



# WORKSHOP

## DOCTORAL SUPERVISION: METHODS & TOOLS

### WHY THIS WORKSHOP?

Doctoral research is a key activity in an academic career, and doctoral students carry out a substantial part of the research at the institute. As supervisors, you play a significant role in helping doctoral candidates to realize their full potential and to support them in developing into competent, independent researchers that generate high-level scientific results.

### TARGET GROUP

The workshop is aimed at doctoral supervisors who are group leaders.

### PURPOSE

The main purpose of the workshop is to expand supervisors' repertoire of strategies to make supervision a professional, effective, and enjoyable process. The purpose is also to create a safe space for supervisors to reflect on their role and to exchange experiences with other supervisors at the institute.

### LEARNING OUTCOME

At the end of the workshop, participants have enhanced skills on how to:

- ✓ align expectations with doctoral candidates early and regularly regarding goals, ambitions, and forms of collaboration in the project
- ✓ orchestrate a team of supervisors to ensure efficient collaboration
- ✓ balance conflicting needs in the supervision process, e.g., between product and process, and between being private and professional
- ✓ provide constructive text feedback
- ✓ support doctoral candidates' independence and ownership of their projects
- ✓ apply dialogical techniques to ensure progression and efficiency in supervision meetings
- ✓ manage potential crises in the candidates' research journeys.

### TIME AND LOCATION

The workshop takes place in-person on the 22 April 2026, 9:00-16:00, at the Max Planck Institute of Quantum Optics in Garching, small auditorium (next to Herbert-Walther Lecture hall).



## TEACHING FORM

The teaching form is highly interactive based on a combination of group work, exercises, plenary discussions, and lectures. To tailor the program to participants' needs and local practices, participants are asked to prepare beforehand. Please see below.

## PARTICIPANTS' PREPARATION

Prior to the workshop, participants are kindly asked to briefly prepare (10-15 minutes) by writing a case about challenges in supervision. The instructions are as follows:



Please describe a **specific issue or problem** which you are **currently** facing in relation to supervising one of your doctoral candidates. If you do not have experience with doctoral supervision yet, it is okay to use an experience from being a doctoral student yourself or from supervision of master students. Please don't write a fictitious case.

The case will be used in planning the workshop, and parts of the material will form the basis for discussions during the session. It can be written in a drafty style since only the facilitator (Gitte) will read it.

Please mail the case (½-1 page) as an attached file to Gitte ([gitte.wichman-hansen@uia.no](mailto:gitte.wichman-hansen@uia.no)) no later than **14 April**. Remember to label the file with your name but to anonymize all names in the case.

## FACILITATOR



Dr. Gitte Wichmann-Hansen, Professor at University of Agder, and owner of the consultancy *Academic Supervision* that offers high quality professional training of research supervisors.

She is an established publishing researcher within the field of supervision, and she has 20+ years of experience with running workshops for supervisors at all career stages across universities, internationally.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

- Course certificate: Participants will receive a course certificate after completion of the course.
- Language: The course is offered in English.

## PROGRAM

Please see the next page. The program is provisional as it will be subject to minor changes based on participants' preparation.



## PROGRAM

| Time          | Activity   |
|---------------|--|
| 09.00 – 09.05 | <b>Welcome</b> by Sonya Gzyl & Lisa Wimmer, MCQST  |
| 09.05 – 09.30 | <b>Introduction</b><br>Presentation of the program and round of introduction   |
| 09.30 – 10.15 | <b>Productive supervision relationships</b><br>The supervision relationship is one of the most essential aspects for a successful doctorate, but the relationship is not always easy to navigate. In this session, we focus on how to navigate the work relationships with PhD candidates.                 |
| 10.15 – 10.30 | <b>Coffee break</b>  |
| 10.30 – 11.45 | <b>Tools for aligning expectations.</b><br>Unspoken and contrasting expectations for the collaboration process can disrupt supervision and impair doctoral researchers' success and persistence. In this session, you are introduced to concrete tools for aligning expectations early in the PhD process. |
| 11.45 – 12.15 | <b>Lunch break</b> (sandwiches are served)   |
| 12.15 – 13.00 | <b>Expectations versus reality</b><br>Reflective team exercise focusing on some of the challenges you experience as supervisors  |
| 13.00 – 13.30 | <b>How to manage potential conflicts.</b><br>In this session, you will get concrete strategies for spotting early warning signs, addressing insecurity, and approaching critical moments.  |
| 13.30 – 13.45 | <b>Coffee break</b>  |
| 13.45 – 15.00 | <b>Dialogical supervision tools: How to support students' independence.</b><br>Presentation of dialogical tools in supervision to support PhD candidates' independence. The presentation is followed by exercises.   |
| 15.00 – 15.05 | <b>Bio break</b>   |
| 15.05 – 16.00 | <b>How to provide constructive feedback</b><br>Providing good feedback is key in doctoral supervision. In this session, you will get advice on how to support candidates in being productive writers of high quality scientific texts.   |