

MC2 PhD council minutes - 2024/02/28

Time: 12h00

Place: B618

Present: Ariadna Soro Álvarez, Achintya Paradkar, Núria Alcalde Herraiz, Ragnar Ferrand-Drake Del Castillo, Erik Strandberg, Hanna Karlsson-Fernberg, Isak Brundin, Nermin Trnjanin, Patrik Blomberg, Hanna Linn

Election of meeting officials

- Chair: Núria Alcalde Herraiz (until 13:00), Nermin Trnjanin (13:00-13:20), Isak Brundin (13:20-14:00)
- Secretary: Hanna Karlsson-Fernberg
- Adopt the minutes: Ragnar Ferrand-Drake Del Castillo

2. **Approval of the agenda:** The agenda were approved.

3. **Meeting notice in due order:** Yes.

4. Updates from boards and committees

- The executive board (Ledningsgruppen, LG) – Hanna Linn
 - Traktamente (per diem): 5/2: As an employee you have the right to get traktamente for longer stays, even if it is the bare minimum set by Skatteverket or even lower, dependent on the living situation at site. The traktamente could be decided to be very small as a travel grant may cover trip, rent and academic costs. An employee should not gain extra money on the traktamente and it should only cover the extra cost of living. The traktamente should not be zero and your supervisor does not have the right to tell you to set it to zero or to not fill out a reserapport. But it should be noted that PhD students don't have the right to go do research stays and the traktamente should not be the limiting factor that makes the trip not take place. The traktamente should be discussed with the line manager before the trip takes place. Also, from the line manager's point of view, a sudden big cost not earlier discussed is not nice. Magnus will set a policy that the line manager should talk to the PhD student before the trip, but he does not want to set any other policies as to not limit PhD students in doing research stays. It will be communicated to all seniors that there should be a traktamente and it is wrong if there is none.
 - Swedish courses: HR central will buy (upphandla) Swedish courses for non-Swedish speaking employees. 20/2
- The department's advisory board (Institutionsrådet) – Isak Brundin
 - There hasn't been a meeting.
 - The requirement of a new Head of Department:
 - * A company has been hired to requite the new head of MC2 department.

- * A time plan has been set up for the requirement where they scheduled interviews Friday 1/3 as well as 4/3-8/3. They intend to send an offer for the new person in the end of March.
- Chalmers PhD student Guild (Doktorandsektionen, DS) – Ariadna Soro
 - Yin Zeng is stepping down from the DS and therefore DS need a new board member. Ariadna will send a message to see if someone might be interested. Preferably someone that has been doing the Ph.D. for a couple of years. (Núria may be interested).
 - A new DOMB (doktorandombud, Ph.D student ombudsman) will be hired by the Student Union. Inputs that could be valuable for the process could be passed from Ariadna to DS. The new DOMB should have suitable profile that is relatable for the Ph.D. student's situations and should be working at Chalmers.
 - The MC2 Alumni Network was used to find speakers for the PhD Alumni event (22 March) that is organized yearly by the DS.
 - The report for the Ph.D. survey 2022 is in the Ph.D. student council OneDrive. Ariadna shared on Facebook some of the highlights about MC2.
 - Preliminary results for the Ph.D survey 2024 will be put on OneDrive. Sending out the survey link repeatedly in different platforms (email, Slack, Facebook, etc) resulted in that the MC2 had a 2-3 times higher response rate than the previous edition. This time, there were more responses from early-stage Ph.D. students.
- The association of graduate students in Physics (Föreningen för Forskarstuderande i Fysik, FFF) – Ariadna Soro
 - We need an FFF member asap. Malte Dornieden (TML) is considering joining.
- Equality group (Jämställdhetsgruppen, Jägr) – Erik Strandberg
 - The date the first workshop is to be set 1/3.
 - Discussion about the joint announcement for position, which has been successful in attracting more candidates in the Physics Department.
 - A flow chart will be developed on how to act when someone is harassed. The first draft will be presented at the Jägr meeting 1/3.
- Dr Genie – Achintya Paradkar
 - A workshop will be arranged by Dr Genie on inclusion and strategy planning.
 - There will be a mapping of harassment cases. Cases can be reported to Achintya, and it does not have to be detailed or expose anyone.
 - Discussion on how protocols of employees accused or charged for harassment should be handled. Problems when employees are fired or asked to leave get a new position as protocols is not official. How to reach out in these cases?
 - There will be more spreading of awareness regarding sexual harassment as well as statistics. A meeting will be held in March.

5. Other issues

- Department Day - Everyone
 - QT took AQPs Menti and changed some of the questions, as well as the grading (1-10 instead of 1-5). They were presented and discussed with a mostly positive attitude but some also questioned if the indicators were backed up by research.
 - * It was found that there are issues related to transparency and collaboration between groups.
 - * Achintya will forward the results to Johan Veiga Benesch (scientific coordinator of WACQT).
 - Discussion on how to conduct the survey in other divisions. How to keep it as non-confrontational as possible?
- School evaluation – Patrik Blomberg
 - According to MC2 internal statistics, Ph.D. students at MC2 generally take a long time to complete their licentiate, but quite short time to defend the Ph.D. There is no data on mid-ways seminars, but this could be supplemented with data from the DS PhD Survey. We believe this could be attributed to the time required to start working in the cleanroom, get acquainted with different machines, techniques, obtain licenses, etc.
- There should be more information on Ph.D. student rights, besides the introduction session.
 - Suggestion to arrange a mid-way Ph.D. information meeting with food or fika to inform students on their rights. Ariadna suggests arranging this with help from someone else.
- The Physics Ph.D. council wants to organize a Gender Equality Event in April to present the results from the gender-based violence survey, and maybe also the ones from the PhD survey. They have asked us to join, so Ariadna, Erik, Achintya and Frida (Jäger) are in the loop. It is still unclear what MC2's role would be.
- Reporting TA hours – Isak Brundin
 - It is unclear how to report department duty hours.
 - There should be a system and information with clear guidelines on how the hours should be reported that the Ph.D. students, supervisors and examiners know about.
 - * Problems when Ph.D. students report hours spent on Master thesis projects, as 60 h was suggested by Per Rudquist and some people take it literally. The Ph.D. student should get the hours they spend as it takes a long time to teach the students the cleanroom processes.
 - Isak will discuss this at the next Executive Board meeting (he will attend instead of Hanna).
- Forced teaching duties – Ragnar Ferrand-Drake Del Castillo
 - Ragnar heard of a case of a PhD student who was being coerced into taking on more teaching duties. Can this be done? No. PhD students are not *obliged* to take on teaching, they are *allowed* to take up to 20% of their time.

- Per Rudquist should remind course examiners that. Ariadna will drop him an email.
- Alumni network, Questions to ask – Ragnar Ferrand-Drake Del Castillo
 - The alumni network has started and it's important to stay active.
 - First a poll will be sent (1/3) out for the alumni's followed by monthly interviews. Ragnar will take the lead on the content, with help from Ariadna.

6. Actions to take by next meeting.

- Isak: bring up the reporting of TA hours at the Executive Board.
- All outside AQP/QT: follow up on Department Day
- Ariadna: write Per about forced teaching duties
- Ragnar: post polls on the MC2 Alumni Network

7. Next meeting: Next meeting will be held 27/3 11:30.

8. Closing of the meeting