

DS Board Meeting #HT18-1, 2019-01-24 – Minutes

Time: 14.15 - 17.45

Place: Room M Delta, M Building, Chalmers University of Technology

Attendance list: see appendix

Point on the agenda	Rapporteur (approximate time)
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Opening of meeting and election of meeting officials	Giulio (10)
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Giulio, the DS Chair, opens the meeting. He proposes the meeting officials as follows:

Chair – Giulio Calcagno

Secretary – Tomasz Kosiński

Adopt the minutes – Mursalin Sajib

There was a change, compared to the original meeting Agenda sent out by Giulio, of the meeting secretary. Joakim could not take part in the first few minutes of the meeting and Tomasz was proposed as a meeting secretary. The board unanimously approved the proposed meeting officials.

§1. Approval of agenda

The meeting approved the agenda. Dan Li asked for the meeting point he was responsible for referring to be spread in time, it was approved.

§2. Meeting notice in due order

The Board confirmed that.

§3. Minutes from previous meeting

The minutes are available on the DS website.

§4. Practical information

Giulio mentions that the Board members could already start considering their plans for the new year of DS, whether they want to stay in the board or continue working or consider a Chair or vice-chair position. Giulio also officially introduced the new Board member, Johanna Merisalu (from ACE dept.) to the Board. He mentions that Ananda, who will be on parental leave from January to May will still work remotely with the Board. Siri will most probably not work any more. Therefore, there is a need to reevaluate responsibilities distribution.

§5 Employee survey results

Johanna Andersson (30)

Giulio passes the voice to Johanna Andersson, who presents the results of employee survey results where questions specifically directed to PhD students were asked. She takes special care to present the breakdown of the results, e.g. by the respondents gender or department etc. One remark she makes is that half of the respondents answering positively to the question on encountered discrimination were not discriminated themselves (52%). Also, that the figures related to harassment, bullying and abuse are very small. Negative conflicts seem to have slightly higher numbers, same for the master suppression techniques. There is very little answers on the sexual harassment, Johanna can't believe they are so low. There is a comment on respondents not trusting the anonymization of the survey answers and being worried of answering fully or at all due to working in small groups. Another comment confirms that colleagues we talk to do not want to risk deanonymization. Johanna asks how can we solve this problem, is it by increasing the threshold of people who need to answer before a summary of the answers is shown in the results? There is a proposal of HR being possibly responsible for acting on the results, instead of passing the information to Department heads. Johanna shows that there's quite a few answers on the issues with cooperation with main supervisors and that if there's many in a single departments, they will be contacted and there will be discussions held. Giulio asks what is the action plan in such a situation. Johanna answers that it's the department's responsibility and they will check in 1 and then 2 years before taking any action. The quality of supervision, its quantity and whether it's the main or a co-supervisor – these questions are also briefly shown. Due to time constraints, the presentation is sped up though Johanna says she is ready to give answers to all Board's questions on the survey results and to run a workshop. As a final remark, the situation where female researchers in one of the research schools did not have a developed network of contacts is made while presenting the answers to the question on whether PhD students have someone else than a main supervisor to turn to for research supervision.

§6. Key topics from the committees and activities

1) Accounting (Financial and economic update)

Anna

Anna notes that the remunerations for DS Board duties paid as the departmental duty hours costs more than the salary paid to the accounts directly due to additional costs such as university overhead but the budget is currently balanced. There is, however, a need for an auditor. There will be a document describing auditor's responsibilities and tasks send out. Also, there will be a support from Chalmers for the auditor.

2) AJK + Focus equality project group

Maria

AJK: Most of the meeting was spent on the results of employee survey, discussion

points were: status of the action plan to improve gender equality. The results are published on Insidan. Chalmers will setup action to support managers with checklist for preventing suicides among employees at Chalmers. Chalmers is good at working on gender issues and is doing good job on that as compared to other universities in Sweden.

3) Chalmers AB Board

Giulio

Last meeting was mostly spent discussing the results of employee survey as well. Presentation about the university ranking and how to improve it was given, also on how to empower workers & PhD students, how to attract & develop right competences (though no plan was developed yet). Giulio met vice president for PhD education, follow ups are not deep at the moment, not enough concentration on how to develop over years. Vice president agrees there can be improvement there. Giulio asked for good rules for procedure for the follow up meetings, how it should be done, to provide guidance in the document so these could be applied uniformly for all PhD students. It'll take time but it's a start and we convened the DS opinion on it.

4) Chalmers research foundation

Mursalin, Ananda

Mursalin reported that he and Ananda were in the evaluation board of Chalmers research foundation, and they had a meeting with other board members in October 2018 to evaluate all the applications. There were too few applications; so, more than 95% of the applications were granted, and the rejections were mostly due to incomplete or late applications.

5) Chalmers workfare (CHARM)

Agin, Nitesh

Agin: Nitesh is traveling at the moment so Agin is mostly taking care of the organization. The initial meetings were held, people were assigned time at the booth, accessories were ordered (from Cremona). Suggestion: to use more than 5 assigned people to man the booth so that everyone participates and we have a representation from more departments and the possibility to refer interested students to PhD students from all of the departments at Chalmers.

6) CHARM PhD alumni event

Carlo

Six of the alumni participants already confirmed their participation, the aim is to have ten, please suggest people from your departments. Ten to eleven people are still to answer. We have 58 registered attendants for now, room and food is available for up to 110 people. We'll wait with giving the final number of attendees to the organizer. There's an office of alumni at Chalmers and portal and they were interested to work together for next year's event.

7) DOMB contact

Giulio

Today a meeting with the DOMB and the vice president for research education regarding the rules of procedure document was held. There're errors, the DOMB has proposed many comments, these were accepted, there should be a considerable improvement. Annual report will be sent out when it's ready.

What's the DOMB's workload? Similar to last year, ~34%, while she was originally employed for 20%.

Giulio asks the Board: do we want to sign and prolong the DOMB's contract for the next period, i.e. 2 years? Unanimous answer of the Board is: yes.

8) DS homepage

Tomasz, Anand

There was mostly maintenance work conducted, for the rest of the year focus will be on preparing user guides and easy handover of the new tools to the new board.

9) Election committee

Anton, Anand, Carlo

No activity yet, from February there'll be activity, starting by asking who wants to stay in the Board during the break in the meeting.

10) Facebook

Nitesh, Mursalin

Sharing the info from the board is done. Mursalin also mentioned that there's interest from student union, who wants to share information on student union election, and DS representative replied that we (DS) can share maximum 1-2 posts on DS Facebook page (because DS doesn't want to irritate PhD Students with loads of news on student union election, so 1-2 posts on student union election should be fine to spread the news on Student Union Election). Also, feel free to contact if you want to share something.

The introduction of the new IT infrastructure allows for automatic posting of the DS webpage posts to Facebook though there might be information/news that are more appropriate to be posted to social media than the website. The DS homepage responsables will make sure the functionality is active.

11) Faculty council

Joakim

Last meeting: high level strategy discussions, how to organize support function at Chalmers, communication will be centralized. Overhead is increasing for support but people feel decreasing support, solutions discussed (ongoing work). Another issue: the president has said that for the first time in 20 years PhD student was failed on the thesis defence, we'll look into why it happened.

12) FUN

Nadja, Giulio

Difference between expected Licentiate times, how to approach the requirements of expected time of Lic, FUN's interested in data on that. PhD students should be able to receive a certificate for teaching done, who would be responsible? People who want it, should demand the certificate to trigger establishing the procedures. Also, supervision of BSc and MSc thesis was also brought in so that this should be considered teaching, two departments opposed to that strongly (since this is sometimes considered to be a help for one's PhD). No decision made. DS needs to bring it to local councils and work on it being considered a dept. duty.

13) Handling of failed PhD dissertation

Nadja

Work group: The current case is handled by the dept. There's not many procedures or structures, there should be (there's no such structure in Sweden). There're rules saying you have right to go for second defense. What could be in place earlier, any quality assurance in previous stages e.g. pre-internal evaluation before going for the defense. Also, PhD Student has the right to go for defense even though the pre-evaluation committee doesn't agree. The actions will be according to the rules of procedures. Vice president has written the first version/outline of rules of procedure for such situations. The work group had insight into the rules, these were straightforward. Now looking into whether there're gaps in rules for procedure of thesis pre-evaluations.

14) Individual study plan

Ananda

ISP – Ananda was on parental leave. ISP will be ready (implemented) soon; the President has made a decision to implement it. Giulio will continue to remotely interact with those developing it.

15) Introduction day

Sobhan

Will ask for more time than 20 minutes for this activity since there's a lot of information to pass on to the new PhD students and there is interest shown in that by them.

16) Investigation of Departmental Duty

Govindan

Received answers from all departments, compiling results.

17) Institutional Council

Library and GTS department, Swedish was probably required last year, working on

strategic requirements/plans. Didn't start yet, there're 2 meetings per year (approximately half a day for each meeting), we need new responsible (Siri won't work on it).

18) Local PhD student council reach out

Jiacheng

Dan Li: there will be a workshop for the board and all local PhD student councils (application for support prepared by Dan Li was accepted last year). There're 3 preliminary dates, at the moment evaluating answers from invited speakers with regard to possible time (depends on speakers availability; the possible times so far are 6 or 20 or 21st March from 3-6 pm). The plan of the workshop was presented. There will be emails sent out with more information.

19) Newsletter

Mursalin, Nitesh

The previous newsletter was sent out on time, the new one will be sent out around end of February. Make sure to include information about the PhD survey in it.

20) PhD portal

Raphael

Feature requests: keeping email address after completion of PhD (there was a wish from PhD student, but not possible at the moment due to security issues), easier access to master courses, multiple others. Recommendation with keeping email access: contact IT dept before finishing your PhD to extend email access (you will need permission from your line manager). Teaching certificates could be implemented with electronic ISP.

- Discussion section

Giulio proposes to give feedback to new written parts on the general study plans.

21) PhD survey

Samar, Julia, Anton

Julia: There were problems with access to the survey. Student union suggested different ways of accessing the survey with (1) paid account which allows the access (said they won't give the access due to GDPR). (2) they export the data we need and share the data. After a meeting with the Student Union representative, we opted for solution number 2.

22) Research misconduct

Julia

The Committee calls itself an ethical board, ethical problems are reported there. There was an issue reported from HSB Living lab about privacy harm. Meetings based on need basis. The committee is still assessing their competence areas. There's a Sweden wide research ethics board in Stockholm.

23) Student Union - Labour Market Analysis

Julia

Preliminary document on labor market, how we're ready, what employability, what are skills (PhD?) students have. There'll be final opinions. Very general answers. How companies have access to the campus, how students have access to internship, support for PhD students if they want to stay after PhD. The document will be sent out.

Equal chances and funding opportunities for PhD students were brought up.

24) SACO and Wage negotiations

Joakim

Wage negotiation is done, the contract is signed. New agreement: 30 000 entrance level salary, 4900 raise at the Licentiate level, no 3rd step. The final document received surprisingly showed no half-step salary increase (automatic increase at 2y and 6 months, half of the licentiate raise) but was not re-negotiated. There'll be group between Chalmers and union to investigate discrepancy between 2.5 (Licentiate expected time) and 3.2 years (average time it actually takes). The DS should push so that Licentiate is taken in 2.5 years and there is enough support to PhD students from Chalmers to do that within this time.

25) Social activities

Jiacheng, Dan

There were invites for lunches (Johanneberg, Lindholmen) and after the meeting (games are booked).

26) FUM meetings (monitor)

Giulio, Dan

One meeting since last time, student union gave report for previous operational year. New topics: how to have presence of student union at Lindholmen, what they wish from Chalmers to develop Lindholmen.

Spring will be election, will contact to advertise to PhD students.

27) Supervisor of the year

Agin, Samar, Raphael

There's considerably less applications. The interviews will be conducted soon and the announcement will be made mid march.

28) Swedish national PhD council (SFS-DK)

Sobhan

First meeting of the year will be held on the 2nd of February. Financing of research is to be discussed and reorganization upcoming. Sobhan will be leaving the board but can apply for the SFS-DK after he defends and he will report to the board.

29) Work group: University Evaluation

Dan

The university is writing the self-evaluation report. UKA appointed an evaluation committee to evaluate Chalmers. The committee has a strong profile towards gender equality. There'll be students and PhD remarks on the self report.

§7. "Themes of the day" discussion and other issues

Giulio (30)

- Change in Licentiate raise time was discussed, clarifications of the rules were presented.
- Person needed to replace Siri.
- Workgroups
- Transfer of credits from MSc to PhD, Johanna will take care of this activity, board agrees.
- Budgeting

Other issues

The summary of PhD part of the Chalmers internal evaluation's report will be reviewed by Giulio, then summarized and shared with the Board.

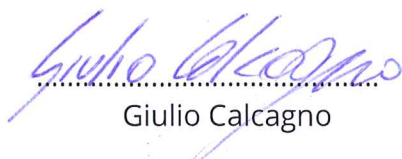
Next board meeting: 10/04


Next General Assembly: 22/05

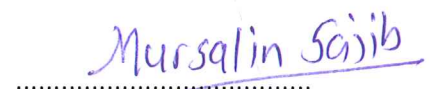
The meeting is closed.

TASK LIST:

Responsible	Task
Everyone	Send proposals for newsletter articles


Giulio Calcagno


Tomasz Kosiński


Mursalin Sajib

Board meeting – 2018-01-24

First name	Last name	Signature
Giulio	Calcagno	
Anna	Köhler	
Siri	Jagstedt	
Tomasz	Kosinski	
Maria	Landqvist	
Govindan	Induchoodan	
Mursalin	Sajib	
Nadja	Holtryd	
Joakim	Strandberg	
Dan	Li	
Sobhan Sophan	Sepehri	
Jiacheng	Xia	
Anand	Harihara	
Ananda S.	Kannan	
Anton	Kersten	
Nitesh Raj	Jaladurgam	
Carlo	Negrato	
Raphael	Ferreira	
Agin	Vyas	
Julia	Orlovska	
Samar	Hosseinzadegan	
Johanne	Meisalu	