QGG Mentor Guidelines

The Center for Quantitative Genetics and Genomics (QGG) has started a mentor system for PhD students (from May 2023). The aim is to provide a person each student can ask for advice (in confidence). For example, the mentor can provide guidance on the PhD requirements, and ask whether the student is happy with their progress. The current mentor is Kristian Meier (kristian.meier@qgg.au.dk), whose office is Room 308, Building 1130 on the Aarhus University Campus.

Below are some guidelines for the mentor system.

Within 2 months of PhD Start

The mentor will schedule a joint meeting between the PhD student, supervisor(s) and mentor. By this point, the PhD student and supervisor(s) should have produced a PhD plan.

At the start of the meeting, the mentor will introduce themselves and explain how the student can contact them.

After the introduction, all present will look through the PhD plan. Possible focus points are:
Frequency of supervisor-student meetings (fixed or ad-hoc?)
Expected time to respond to emails.
Will the supervisor be away for extended periods?
Discuss the balance between scientific independence and supervision.
What are the student's major concerns.

At the end of the meeting, the mentor explains that they will have a compulsory meeting in four months time, then optional meetings every six months.

Six months after PhD start

The mentor will schedule a meeting between the PhD student and mentor only. At the start of this meeting, the mentor will explain that the details of this conversation are confidential.

Then suggested topics for the remainder of the meeting are

A - Is the student feeling confident about the scientific progress of their PhD?
Is the project progressing too slow, ok or ahead of schedule?
How is progress on the non-research activities (e.g., teaching, courses, secondment?)
Are the scientific demands too little, sufficient or too much?
Is the student's self-confidence low, medium or high?

B - Is the student feeling well integrated into the department?

    Are they receiving adequate scientific discussion / sparring?
    Are they satisfied with their social and personal relations?
    Are they receiving enough support from the student community?

C - How is the student's relationship to their supervisor?

    Communication
        Does the student feel they understand their supervisor?
        Does the student feel their supervisor understands them?
    Alignment of expectations
        Do the student and supervisor agree on the scientific expectations?
        Does the student feel the scientific expectations are relevant for their PhD?
        Does the student agree with the project timescales?
    Other issues
        Does the student feel their supervisor provides adequate support?
        Does the student feel their supervisor requests work outside of the PhD project?

D - Other issues?