DM is the Danish Association of Masters and PhDs

DM is a traditional trade union as well as a professional association for people with a university degree. We advise our members on the rules and opportunities in the labour market and help secure the best possible pay and working conditions. DM sees it as our most important task to fight for a working life with decent pay and working conditions for each individual member of our organisation. But support for the individual members requires the collective strength of all members. We believe that a strong union is made up of active members using and developing the services and offers of support the union makes available.

Focus areas

Important focus areas for DM are gender equality and academic freedom and the conditions for higher education teaching personnel. DM works e.g. for equal pay between men and women, for men's right to paternity leave and to limit the number of academic staff on short-term contracts as they do not have the same rights as full-time staff.

dm.dk/english