

Support for Work Environment Dialogue with doctoral student

WE-dialogue, Equivalent to performance dialogue 1 for employees.

INTRODUCTION

The WE-dialogue is one part of the performance management process, which is a part of KI's review, quality, and results' assurance process in relation to our operations at an individual level. This dialogue is adapted to investigate the doctoral student's situation regarding the work environment and what is needed or helpful for the doctoral student to perform well and thrive.

"The WE-Dialogue" should take place once a year, if possible, at the same time as the first performance management dialogue for employees, December to March. The WE-dialogue can take place separately or be incorporated in the annual follow-up if the principal supervisor is a manager with work environment responsibility.

- WE-dialogue - between doctoral student and the manager (person with work environment responsibility)
- [Annual follow-up](#)- between doctoral student and principal supervisor (see separate supportive document on the KI staff web site)

The purpose of the WE-dialogue

The goal for KI is to have motivated and committed employees and students that experience good working conditions so they can thrive. The WE-dialogue aims to look at different aspects of the work environment and to talk about the demands and resources we have in our surroundings and how we can create a good working environment together.

Responsibilities

The head of department ("prefekt") is responsible for ensuring that the dialogues are conducted in an appropriate manner and can allocate the assignment to preferably the immediate manager or the supervisor (or both).

All doctoral students (employed, scholarship funded and affiliated) are entitled to participate in the dialogue about the doctoral work environment. To ensure a safe work environment and a good working climate at KI it is important that all doctoral students participate in the WE-dialogue (regardless of employment or funding arrangements).

Preparations

- Make sure all parties are familiar with the overall goals, operational plan, responsibilities, and guidelines for the dialogue (The individual study plan (ISP) could be relevant for the discussion and can be brought to the meeting).
 - Decide on a place where you can talk undisturbed and where everyone feels comfortable.
 - Let the conversation take time, turn off phones, be present and curious.
 - Encourage an open dialogue and avoid one-way communication.
 - Respect each other's perceptions and ensure what is said during the meeting stays between you.
 - Have a dialogue about the working conditions that are relevant for the doctoral student.
 - Have an ongoing dialogue throughout the year – never postpone dealing with important issues or potential conflicts.
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OPENING

- What are your expectations of the dialogue? What do you want its outcome to be?
- What has happened since the last dialogue? If necessary, briefly review last year's action plan.

ABILITY AND CONDITIONS FOR COOPERATION, COMMUNICATION AND SOCIAL SUPPORT

These questions address the doctoral student's ability and the conditions for managing his/her tasks, for cooperation, communication and what possible sources of conflict can be seen.

Issues you might discuss during the dialogue:

The role and the conditions regarding assignment and goals

- How do you view your assignment/role as a doctoral student? What works well, and what can be improved?
- How are your working conditions regarding your assignments and goals?
- What skills/abilities do you wish/need to strengthen? How can you do so? Activities related to your doctoral education should be included in your individual study plan after discussion with your supervisors. If you see a wish/need for developing other skills/abilities, it can be discussed here.

Working climate and culture

- How is the work environment/culture around you?
 - What works well and what does not work so well?
 - Do you and your colleagues help each other?
 - Is there room for bringing up new ideas?
 - Do you allow each other to make mistakes and ask “stupid” questions?
 - Do you listen to each other?
 - Are there conflicts or other worries we should address?
 - Have you experienced any inappropriate behavior such as discrimination, harassment, or
 - What can we do to improve the work environment/culture?

- How is the cooperation and dialogue between you and your supervisors?
 - What works and what doesn't work in the relationship with your supervisor(s)?
 - How is the communication between you and your supervisor(s) and can we support you in improving that?
 - Can you have an open dialogue?
 - Do you have regular meetings with your supervisor(s)?
 - Is there enough time allocated for your needs as a student?
 - Do you get enough support?
 - How do give and receive feedback? *Suggested activity: read and discuss the book “Thanks for the feedback” (ISBN 9780143127130)*
 - Are there conflicts or other worries we should address?

- How do you feel about the social support around you and what do you need (does this fit your needs)?
 - From your supervisors?
 - From your colleagues?
 - From me as a manager?
 - From your mentor?
 - Others?
 - What can we do to find the support you need?

- How do you feel about communication and networking with partners and other universities?

HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK

These questions address the doctoral student's perceived health.

Issues you might discuss during the dialogue

- What is health for you?
- What does well-being mean to you?
- What is important for you to thrive, feel good and develop at work? (Feel well)
- What motivates you?
- Is there anything I as a manager and/or supervisor can do, to further *increase/improve* health, motivation, and work commitment?
- Is there anything in your situation that we need to *reduce* for motivation and work commitment to increase?
- How do you view your work-life balance?
- Is there enough time and space for recovery? And how do you/we make sure you get the recovery you need?
- What support or activities could help you manage, for example stress?
- Have you experienced any discrimination, harassment, unequal treatment or other?
- Are there stressors that affect work? For example, migration law problems, combining PhD and clinical work, financial worries, illnesses, other problems. What can we do to support you in managing these stressors?

Suggested activity!
[Health Promotion at KI](#)

Visit our gyms or some of our different classes. Talk to one of our health specialist

Career Development

- Do you have future professional plans? If yes, what are your future professional plans? If not, we should discuss making plans.
- Which sectors, positions, countries, organizations etc. do you see yourself working in?
- Which info or what kind of support do you need to get there?

Suggested activity!

Do the [myIDP exercises](#) on skills, interests, and values and discuss with supervisor, mentor and/or friends

SUPPORT AT KI

There are a lot of supportive services at KI that are good to know about, for example:

- [Health Promotion at KI](#)
- Staff support
- Avonova Health Care Center
- The Doctoral Students' Ombudsperson
- Student representatives on department level
- Doctoral students' association (DSA)
- Student Healthcare
- Director of doctoral studies
- Career Service

ACTION PLAN

Use the questions below to summarize the main points raised in the dialogue:

- What works well in the work environment?
- What do we need to look in to closer and adjust/change/improve?
- How will this be achieved?
- Who will do what?
- Need for support, resources, cooperation, work environment, skills development or other?
- Have questions appeared during this dialogue that have an impact on the content of the individual study plan (ISP)? If so, summarize here and make sure they are discussed with the main and co-supervisors.
- Follow-up (When will adjustment/changes/actions be in place)