

## WORKSHOP ON PhD SUPERVISION IN BIOMEDICINE AND HEALTH SCIENCES: ORPHEUS PERSPECTIVE

Izmir Ekonomi Üniversitesi, 21-22 June 2018

Successful supervision is a key element in successful PhD training. The aim of the workshop was to provide participants with tools to improve their PhD supervision techniques. The course programme is attached below.

There were about 120 participants, of whom about 80 took part in all activities. The participants' evaluation of the course was generally positive.

Part of the workshop consisted of lectures, but a major part of this workshop was based on three sessions with Group discussions. Here it was the intention that participants should have the opportunity for intense discussion of a number of topics relevant for the supervision process. The aim is to allow participants to reflect on the challenges inherent in providing professional supervision for PhD candidates (students).

Participants were allocated to one of four groups of about 25 persons with three moderators for each group. In each room there were three tables giving about eight persons around each table plus a moderator. As far as possible, it was ensured that around each table there was a similar proportion of experienced supervisors, newer supervisors and PhD candidates.

The following topics were discussed. For each topic a small exercise was prepared and sent to participants in advance.

### Group discussions 1 (2 hours)

1. What makes a good supervisor?
2. Matching supervisor and candidate expectations
3. Making a contract
4. Tasks for the supervisor
5. Recruitment
6. Defining the project

### Group discussions 2 (1½ hours)

1. The supervisor-candidate (weekly) meeting
2. Active listening
3. Providing text feedback
4. Career development

### Group discussions 3 (1 hour)

1. Promoting responsible conduct in research
2. Conflict management

### Typical exercises:

2.1 The supervisor-candidate (weekly) meeting  
*The meetings between the supervisor and the PhD student play a key role. Discuss the following.*

- How often should the meetings be held?
- How long should the meetings last?
- Who should participate?
- What structure should it have?
- Should there be a formal agenda?
- What should the student provide for each meeting? What should the supervisor provide?
- Should there be a summary of decisions? Who should write this?
- Who arranges the meeting?
- What happens if the meeting is cancelled?
- What should the agenda consist of?

### 3.2 Conflict management

*Supervisor-student conflicts are not uncommon and can lead to unsuccessful outcome of the PhD project if not resolved. Consider the following situation.*

Dr. Peter Jensen is supervisor for a PhD student Julia. Peter Jensen is dissatisfied with Julia's progress. He thinks that she is not working enough in the laboratory and she does not present satisfactory reports about her studies. Julia is also dissatisfied. She is unclear about the aim of the project and is also unhappy about her career prospects. She finds Peter Jensen's attitude to her offensive. She also has domestic problems.

- *Discuss how this conflict should be resolved.*
- *How might the conflict have been avoided?*

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İzmir Ekonomi Üniversitesi, 21-22 June 2018 (Total time 13½ hours over 2 days excluding breaks and course dinner).

### Contributors

- Main organizers: Prof. Gül Güner AKDOĞAN (İzmir Ekonomi Üniversitesi), Prof. Ferhan SAĞIN (IEU), Prof. Michael MULVANY (Aarhus U).
- Consultants (non-participating): Dr. Gitte WICHMANN-HANSEN (Aarhus U) and Prof. Robert HARRIS (Karolinska Institute)
- Main lecturers: Gül Güner AKDOĞAN (IEU), Michael Mulvany (Aarhus U), Zdravko LACKOVIC (Zagreb U), Prof. Dr. Sezer KOMSUOĞLU (YOK, Turkish Ministry of Research), Hakan ORER (Koç U), Mine Doluca DERELİ (Dokuz Eylül U), Ferhan SAĞIN (IEU), Ayşegül ÖZERDEM (Dokuz Eylül U).

### Programme outline

#### Day 1 (ca. 7½ h)

- Opening remarks, 30 min.
- PhD training in Turkey: 21<sup>st</sup> century perspective, in Turkish, 30 min
- Best practices for PhD Training, 30 min
- Training a researcher and PhD supervision, in Turkish, 30 min
- Role and responsibilities of a supervisor, in Turkish, 30 min
- Poster viewing (and lunch), 75 min
- ORPHEUS Best practices and the status of PhD education in health sciences in Turkey, 90 min
- Challenges and accomplishments of ORPHEUS member universities in Turkey, in Turkish
  - Reports from Dokuz Eylül, Hacettepe, Kocaeli, Koç
  - Contributions from Marmara, Celal Bayar, Acibadem, Bezmi-i Alem
- Introduction to group discussions 1, 30 min
- Group discussions 1, in English or Turkish 120 min
  - 1 What makes a good supervisor?
  - 2 Matching supervisor and candidate expectations
  - 3 Making a contract
  - 4 Tasks for the supervisor
  - 5 Recruitment
  - 6 Defining the project

#### Day 2 (ca. 6 h)

- Introduction to second day, 10 min
- How to improve PhD supervision culture in an institution, 30 min
- Communication between supervisor and PhD candidate, in Turkish, 30 min
- Introduction to group discussions 2 and 3, 30 min
- Group discussions 2, in English or Turkish, in English or Turkish, 90 min
  1. The supervisor-candidate (weekly) meeting
  2. Active listening
  3. Providing text feedback
  4. Career development
- Poster viewing (and lunch), 60 min
- Group discussions 3, 60 min
  1. Promoting responsible conduct in research
  2. Conflict management
- Open forum: Conclusions and Evaluation of workshop, 70 min