

Discussion material for a preparatory conversation between (potential) PhD candidate and (envisaged) advisor

The purpose of this form* is to talk about the PhD candidate's and the advisor's expectations. This voluntary questionnaire is to be completed individually by both parties. They arrange a meeting where the answers are to be compared and discussed. This exercise may clarify different expectations and will hopefully improve the collaboration. The completed forms stay with the participants in the conversation and are not to be submitted anywhere.

The advisor must be aware of the asymmetric power ratios that exist in the guidance relationship. Academic knowledge and authority shall not be exploited to win academic or personal benefits.



Bonn-Cologne Graduate School
of Physics and Astronomy



My name:	My conversation with (name):
-----------------	-------------------------------------

Instruction: Choose the answer that fits best with HOW YOU WANT IT TO BE.

The alternative answers to the left and right represent the extremes of the scale.

*Select the central option
if both alternatives apply
equally*

Aim of the PhD				
Writing a thesis	irrelevant			relevant
Independent research	irrelevant			relevant
Obtaining a title	irrelevant			relevant
Finishing the doctorate in the shortest possible time	irrelevant			relevant
Achieving further competences	irrelevant			relevant
Employment	irrelevant			relevant
Reputation	irrelevant			relevant

General				
What form of supervision is preferred?	spontaneous talks			by appointment
How often will there be some sort of discussion? Once per	day	week	2 weeks	month
Who should take the initiative for planning the advisor/ PhD candidate discussions?	advisor			PhD candidate
Who defines any goals?	advisor			PhD candidate
Performance is measured in	working hours			scientific output
Errors, mistakes and problems are to be discussed	not at all			openly
Ethical questions affect the research	to a low extent			to a high extent
Respectful communication is	irrelevant			relevant
Regular continuous development meetings (<i>Personalentwicklungsgespräche</i>) are	irrelevant			relevant

Research				
Who is responsible for the project proposal?	advisor			PhD candidate
Research is to be done	according to a schedule with milestones			free from schedules
Who is the driving force in the research project (attending meetings, making contacts, etc)?	advisor			PhD candidate
Who decides where/how the research will be presented?	advisor			PhD candidate
Who is responsible for solving scientific problems?	advisor			PhD candidate
Who solves practical problems (equipment, analyses, logistics etc.)?	advisor			PhD candidate

How is the research work supposed to be done?	alone		together with others
Regular meetings with the Thesis Advisory Committee (TAC) are	irrelevant		relevant
Thesis			
Who decides on the type, contents and outline of the thesis?	advisor (and TAC)		PhD candidate
Publishing / property rights etc.			
Who has the right to use the research results of the PhD candidate?	university	advisor	PhD candidate
Who has the right to publish the research results of the PhD (apart from the thesis)?	advisor		PhD candidate
A peer reviewed publication is expected before thesis submission	yes		no
Publishing of the PhD results in peer reviewed journals is supposed to be done	together with advisor and other colleagues		by the PhD candidate
Who decides if the results are to be published as a paper or a patent?	advisor		PhD candidate
Financing and infrastructure			
Who applies for means for running project costs (materials, analysis etc)?	advisor/ project leader		PhD candidate
Who applies for funding for conferences and workshops, etc?	advisor/ project leader		PhD candidate
Access to computer, phone, storage space, literature, databases, repositories, labs, instruments, software, etc.	should be at the workplace		PhD candidate should arrange themselves
The work can temporarily be moved to another location (different lab, field studies, different city, etc)	agree		disagree
Working hours and vacation			
Working hours	strict		free
One should work more than the contracted working time	right		wrong
Remote work	regularly		by agreement
Vacation	strict vacation time		free vacation time
Courses			
Who makes sure that the obligatory programme of the Graduate School is fulfilled?	advisor (and TAC)		PhD candidate
Who decides what other courses the PhD candidate is to take?	advisor (and TAC)		PhD candidate
Courses are to be chosen	in one's research field		over a range of topics
Teaching and outreach			
The PhD candidate should teach	as little as possible		as much as possible
The content of the teaching should be	in one's research field		in a range of topics
Participation in outreach activities (" <i>Kinderuni</i> ", " <i>Schnupperuni</i> ", Girls' / Boys' Days, Open Days, Pub Talks, etc) is	unimportant		important
Miscellaneous			
Taking part in the department/institute seminars, meetings, etc is	unimportant		important
Joining the working group for lunch or coffee breaks is	unimportant		important
Mingling with other PhD candidates and researchers in the department / Graduate School / institute is	unimportant		important
Taking part in common social activities in the department / Graduate School / institute (coffee breaks, discussions, parties etc) is	unimportant		important