



## Minutes CBH Third-Cycle Quality Council Meeting 1-2020

Date and time: Monday 2020-02-10, 09.30-12.00  
Place: Treesearch conference room, Teknikringen 38A, Campus Valhalla  
Invited: Christina Divne, Director of Third-Cycle Education and Chair (FA)  
(Absent): Inger Odnevall Wallinder, 1st Deputy Director of Third-cycle education (vice FA)  
Svein Kleiven, Deputy Director of Third-cycle education/Program Director (vice FA/PA)  
(Åsa Emmer, Program Director (PA))  
Ines Ezcurra, Program Director (PA)  
Lea Hohmann, Doctoral council CBH  
Markus Keskitalo, Doctoral council CBH  
Minna Hakkarainen, Teacher representative, Campus Valhalla  
Johan Rockberg, Teacher representative, Campus Albanova-BIO  
Patrick Norman, Teacher representative, Campus Albanova-TCB  
Matilda Larson, Teacher representative, Campus Flemingsberg  
Aman Russom, Teacher representative, Campus Solna/SciLifeLab  
Per Dalhammar, Education administration manager (UA)  
(Eva-Rut Lindberg, Coordinator third-cycle education)  
Fredrik Häggström, Coordinator third-cycle education  
Kristina Jansson, Coordinator third-cycle education  
(Johanna Hagerman, Coordinator third-cycle education)  
(Alexandra Ryduk Kinnander, Administrator third-cycle education)  
(Tara O'Keefe, Administrator third-cycle education)

### 1 Opening of the meeting

### 2 Appointment of secretary and certifiers

Secretary: Kristina Jansson; Certifiers: Christina Divne, Inger Odnevall Wallinder, Minna Hakkarainen (point 9)

### 3 Additional points to be added to the agenda

See item 10.

### 4 Approval of the agenda

The agenda, with additional points, was approved.

### 5 Previous meeting minutes

No comments. A signed version of the minutes will be uploaded to the group's Social page.

### 6 Updates from the KTH and CBH boards and councils (FA)

#### *CBH Board 2020-01-22*

For the upcoming (2022) external evaluation of how KTH and CBH work with *continuous quality assurance*, those responsible for 1st and 2nd level education (GRU), have suggested that Master and Doctoral programs are jointly described.

FA and the Dean have suggested the following dates for the entry into force of the *Green light process*: (i.e. the process to ensure that all necessary resources are in place before a new PhD-student is recruited)

- a trial period from 1 April 2020 for testing the existing form
- formal starting date 1 May 2020

*Education Board (Utbildningsnämnden, UN) 2020-01-29*

*Broadened recruitment* is a KTH wide aim for all levels of education. UN has noted that there are few (known) activities at the 3rd cycle. Some "good examples" and suggestions were discussed. It was also pointed out that recruitment to 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle differs from cycle 1 and 2 in that that it concerns "individuals recruiting individuals", where the broader type of efforts aimed at different groups that can be made at cycle 1 and 2 is not helpful. It is however something that those recruiting PhD students should bear in mind. For instance the wording when announcing a position can influence who will apply, e.g. with reference to gender. A practical example is that at Technology and Health, supervisors have received help from HR (Malin Lindelöf) in working with "structured interviews", including examples of questions to use or avoid.

The issue of balanced recruitment is to be further discussed at future QC and PC meetings, e.g. when discussing career opportunities.

*Postgraduate Education Committee (Forskarutbildningsutskottet, FU), 2020-02-04*

- The ISP administrator, Anna Sandberg, has left KTH.
- The annual update of KTH steering documents is underway. Proposals for (minor) changes by vice FA and QC to the guidelines (<https://intra.kth.se/en/styrning/regelverk/utbildning-pa-forskarniva-1.661089>) for cycle 3 can be submitted to FA until February 23 2020.
- Anna-Karin Högfeldt informed about a new network for PA's for cycle 3. Svein Kleiven and Åsa Emmer will attend the first meeting February 11. The focus will be on program analysis, an evaluation is due in March.
- Information about EU-financed projects and three-part agreements: there is a big demand for help on this at KTH, since it is both complex and time consuming.
  - o For EU-financed projects contact Mia Brandelius at Research Support Office – [miabr@kth.se](mailto:miabr@kth.se)
  - o Förvaltningsjuridik (administrative law) – administrative law and education law – [forvaltningsjuridik@kth.se](mailto:forvaltningsjuridik@kth.se) (Maria Palma-Hakim)
  - o Avtalsjuridik (contract law) – civil law (civilrätt) and business law (affärsjuridik)– [avtal@kth.se](mailto:avtal@kth.se) (Malin Koch)
- Information from the ASP workgroup V-2019-1067 (chaired by vice dean of faculty Sofia Ritzén, started 27 Jan).
- Follow up regarding administration and information of third-cycle courses (chair of the PhD chapter Emma Riese). The PhD chapter of THS (Tekniska Högskolans studentkår) and students are concerned (not to say frustrated) about the lack of information about, and accessibility of, existing courses.
- KTH-CSC office (Hui Jansons): Guest PhD students with stipends up to 24 months who are not formally admitted to KTH should fulfil the same eligibility requirements for English as master students and PhD students. It was noted that students may have a high score, but still not be able to communicate adequately. It is essential that a "live" interview is conducted, e.g. via Skype, and it would be beneficial if the KTH-CSC office could participate in this, together with the potential supervisor.
- UKÄ evaluation of the third-cycle subject Chemistry 2020: there is no detailed process timeline yet, but there will be a start-up meeting March 17. FA and vice FA Inger Odnevall Wallinder will participate.

*FAUA: meetings FA, UA, HA (head of administration), 2020-01-22 (FA and UA present)*

- A list of examiners and course offerings will be compiled each spring term (responsible: Eva-Rut Lindberg (ERL), third cycle coordinator) to be processed in the Program Councils and decided by the head of school in May. All courses that have not been actively discontinued will be announced on the web as available.
- Discontinued courses should not be visible in the online course catalogue – ERL will fix this in KOPPS. Discontinued courses can be examined up to two years after being terminated, but no new students can be admitted.

- *PhD day 2020*. CBH has decided that it should not be the responsibility of only the PhD council to arrange the PhD day. Marie Larsson has assembled a workgroup to plan and organize. It was decided that, after discussion within the QC, that the PhD-council will get in touch with the CBH workgroup. To make the event attractive to PhD-students it was seen important that it should not be organized in a top-down manner. The CBH administration should serve as a supporting group for the implementation of the event, while defining the purpose and setting the agenda is more suitably left to the PhD Council. It was however stressed that including administrative staff in the planning could serve as a useful "bridge of knowledge" between years, since the members of the PhD Council are exchanged more rapidly than staff. Important also to discuss the agenda with FA/vice FA's.

Since participation was low last year, different means to enhance participation were discussed. Making it mandatory was not seen as helpful, since the goal must be to make it attractive enough in itself. Giving credits for participation requires that there is some kind of examination, as in the credits that were awarded last year for making a pitch. The venue was also seen as important: making people commit to a full day "out in the wilderness" is a possible deterrent. Maybe half a day is more suitable, possibly in conjunction with CBH day or some other event, either on campus or someplace easy to get to.

The members of the CBH workgroup appointed by Marie Larsson are: Johanna Hagerman, third-cycle coordinator; Alexandra Rudyk Kinnander, third-cycle coordinator; Erika Gren, HR; Katarina Engdahl, HR; Sabina Fabrizi, communication; Sandhya Hagelin, Service center.

*FADR: meetings FA and PhD council, 2020-02-03*

- A Canvas site for CBH's PhD education is almost finished, and will be published after feedback from the PhD council and third-cycle administration. The PhD council could also use the site to disseminate information. Keeping the page current will be the responsibility of FAs, PAs and admin. staff, and the latter can also manage access to the site. Ideas for future functionality includes quizzes for different groups of students, especially those who are newly admitted. A site tailored specifically for supervisors and teachers could also be useful.
- The diversity and availability of courses is a recurring issue. It is felt that there are too few courses offered for narrow subjects, or that they are offered too seldom. Now, students may have to wait several years to take a course. It is not clear who is responsible (so far: every individual teacher). This is a topic with high priority for future discussion in the QC, and has been added to the list of thematic discussion points.

7 Update from the program council meetings and activities (*Program directors*)

FA encouraged PAs to share information about upcoming meetings, including sharing information between different programs.

- CHE (PA Åsa Emmer): The PC is working to sort out third-cycle courses. Next PC1 meeting is Feb. 18. Åsa has been in contact with the new THS PhD student representative Elise Farah.
- BIO/TCB (PA Ines Ezcurra): PC1 to be scheduled [Date decided after QC meeting: Feb. 26]
- TH/MT (PA Svein Kleiven): First PC Dec 12 2019. Next meeting will be spring 2020.

8 Update from the third-cycle education administration (*Administration*)

*Old and/or inactive courses at TH/MT*: FA pointed out that all old courses (course code F6L) must be revised, since they are not valid anymore. In practice this means that they must be discontinued and replaced with new ones – preferably on active and attractive subjects. PA Svein Kleiven has been working on updating the course list, and he, Eva Rut L and Pelle Dalhammar will attend to this.

*IT-Support for KTH education*: FA showed an illustration on how the various IT support systems at KTH are connected to each other (or not), which in part explains why it may take a long time, or even be impossible, to implement even highly desirable changes. (See slide 16)

9 Thematic discussion points (see Appendix): Prioritize points and discuss. (*All*)

Q 10: Information from FA: the Postgraduate Education Committee has suggested that program councils collect input from supervisors and their impressions (pros and cons) with Urkund, the tool to for plagiarism check. FA asked members of the QC to bring this question up in other suitable fora, e.g. as a point at department meetings, to find out if anybody feels that using Urkund is actually a problem, or that it is less efficient than other systems for analysing papers from PhDs (as has been suggested).

Q 1 & 2: The points chosen for discussion were "Rights and responsibilities for doctoral students and supervisors - discussion taking both perspectives", and "The funding vs. responsibility conundrum - costs and responsibility are increasing for supervisors with less central support, funding from KTH or external financiers is not increasing" Minna Hakkarainen (MH), CHE FPT, introduced the points.

It is felt, *i.e.* from supervisors at FPT, that there is a lack of balance in the description of the rights and responsibilities of supervisors and students, with responsibilities only being described for the former, and rights for the latter. Firstly, it should be recognized that supervisors carry a heavy burden of tasks in addition to the scientific part of their supervisorship, including time consuming administrative duties, securing funding for students, increasing rents and salary costs, etc., and that they put a lot of effort into this work.

Secondly, it is important to communicate to the student that if there are any problems, the first step should be to talk to the main supervisor, or if he/she is not available, to the co-supervisors. In most cases, problems can be identified, discussed and hopefully solved to everyone's satisfaction at this level.

FA: Responsibilities are given by law for all government employees, *i.e.* everybody. Third cycle administration is working on a communication strategy, where it will for example be pointed out that if problems arise, the first step for the PhD-student should be to bring this up with their supervisors. However, when a student approaches someone else, it's usually because the parties have not been able to resolve the problem. It then becomes the duty of the third cycle administration to advise, and FA/vice FA for the specific PhD-programme should be contacted.

In relation to question 2, the funding vs. responsibility conundrum, Inger Odnevall Wallinder (IOW) pointed out that in the future (and already now), we will see an increase of post-docs at the expense of PhD-students. The greatest problems are the high cost for a PhD-position in relation to available sources of funding, and the fact that some financiers provide at most three years of funding, while KTH demands that one year out of four is spent on courses. FA pointed out that the issue of sub-critical study environments and the need of collaboration between research programs to counteract this needs to be addressed by the Programme Councils.

Patrick Norman (PN) pointed out that the requirement of 60 HEC in courses is high in an international context, and MH added that financiers don't usually allow their funding to be used as salary during courses. FA noted that this is a discussion that needs to be addressed at a national level (government) since one year of courses originate far back in time. When reforming the third-cycle education as a result of the Bologna collaboration, Sweden wanted to keep the 4-year model for doctoral degree that already included one year of courses. As a way to align better with Bologna, it was decided that up to 60 ECTS credits could be transferred from the last year of a masters degree to the doctoral degree and by that also reduce the third-cycle study time by the corresponding time. Existing rules and regulations must be followed also when the funding comes from external grants. Funding is difficult in many respects, *e.g.* when changing supervisors, the money for the project stays with the supervisor, and new funding has to be found – no such funds are available at CBH or KTH. (The exception is CSC and SIDA stipendees, where the scholarship is tied to the student).

The final point is the responsibilities of PhD-students. MH noted that presenting rights and responsibilities of supervisors and students in a more balanced way would in itself lessen the aggravation felt by some supervisors. There is however another imbalance to consider. Fredrik Häggström (FH), drawing on his experience from working at THS, noted that for many PhD-students who come there with problems, the supervisor is "the most important person in their life". Leah Hohmann added that many PhD-students are young, and further come from a different cultural background, where relationships with figures of authority can be fraught with difficulty. FH pointed out that many students are simply seeking advice on *how* to talk to their superior *so as not to create a problem*. They want help to trouble-shoot so as not to destroy this most important relationship.

*A preliminary list of rights and responsibilities* was prepared by FA ahead of this meeting. It is available on the group's Social page: <https://www.kth.se/social/group/cbh-fou/page/qc1-meeting-2020-02-10/> Additional points can be added, and the list could *e.g.* be uploaded to the PhD students' upcoming Canvas site (cf. item 6).

*Suggestions for future discussion points* can be added to the existing list (see Annex). Please submit them to Christina Divne ([divne@kth.se](mailto:divne@kth.se)) ahead of next QC meeting in May.

## 10 Additional points

### *Size and number of doctoral programs and subject areas at CBH (Patrick Norman)*

There are several disadvantages if programs for doctoral education become too small, including the problem of securing resources for subject specific courses. It may also be argued that three doctoral programs – corresponding to the three former schools – is a reasonable number for CBH to manage. Theoretical Chemistry and Biology has therefore declared an interest to merge its doctoral program with the Chemistry program. The implementation of such a merger is proposed as to allow no further admissions to the existing program Theoretical Chemistry and Biology.

### *Common half-time protocol for all PhD-programs at CBH (Svein Kleiven)*

A common protocol for all of CBH for half time seminars is something *e.g.* the PhD council has asked for. The existing protocols are available on the QC Social page, and anyone interested in taking part in creating a joint protocol should contact Svein. The goal of this ad-hoc working group would be to present

a proposal for a joint protocol at the next QC meeting in May.

Existing protocols on Social: <https://www.kth.se/social/group/cbh-fou/page/protocol-halftime-seminar-bio-and-tcb/>

*Eligibility of CSC-students to doctoral education (Inger Odnevall Wallinder)*

As part of the process for recruiting PhD-students with CSC scholarship, a letter of invitation to prospective students is to be signed by the dean, the prefect and FA based on a budget (showing eligible funding agreements from financing body) submitted by the supervisor, *and an* eligibility investigation of the CSC student to the PhD program of interest performed by the CSC-office and the administration office.

The CSC-KTH office does not currently provide any document that certifies that they have performed an eligibility check of the CSC applicants to a given PhD position within a given PhD-program. FA (vice-FA) cannot sign a reply form and/or letter of invitation without this type of documentation. The eligibility check was previously made by the PhD-administration office together with the tentative supervisor, certifying that an interview and work tests, or similar, had been completed, after which a decision on the eligibility of the CSC applicant was made by (vice) FA. In the past, prior to KTH-CSC sending out invitation letters, FA together with the heads of school and the department jointly agreed that the main supervisor could admit a new PhD-student and had required economical resources. For unknown reasons this procedure has changed.

If the CSC-KTH office is to provide the eligibility check of the applicants, a signed document is needed with a decision on the outcome of the eligibility check of the applicant in relation to education, ranking of the Chinese university education, the TOEFL/IELTS grades and the real English speaking qualifications verified via interviews. This should be linked with documentation from the supervisor that interviews as well as work tests, or similar, have been conducted, a budget and confirmation, signed by the head of the department that the financial prerequisites set by KTH are fulfilled in relation to the scholarship combined with an acceptance from (vice)FA . The PhD-administration should in addition ensure that the education of the applicant is sufficient for the requirements of the given program. When all documentation is ready, the CSC-applicant can be invited to KTH and PhD-studies. The admission process of the CSC-PhD-student is then less complicated at the time when the student arrives at KTH.

11 Upcoming meetings

*QC-2 2020* will take place in May 2020. Aman Russom will send out a Doodle-proposal with possible dates.

*PC: 4 meetings per year, next meeting*

- BIO/TKB: PC1 2020: February 26
- CHE: PC1 2020: February 18
- STH: PC1 2020: Spring

*FADR: to be determined*

12 Closure of the meeting (*FA*)

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Kristina Jansson, Secretary

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Christina Divne, Certifier

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Inger Odnevall Wallinder, Certifier

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Minna Hakkarainen, Certifier  
(Item 9 only)

### Future QC thematic discussion points

1. ~~Rights and responsibilities for doctoral students and supervisors—discussion taking both perspectives (CHE FPT) (QC1 2020-02-10)~~
2. ~~The funding vs. responsibility conundrum—costs and responsibility are increasing for supervisors with less central support (CHE FPT)-(QC1 2020-02-10)~~
3. Quality development in third-cycle education - what does it mean in practise and how will it be financed? (CHE FPT)
4. Support for supervisors - what do they need? (CHE FPT)
5. Subject-specific courses (PhD council)
6. Change of supervisor (PhD council)
7. The role of a PhD student within the department (PhD council)
8. Information dissemination (PhD council)
9. Quality requirements for a doctoral thesis (Strategic council)
10. ~~Experiences with Urkund (FU), suggestion that program councils collect input from supervisors and their impressions (pros and cons) with Urkund (maybe questionnaire or point at department meetings)-(QC1 2020-02-10)~~
11. What is "quality" and "quality culture" in third-cycle education (QC)