



MALMÖ HÖGSKOLA

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Internal evaluation of doctoral education

Stage: Faculty of Culture and Society

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Preface

As an initiative to improve doctoral education, all the third-cycle subjects offered at Malmö University have been subjected to an internal evaluation over the period 2013-2015. A separate evaluation has been undertaken for each Faculty in accordance with specific guidelines.¹ Each results of each evaluation have been presented as a report including a series of recommendations for improvement. The report is based on a range of information sources including the general study plan for the subject in question and any other documents relating to the education, the study documentation in Ladok, a self-evaluation set out according to specified guidelines² and interviews with the groups of staff responsible for the self-evaluation document, with doctoral candidates enrolled in the subject and with the Faculty management. On completion, the reports have been presented to both the Research Advisory Committee at the University and the relevant Faculty. Shortly after receiving the report, the representative on the Research Advisory Committee is required to present the measures proposed by the Faculty to address the recommendations made in the report. The programme of measures is followed up by the Research Education Committee after one year.

Professor Julia Davies acted as chairperson for the evaluation group responsible for this report.

¹ For a complete description and schedule, see “Kvalitetsutveckling av Malmö högskolas utbildning på forskarnivå – principer” (Mahr Dnr. 68-2014/99).
<http://www.mah.se/upload/Forskning/ForskningUFS/Principer%20-%20Kvalitetsutvärdering%20av%20Malmö%20högskolas%20utbildning%20på%20forskarnivå.pdf>

² A more detailed description of the layout is given in “Evaluation of doctoral education: layout of the self-evaluation” (Mahr Dnr. 68-2014/99).

Introduction and outline

The Faculty of Culture and Society has the right to award doctoral degrees in two areas: New media, public spheres and forms of expression (NMOG) and Migration, Urbanization and Societal Change (MUSA). Each area offers two doctoral research education subjects, NMOG: Media and Communication Studies (MCS) and Interaction Design (ID) and MUSA: International Migration and Ethnic Relations (IMER) and Urban Studies (US).

Each subject has been evaluated separately on the basis of hearings with the staff responsible for the self-evaluation and other relevant material (13th-14th November 2014). Separate hearings were held with representatives for the doctoral candidates and the Faculty management on 14th and 17th November 2014, respectively. The report is structured along similar lines to the self-evaluation provided by the self-assessment groups. Since many central observations and recommendations affect the University or the Faculty as a whole, these have been grouped in the first two sections. Thereafter, follows a section reviewing each subject individually.

The evaluation group's task has been to observe each subject and carry out a peer-review in order to provide constructive criticism. As is often the case in an academic environment, this has led to a focus on the identification of elements within the research education environment, both at subject and Faculty level, which could be improved. However examples of good practice are also mentioned. Comments pertinent to more than one subject within an area of research education may be mentioned more than once.

Recommendations on the University level

The evaluation at the Faculty of Culture and Society has highlighted a number of recommendations, listed below. These are also relevant to, and have been identified in the previous evaluations of the Faculties of Health and Society, Odontology and Education and Society.

General requirements

1. The new agreement on working hours for Professors can have damaging effects on the different research environments. The University and the Faculties should therefore examine the consequences of the agreement with regard to maintaining sufficient quality and quantity of research to live up to the requirements for a vital research environment for all subjects. They should also evaluate whether the new conditions will affect the possibility for Professors to successfully compete for external funding, including funding for doctoral studies. Serious consideration should be given to how the conditions concerning guaranteed time for research can be adapted to make them more attractive to key personnel needed to maintain the research environments within some subjects.
2. Since many Supervisors are forced to use their research time for supervision of candidates, particularly in the final stages of their doctoral studies, the effects of the new agreement on working hours for professors on research education also need to be evaluated.
3. The University should investigate the possibility of employing a “fundraiser” to help with grant applications, which have now become much more important in the light of the changes in employment conditions for Professors. Not least, a fundraiser is needed to attract external funding for doctoral candidates now that Professors must prioritize applications for funding to guarantee their own research time.

Language

4. The University should ensure that the generic doctoral courses are always given in English so that non-Swedish-speaking doctoral candidates can attend the same courses as their Swedish-speaking counterparts.
5. Versions of the administration systems (Palasso, Proceedo and Invoice Manager or future equivalents) should be available in English to make life easier for non-Swedish-speaking doctoral candidates and other co-workers.
6. The University central administration should work with the Faculties to ensure that complete and updated information about doctoral studies is available in English on the University website.

Doctoral candidate's working environment

7. The introduction is important for new doctoral candidates. To ensure that this is optimal, the introduction course run at the University level should be synchronized as far as possible with the introductions given by the Faculty and the Department.
8. Several of the Faculties have a significant number of doctoral candidates with external employers. This can be regarded as positive in that it shows that the University is an attractive partner for collaboration, but can also have a negative effect upon the research environment if these doctoral candidates rarely visit the Faculty. This should be taken up and discussed by the leadership both at Faculty and University levels. If a subject has too many doctoral candidates with another employer, it can be difficult to ensure a viable study environment, particularly because these are often candidates studying part-time from a distance.
9. A problem related to external financing of doctoral studies is that the project leader and the candidate's supervisor is often the same person. From the doctoral candidate's point of view, this means that they are dependent upon this one person throughout their

studies. Even though the doctoral candidates report that they are given “freedom under responsibility”, how this arrangement is compatible with the learning goal related to independence needs to be considered. A policy for how to deal with such a situation should be discussed by the leadership both at Faculty and University levels.

Courses

10. The current evaluation, and that at the Faculty of Education and Society, highlighted the need for a review of the doctoral courses offered by the University, particularly the course in Research Methodology. Very few doctoral candidates from either Culture and Society or Education and Society participate in the University courses.

Examination

11. There is great uncertainty as to the role of the examiner in doctoral studies and even whether an examiner is required (see Faculty recommendations). The University should develop guidelines regarding what the examiner is responsible for and instructions to the Faculty committees to ensure that all the goals for doctoral education are examined.
12. One of the purposes of the ISP is to track the progress of the doctoral candidate. An annual self-evaluation by the candidate of their fulfillment of the goals for doctoral education (in collaboration with their examiner) would be a great help in monitoring the progress of the doctoral studies. The current form for the ISP should be reworked, amongst other things, to allow this.

Recommendations on the Faculty level

The evaluation of doctoral education at the Faculty of Culture and Society raised a number of general problems related to the flow of information within the Faculty, the introduction of new doctoral candidates, the planning of teaching and other departmental duties and the research environment. More specific details are presented below.

1. The international nature of research at the Faculty of Culture and Society means that it attracts doctoral candidates from both other parts of Sweden and abroad. It is important that all doctoral candidates, but particularly those that do not speak Swedish, receive a good introduction to the workplace and their studies. The Faculty should give particular attention to this by improving their introduction routines. Measures such as organizing a meeting with the Doctoral Student's Union upon arrival, providing a checklist for supervisors and co-ordination of the introduction at Faculty level with those at University and Departmental levels should be introduced. The possibility of using both Swedish and English at all formal and informal meetings should be considered.
2. The doctoral candidate representatives raised issues concerning apparent differences in working conditions, length of employment and salary between doctoral candidates. The Faculty should take steps to ensure that there is consensus concerning these issues and that Faculty policy regarding these is conveyed to the doctoral candidates.
3. Within the current linear organization, doctoral candidates and some staff appeared unsure at what level decisions regarding different aspects of doctoral education are made. The decision-making processes within the Faculty should be made clearer for all concerned with doctoral education.
4. Currently the roles of MUSA-SO, GPS-HK and US-HK in administering doctoral education within MUSA are ambiguous. The evaluation group recommends that the Faculty instigate a Supervisor board for MUSA (MUSA-HK) in analogy to that for NMOG to concentrate decision-making with regard to MUSA doctoral candidates to one body.
5. Teaching and other departmental duties are important for socialization into the workplace. Doctoral candidates problematized the allocation of these tasks, with some expected to do too many and others not offered any. The Faculty should ensure that the Head of Department has each candidate's ISP available during the annual appraisal and that the planning of doctoral education is discussed in order to optimize the extra duties of each doctoral candidate.
6. Attendance at the University's doctoral courses is poor amongst candidates from the Faculty of Culture and Society, which means that the generic goals must be fulfilled within the Faculty. Moreover, there is a need for relevant courses in research methodology for candidates at the Faculty. The Faculty must address how this need can be met, for instance, by developing courses, collaborating with other HEIs, or adapting existing courses to ensure that candidates meet the goals for doctoral education.
7. None of the staff interviewed professed knowledge of the principles governing allocation of the Faculty budget for research education. The evaluation group recommends that the Faculty develop ways to increase the transparency and collegiate influence into this process so that all those concerned become engaged in this part of the budgetary process.
8. The research environment for some subjects, particularly within NMOG, is currently fragmented. The Faculty should take the necessary steps to facilitate an active research environment within each subject and work to establish a good physical environment for doctoral candidates in all subjects in conjunction with the move to Niagara.
9. The Faculty should review the General Study plans for each subject and develop guidelines for how specific criteria, such as "the ability to work in a team" are assessed and review whether all criteria are relevant to all subjects.
10. The evaluation group questions the decision to appoint the main supervisor as examiner adopted at the Faculty of Culture and Society. This should be reviewed in the light of the disadvantages that total dependency upon the Supervisor can have for the doctoral candidate.

Media and Communication Studies

Doctoral education in Media and Communication Studies (MCS) has been conducted at Malmö University (Mah) since 2010, when the University gained the rights to award doctoral degrees within the research area "New media, public spheres and forms of expression (NMOG)". Prior to this (since 2006) research education had been conducted through an agreement with Karlstad University. MCS at Malmö University differs from the traditional "analytical-critical" approach through having the double perspective of theory and practice. There are clear links to the other subjects within NMOG, particularly Interaction Design (ID) as emphasized by a joint thesis recently presented by doctoral candidates from the two subjects. MCS and ID have a joint Supervisors Board (NMOG-HK). The Faculty of Culture and Society funds equal numbers of doctoral candidates in each subject and the leadership report an intention to continue this policy. According to the self-evaluation, there are currently 4 doctoral candidates enrolled in MCS and, so far, 3 candidates have defended their theses. There are relatively few doctoral candidates enrolled in MCS but collaboration within NMOG enriches the research environment, which is beneficial for the doctoral candidates.

The Education Process

Information

A website with formal information both in Swedish and English has been developed by the Faculty during the autumn of 2014, resulting in an electronic study handbook. This is good idea, facilitating easy revision of documents associated with doctoral education. The doctoral candidate representatives suggested that the formal documents could be complemented with information about the actual experience of being a doctoral candidate at the Faculty including, for instance, a section for FAQs.

Recruitment and Admission

The profile of MCS at Mah differs from that offered by other Swedish Universities and stands out in an international perspective, with much collaboration with international researchers. Doctoral positions are advertised both nationally and internationally and attract many very highly qualified applicants (up to 37 applicants for one position), many of whom have not previously studied in Sweden. A Masters course in "Media and Communication Studies" will be started in 2015 and is expected to increase the possibility of recruitment of more undergraduates from Mah to doctoral studies.

A group of three (including the proposed supervisor) is appointed by NMOG-HK to manage the admission process. After assessment of the applicant's qualifications in relation to the selection criteria, they are ranked and interviews are conducted locally or via *e.g.* Skype. NMOG-HK makes a recommendation and the Vice Dean makes the final decision. The supervisor is appointed immediately and it is not clear whether the doctoral candidates have an input into this process. Some staff expressed concern that the relatively long administration time for applications could, in some cases, mean that top applicants had already accepted employment elsewhere. Clear guidelines for how applications from potential doctoral candidates with financing other than as an employee are presented in the self-evaluation document, although no such candidates have yet been admitted.

Introduction

The introduction is reported as occurring on three-levels – University, Faculty and Department. On the University level there is an ambition that all doctoral candidates should attend the Introduction course but during the hearings it was apparent that many did not know about the course and none had attended. At the Faculty level, the Associate Dean for

Postgraduate Education introduces new doctoral candidates. At the hearing the doctoral candidate representatives said that they lacked information about who was responsible for making decisions at Faculty and University levels and were unsure of who they should contact regarding different issues. Some candidates also mentioned that many supervisors were also unsure about the rules and regulations governing doctoral studies and how these were applied at Faculty level. Doctoral candidates are introduced at the Department level by their supervisor, the Head of Department and other doctoral candidates. It is unclear whether and how this introduction is coordinated with the others, possibly contributing to the difficulties in navigating within the organization experienced by the candidates. Therefore it is important to review how to coordinate the introduction at different levels to best meet the needs of individual doctoral candidates, particularly those from abroad.

The Individual Study Plan

The Individual study plan (ISP) is a legal document regulating both the doctoral candidate and the supervisor's commitments but it is also designed to allow follow-up a doctoral candidate's progress and as an instrument for planning. Both supervisors and doctoral candidates within MCS regarded the ISP more as a checklist than the important tool in planning future activities that it is intended to be. All the doctoral candidate representatives at the hearing called for better planning of teaching and departmental duties. The Doctoral Student's Union reports that the allocation of teaching duties at the Faculty often occurs at short notice – a factor that causes stress and makes planning of activities difficult. Use of the ISP allows for good planning of teaching and other duties as well as the different elements in a doctoral education, provided that the supervisor and doctoral candidate discuss the coming year's activities. It is also desirable that the Head of Department who is responsible for allocating duties, has access to each doctoral candidate's ISP during the annual review in order to coordinate doctoral research education with departmental commitments and teaching.

Realization of the Goals for Doctoral Education and Courses

The goals for doctoral education are fulfilled through production and defence of a thesis and courses as well as participation in scientific conferences and visits to other HEIs. Due to the small number of candidates, MCS pools specialist resources with other Swedish HEIs to run courses in the history of Media and Communication Studies and current Media and Communication Studies. This arrangement fulfills the needs of candidates now but it should be noted that this heavy reliance on other HEIs makes the Faculty vulnerable to external influences. Another issue raised in the self-evaluation is the lack of a relevant methodology course. Few doctoral candidates from MCS attend the courses offered by Mah suggesting that these are not attractive or that the candidates do not know about them. The Faculty should investigate the possibility of developing an advanced methodology course relevant to its doctoral candidates.

The research environment

All doctoral candidates within MCS have a work place and computer but the Department of Arts and Communication (K3) is currently spread out within a temporary location. There are no seminars specifically for doctoral candidates in MCS and the research environment is therefore centered around the higher seminars offered at K3. These, organized by doctoral candidates, focus on the research area NMOG and are held every fourth week. Both staff and candidates raised the issue of poor attendance at the higher seminars. The reasons for this include the split department, a lack of interest in research outside the main research area and lack of time amongst senior staff. Since these seminars are such an important part of the research environment it is of the highest priority that MCS and ID work together to develop strategies to ensure that they work effectively.

Supervision

The connection between MCS and ID is strong and many professors and docents act as supervisors in both subjects. There are 9 potential main supervisors and 7 of them currently act as supervisors. Two of them will retire before 2016. In addition there are 5 lecturers all of whom should become docents in the near future. Funding is available for finishing articles etc to promote this. A lecturer with docent competency is also about to be recruited. The supervision capacity is thus very good. The process of appointing and, possibly changing, supervisors is similar to the one at ID. It is not always the case that a researcher with external financing is appointed as the main supervisor. However, if a researcher provides external funds he or she will always be in the group who evaluates applicants for the position. Doctoral candidates are formally entitled to 80 hours of supervision per academic year, distributed between at least two supervisors. Supervision is listed on the supervisor's "tjänstgöringskort" and financed, over and above the guaranteed level of 20 %, from the Faculty's research budget. The time for supervision is not sufficient when the doctoral candidate is in the final phase of writing the dissertation and time intended for the supervisor's research is often used in such cases. This is a common problem, which needs to be addressed at the University level. The doctoral candidate representatives raised the need for support of less experienced supervisors. According to the self-evaluation document, this issue has been addressed by regularly undertaking supervision in groups, but a system to continuously develop skills in this area is desirable. The adequacy of supervision is judged from the ISP during the yearly discussion at NMOG-HK. It is the general opinion that this works well. The candidates are now also represented on NMOG-HK and have the possibility of initiating general discussions about supervision.

Publishing

The traditional thesis form within MCS is the monograph, but compilation theses are becoming more common. So far, all doctoral candidates in MCS have written their theses in English. A great deal of effort is put into supporting writing and publishing. The candidates present papers at Nordic conferences where they try out ideas. Special days for publishing issues are arranged. Papers are presented at seminars and retreats etc. Language editing is available through the Language Editing Group (LEG), although this service is not used much by the candidates, possibly due to a lack of information.

Internationalization

As reported in the self-evaluation, internationalization is an important aspect within MCS. Doctoral positions attract applicants from outside Sweden – a factor that contributes to the international atmosphere but also places demands upon the Faculty in terms of introduction and support. The doctoral candidates raised the need for more meetings to be held in English, if they are to be fully included in departmental activities. Up till now, all the doctoral candidates in MCS have spent a significant period of time at an HEI abroad, which has been financed through external grants. There is however, a clear risk that this will not be possible for all candidates. Doctoral candidates gain access to the international arena through presentation of their research at international conferences and an active international network of collaborators.

Career Planning

Newly examined doctoral candidates have many possible career paths open to them. To prepare them as well as possible, all are recommended to undertake departmental duties, including teaching. Through their supervisors, candidates gain access to research networks that can be important in the future. However, the doctoral candidate representatives raised the

need for more strategic measures in career planning, *e.g.* support in preparing a pedagogical portfolio, inclusion in grant-writing and research projects, as well as contact with alumni.

Financing

Each doctoral candidate at the Faculty receives a “backpack” containing 50 000 SEK to cover costs during their studies. The doctoral candidate representatives said that both they and many supervisors were unclear as to what costs this money was expected to cover (*e.g.* language editing, courses, conferences, field work etc). A policy regarding this is needed. The Faculty leadership highlighted their strategy for increasing the success of external grant applications, including peer-review panels and feedback from the Vice-Dean before submission.

Possible areas of improvement for MCS:

1. It is of the highest priority that steps are taken to strengthen the academic environment by ensuring that the higher seminars at K3 work more effectively.
2. Whether supervisors could be appointed later in the admission process to allow doctoral candidates themselves to have an input in the decision should be considered.
3. A routine to ensure that applications for positions are dealt with by NMOG-HK as effectively as possible should be considered.
4. Steps should be taken to better synchronize the introduction to the Department with that at University and Faculty levels, and to clarify for both staff and doctoral candidates who is responsible for decision-making at different levels.
5. An information package should be developed to improve the introduction for new doctoral candidates, particularly for those from overseas.
6. Increasing the availability of day-to-day documentation in English to better include overseas candidates in academic life should be addressed.
7. The Departmental head should have the doctoral candidates ISP available during the annual appraisal so that doctoral research education can be better coordinated with departmental commitments and teaching.
8. The possibility of developing a methodology course relevant to doctoral candidates from MCS should be investigated.
9. Steps should be taken to secure financing for candidates to carry out essential work abroad.
10. A system to continuously develop the skills of less experienced supervisors should be instigated.

Interaction Design

Doctoral education in Interaction Design (ID) has been conducted at Mah since 2010, when the University gained the rights to award doctoral degrees within the research area "New media, public spheres and forms of expression (NMOG)". Prior to this (since 2000) research education had been conducted through an agreement with Blekinge Technical University. ID concerns the design of human interaction and communication by means of digital or digitally-facilitated artifacts and media, and the primary focus at Mah is on those aspects of ID that are relevant to the research area NMOG. There are clear links to the other subjects within NMOG, Media and Communication Studies and Computer Science, and doctoral candidates from ID and MCS recently presented a joint thesis. The Faculty of Culture and Society funds equal numbers of doctoral candidates in each subject and the management report an intention to continue this policy. According to the self-evaluation, there were 7 doctoral candidates enrolled in ID during the autumn of 2014 and, so far, 5 candidates have defended their theses at Mah.

The Education Process

Information

A website with formal information both in Swedish and English has been developed by the Faculty during the autumn of 2014, resulting in an electronic study handbook. This is good idea, facilitating easy revision of documents associated with doctoral education. The doctoral candidate representatives suggested that the formal documents could be complemented with information about the actual experience of being a doctoral candidate at the Faculty including, for instance, a section for FAQs.

Recruitment and Admission

ID at Mah is well renowned in the field with many international collaborators and research networks. Doctoral positions are therefore advertised broadly and attract a large number of applicants (most recently 20 applicants from 13 countries for 1 position). A group is appointed by NMOG-HK to deal with the admission process. The applicant is required to have academic qualifications as well as "a portfolio of relevant work", although this is not made clear in the General Study Plan. There are no clear guidelines as to how the portfolio of relevant work is assessed and how it is related to academic qualifications. At the hearing it was mentioned that, in addition to the quality of the work, factors such as participation in exhibitions and collaboration were taken into account. Following interview of the top-ranked applicants a report is submitted to NMOG-HK, which makes a recommendation to the Vice Dean. The supervisor team is appointed at this stage and it is not clear whether the doctoral candidates have an input into this process. The self-evaluation document mentions a concern that the relatively long administration time for applications could, in some cases, mean that top applicants had accepted employment elsewhere.

Introduction

The introduction is reported as occurring on three-levels – University, Faculty and Department. On the University level there is an ambition that all new doctoral candidates should attend the Introduction course but as for MCS, it was apparent during the hearings that many did not know about this introduction and few had attended. The Associate Dean for Postgraduate Education introduces new doctoral candidates to the Faculty. Doctoral candidates reported a lack of information regarding decision-making at Faculty and University levels and they were unsure of whom to contact regarding different issues. Some said that many supervisors also appeared unsure about the rules and regulations governing doctoral studies and how these were applied at Faculty level. The self-assessment document

mentions that measures are being taken at Faculty level to improve this situation. At Departmental level a doctoral candidate is introduced to the working space and facilities. It is unclear whether and how this introduction is coordinated with the others, possibly contributing to the “powerlessness” described in the self-assessment and the subsequent difficulties in navigating within the organization experienced by the doctoral candidates. It is important to review how the introduction at different levels is coordinated to best meet the needs of individual doctoral candidates, particularly those from abroad. The mixture of languages used within ID (English and Swedish) also appears to present a problem for both doctoral candidates and staff, with mainly Swedish spoken at, for instance, the breakfast meetings and informal gatherings. This can lead to the exclusion of English-speaking candidates and mean that they miss important information.

The Individual Study Plan

The individual study plan (ISP) is a legal document regulating both the doctoral candidate and the supervisor’s commitments and must therefore be taken seriously. Within ID, the ISP is reviewed annually and examined by NMOG-HK. The self-assessment points out that the degree to which a doctoral candidate’s progress is followed-up can vary possibly due to a lack of understanding about the intentions behind the ISP and the fact that parts of the form (e.g. the section for reporting published work) are not well suited to the needs of ID candidates.

As described for MCS, the doctoral candidates at the hearing called for better planning of teaching and departmental duties as well as more help with career planning. The Doctoral Student’s Union reports that the allocation of teaching duties at the Faculty often occurs at short notice – a factor that causes stress and makes planning of activities difficult. This is reinforced in the self-assessment document. Proper use of the ISP can improve planning of teaching and other duties with the different elements in a doctoral education, provided that the supervisor and doctoral candidate discuss the coming year’s activities. Currently, the doctoral candidate fills in the ISP and sends it to their supervisor, who in turn sends it to NMOG-HK which meets four times per term. To reduce the levels of stress it is important that the ISP is used as a document for both planning and monitoring. It is desirable that the doctoral candidate’s departmental head, who is responsible for allocating duties, has access to the ISP during the annual appraisal in order to coordinate doctoral research education with departmental commitments and teaching.

Realization of the Goals for Doctoral Education and Courses

The goals for doctoral education are fulfilled through dissertation and its oral defence as well as courses (60 ECTS). Doctoral candidates in ID hold 10-24%, 50% and 90% seminars. Participation in the international research community and extramural collaborations are not formally assessed but are regarded as essential for progress towards defence of a thesis. ID participates in, and is heavily reliant upon The Swedish Design Faculty for Design Research and Research Education “Designfakulteten”, the national platform for design research and design education. Designfakulteten has been financed by the Swedish Research Council (VR), but its future is currently uncertain. ID has collaborated with, for example, Aarhus and Copenhagen to run courses on “interactive spaces” and “playful interaction and narrative” but there is no specific methodology course for ID. The doctoral candidates also pointed out that the courses currently on offer by the Faculty do not really cover aspects of “New Media”. Attendance at external courses can be a problem since these have to be paid for from the candidate’s “backpacks”. The current arrangements seem to fulfill the needs of candidates in ID at the moment but it must be appreciated that reliance on external courses makes the Faculty vulnerable to factors beyond its control. It is important that there is a strategy to ensure that the candidates meet the generic goals for doctoral education especially in view of the fact that they reported no knowledge of the courses offered by Mah.

The research environment

All doctoral candidates within ID have a work place and computer but the Department of Arts and Communication (K3) is currently spread out within its temporary location. This has negative consequences for the research-training environment, prohibiting for instance spontaneous contact with colleagues. There are no seminars specifically for doctoral candidates in ID and the research environment is therefore centered around the monthly higher seminars at K3. The self-evaluation emphasizes the problems with poor attendance and the lack of a multidisciplinary meeting of minds at these seminars. The reasons for this include the split location, a lack of interest in research outside the main research area and lack of time amongst senior staff. Since these seminars are such an important part of the research environment it is of the highest priority that ID and MCS develop strategies to ensure that they work effectively.

Supervision

There are four professors in ID, one of whom will retire during the next year. There are also six lecturers with a doctorate and two such positions that will soon be filled. One of the lecturers will soon be appointed docent. There is no formal program or strategy to promote lecturers to docent but individuals are strongly encouraged to, for example, attend courses in supervision and pedagogy to promote their careers. The lecturers are also active in research projects. The supply of supervisors thus seems to be secured. The main supervisor and the supervisor are appointed by NMOG-HK at the beginning of the project. Although it is not always the case that a researcher with external financing is appointed as the main supervisor, he or she will always be in the group who evaluates applicants for the position. Should the research direction alter, possible supervisor constellations are discussed in NMOG-HK and changes made as needed after consultation with the doctoral candidate. The process of appointing supervisors is the same in case of external funding for the doctoral position and there is an awareness of the potential conflicts between the supervisor and the project leader. Doctoral candidates are formally entitled to 80 hours of supervision per academic year, distributed between at least two supervisors. Supervision is listed on the supervisor's "tjänstgöringskort". Supervision occurs mainly one-on-one and in practice, amounts to much more than 80 hours. Since supervision is given individually it is important that the less experienced supervisors have the opportunity to develop their skills in this area. The adequacy of supervision is judged from the ISP during the yearly discussion in NMOG-HK. It is the general opinion that this is working well. The candidates are now also represented in NMOG and have a possibility to initiate more general discussions about supervision.

Publishing

The traditional thesis form within ID is the monograph produced as a book, although some doctoral candidates favour hybrid theses with a long introduction introducing new material or conceptual structures. Candidates choose the most appropriate form in collaboration with their supervisor. Candidates also publish conference and journal papers prior to the thesis. The dissertation is usually written in English but no formalized training in writing English is given. However, special events dealing with publishing issues are arranged. Papers are presented at seminars and retreats etc. Language editing is available through the Language Editing Group (LEG), although this service is not used much by the candidates, possibly due to a lack of information. Overall, the support for writing and publishing at MCS appears to be good.

Internationalization

ID as an academic subject is inherently international and dominated by Anglo-American influences. This is also true for ID at Mah. Doctoral positions attract applicants from outside

Sweden – a factor that contributes to the international atmosphere but also places demands upon the Faculty in terms of introduction and support. As mentioned above, English-speaking candidates easily become excluded from the informal activities in the Department. Doctoral candidates gain access to the international arena through presentation of their research at international conferences and an active international network of collaborators.

Career Planning

The labour market for newly examined doctoral candidates in ID is currently very good as the academic field of interaction design grows. All 12 of the graduates so far are now employed in academia in Sweden or Denmark. To prepare them as well as possible, all are recommended to undertake departmental duties, including teaching, as well as participating in conferences and the writing of grant applications and going on sabbaticals. Through their supervisors, candidates gain access to research networks that can be important in the future.

Financing

Each doctoral candidate receives a “backpack” containing 50 000 SEK to cover costs during their studies. There was uncertainty amongst the candidates as to what costs could be covered with this money (*e.g.* language editing, courses, conferences, sabbaticals etc). A policy regarding this is needed.

Possible areas of improvement for ID:

1. It is of the highest priority that steps are taken to strengthen the academic environment by ensuring that the higher seminars at K3 work more effectively.
2. The requirement for academic qualifications as well as “a portfolio of relevant work”, should be made clearer in the General Study Plan and guidelines as to how the portfolio is assessed and related to academic qualifications should be developed.
3. Whether supervisors could be appointed at the same time as admission to allow doctoral candidates themselves to have an input in the decision should be considered.
4. A routine to ensure that applications for positions are dealt with by NMOG-HK as effectively as possible should be considered.
5. Steps should be taken to better synchronize the introduction to the Department with that at University and Faculty levels, and to clarify for both staff and doctoral candidates who is responsible for decision-making at different levels.
6. An information package should be developed to improve the introduction for new doctoral candidates, particularly those from overseas.
7. Staff and doctoral candidates should discuss and develop guidelines as to how the ISP can work better for ID.
8. The Departmental head should have the doctoral candidate’s ISP available during the annual appraisal so that doctoral research education can be better coordinated with departmental commitments and teaching.
9. The possibility of developing a methodology course relevant to doctoral candidates from ID should be investigated in order to make it possible for them to fulfill the goals for doctoral education.
10. Measures to ensure that collaboration with the partners in Designfakulteten can continue even if VR support is discontinued should be considered.
11. Steps should be taken to secure financing for candidates to carry out essential work abroad.
12. A system to continuously develop the skills of less experienced supervisors should be instigated.

International Migration and Ethnic Relations

Doctoral education in International Migration and Ethnic Relations (IMER) has been conducted at Mah since 2012, when the University gained the rights to award doctoral degrees within the research area "Migration, Urbanization and Societal change" (MUSA). Prior to this (since 1999) research education in IMER was conducted through agreements with Linköping University or other Faculties at Mah. The subject is concerned with population movements and ethnic relations resulting from these movements in relation to urbanity and urbanization. At Mah the focus is on the parts of IMER relevant to MUSA. There are natural links to the other subject within MUSA, namely Urban Studies (US) and the two research areas work together through the cooperative body MUSA-SO. In contrast to US, IMER does not have its own Supervisors board but comes under the remit of the Supervisors board for Global Political Studies (GPS). The relationship between the Supervisory Boards (US-HK and GPS-HK) and MUSA-SO is currently unclear with GPS-HK responsible for some issues and MUSA-SO for others. In some cases they are described as "working together". The evaluation group suggests that the Faculty establishes a MUSA-HK in analogy to NMOG-HK to allow one body to deal with all issues regarding doctoral education for candidates within MUSA. The Faculty of Culture and Society funds equal numbers of doctoral candidates in each subject and the leadership report an intention to continue this policy. According to the self-evaluation, there were 7 doctoral candidates enrolled in IMER during the autumn of 2014 but so far none have defended their theses at Mah.

The Education Process

Information

A website with formal information both in Swedish and English has been developed by the Faculty during the autumn of 2014, resulting in an electronic study handbook. This is good idea, facilitating easy revision of documents associated with doctoral education. The doctoral candidate representatives suggested that the formal documents could be complemented with information about the actual experience of being a doctoral candidate at the Faculty including, for instance, a section for FAQs. Doctoral candidates in IMER also benefit from regular information on activities within MUSA via It's Learning and email.

Recruitment and Admission

Since 1999, staff within IMER has supervised many doctoral candidates through agreements with other HEIs. IMER has had one collective intake of three candidates to doctoral education since the rights to examine at doctoral level were awarded to Mah. All other candidates were enrolled according to the start of their projects during the spring of 2012. Two of the IMER doctoral candidates had completed 1- or 2-year masters in IMER at Mah, 3 had undergraduate training from other HEIs in Sweden and 2 had not previously studied in Sweden. Due to financial constraints there are currently no plans for further recruitment by the direct government funding for research. Positions are advertised in both English and Swedish with the aim of attracting doctoral candidates from abroad. Vacancies are advertised internationally and on the University website after approval by the Head of Department and the Dean. Representatives from IMER in MUSA-SO lead the process to rank and select applicants for interview. In the latest round of appointments, there were many highly qualified applicants for the positions and interviews were decisive. In the selection of applicants, "ability to collaborate" was one of the criteria but there are no clear guidelines as to how this is assessed.

Introduction

The introduction of doctoral candidates in IMER is reported as occurring on three levels; University, Faculty and Department. The introduction at University level is complemented by

an introduction where candidates receive more information at Faculty level. The Associate Dean for Postgraduate Education holds an introductory meeting with all new doctoral candidates. On the Department level, the supervisor and the Head of Department carry out the introduction. Unfortunately, the doctoral candidates report difficulties with the integration of the introduction at these different levels. They find it difficult to know what information is given at what level and in which language, and some information may be missed. Due to horizontal integration at the Faculty, doctoral candidates belonging to same subject may be affiliated to different Departments – making coordination of the introduction even more difficult. It is especially important that doctoral candidates from abroad receive better information concerning housing, salary, bank accounts etc. The doctoral candidate representatives called for better information regarding how salaries are decided, the length of contracts and other details regarding employment. The Faculty leadership reports the appointment of an administrator to assist with these issues.

The Individual Study Plan

The ISP is a legal document governing doctoral studies and regulating the collaboration between the doctoral candidate and the supervisors. After acceptance to doctoral studies, the ISP is drawn up by both parties and includes a plan for how the candidate will be financed throughout their studies. In the self-evaluation, it is reported that the ISP is updated annually by the doctoral candidate and supervisor. At the hearing however, the doctoral candidate representatives report that in practice they alone are responsible for completing the annual follow-ups. They considered the ISP to be a valuable document that could be used more actively as a tool for planning, particularly of teaching and other departmental duties, which are often allocated somewhat *ad hoc* and at short notice. In the hearing with the self-evaluation group, it became evident that many of the staff regarded the form for the ISP as complicated and had discussed development of an alternative form. The evaluation group recommends that Mah's form is used but suggest that instructions on how to fill out the form are developed to simplify its use. It is also recommended that IMER develop guidelines to ensure that the ISP is revised annually by doctoral candidate and supervisor together.

Realization of the Goals for Doctoral Education and Courses

The goals for doctoral education in IMER are fulfilled through a thesis and its oral defence as well as courses. The thesis can be a compilation or a monograph. Doctoral candidates in IMER hold a start seminar within the first year as well as 20 %, 50 %, 75 % and 90 % seminars. The 50 % seminar is undertaken after the doctoral candidate has completed 30 ECTS of courses and approval has been obtained from the supervisor and one representative from US and IMER. Currently, the level required for each stage is not clearly defined. This is particularly important with regard to the salary increments for doctoral candidates at 50 % and 75 %. Before the defense is approved, a docent or professor who has not been involved in the work reads the completed thesis. The self-evaluation raises the issue that it is currently unclear who makes the final decision about whether the work is of sufficient quality to be presented as a thesis and guidelines are needed.

Doctoral candidates in IMER require 60 ECTS in courses including an introduction to MUSA (15 ECTS) and two advanced courses in IMER of 7.5 ECTS each. It is positive that candidates have access to relevant courses at Mah (in English) and it is important that these continue to be developed. However at the hearing, the doctoral candidates from both IMER and US raised the potential problem of reaching sufficient depth in discussions and texts using English. There was a general consensus that the language skills of both candidates and staff needed to be developed if courses were to continue in English. There is currently no requirement for a particular level of English for doctoral candidates entering IMER although "communication skills" are assessed. From the course plans it does not appear that the MUSA and IMER courses cover research methodology and it is not clear where doctoral candidates gain this knowledge. According to the University statistics, no IMER candidates have

participated in the generic course in Research Methodology offered by Mah and steps are required to ensure that candidates gain the required skills in research methodology to meet the goals for doctoral education.

The research environment

Day-to-day contact between senior researchers and doctoral candidates takes place within the research projects and at seminars. As well as departmental seminars in GPS and US, doctoral candidates in IMER have access to the MUSA brown bag seminars, which are well attended and work well. Besides this, the doctoral candidates in IMER have access to weekly migration seminars at MIM and the MIM guest professors act as co-supervisors. Candidates present their 20, 50, 75 and 90 % seminars in this forum. An annual retreat within MUSA provides a regular meeting point for the exchange of ideas and collaboration between candidates and supervisors. The self-evaluation describes extensive contact with external agencies through commissioned research and assessments as well as participation in advisory groups to policy-makers. Researchers within IMER have broad networks of national and international contacts. Together these provide input from Society as well as relevant questions for future research. At the hearings, the doctoral candidate representatives described MUSA as rather divergent, partly due to the physical distance between IMER and US and staff pointed out the importance that new doctoral candidate projects should contribute to the core subject of IMER.

Supervision

There are four professors and eight docents associated with IMER as well as 24 teachers and researchers. The supply of main supervisors and supervisors is thus very good. GPS has funds set aside to promote career progression for lecturers. Questions concerning supervision can be discussed at the annual retreats. The main supervisor is appointed at the time of admission and the procedure for changing supervisors is similar to that for US. At the hearing, the doctoral candidate representatives from IMER were unaware that a change of supervisor was possible, highlighting a problem with the flow of information. The adequacy of supervision is judged from the ISP during the annual discussion in GPS-HK. It is the general opinion that this is working well. The candidates are represented in GPS-HK and have a possibility to initiate more general discussions about supervision there.

Publishing

Both monographs and compilation dissertations are used. There are a number of ways in which the candidates are supported in their writing much of it is based on learning by doing. They go to conferences and their texts are published in proceedings and peer-review journals. Doctoral candidates can attend courses in writing and there are also seminars where they can discuss their texts. The faculty arranged a day about writing and publishing that was well received and will probably be repeated. The Language Editing Group (LEG) is also a valuable resource for doctoral candidates. All in all Faculty staff work actively with writing at IMER and this should be given due credit.

Internationalization

IMER as an academic area is inherently international and English is the working language. Doctoral positions attracted many applications from outside Sweden. Doctoral candidates are encouraged to participate in the international research arena through attendance of international research courses and conferences. Doctoral candidates can also undertake part of their education abroad. Some stipends are available from GPS for travel but doctoral candi-

dates are expected to apply for external funding or use their “backpacks” to cover these costs and this may limit their opportunities.

Career Planning

Since no doctoral candidates have yet graduated from Mah it is difficult to assess their career prospects but they appear to be good. Graduates in related subjects have been employed in academia or local authorities. To prepare them as well as possible for their future careers, doctoral candidates are invited to undertake departmental duties, including teaching, if this is possible. Through their supervisors as well as external research projects, candidates gain access to research networks that can be important in the future.

Financing

Each doctoral candidate receives a “backpack” containing 50 000 SEK to cover costs during their studies. There was uncertainty amongst the candidates as to what costs could be covered with this money (*e.g.* language editing, courses, conferences, sabbaticals, field work etc). A policy regarding this is needed. Although access to external funding is described as “good”, both doctoral candidates and staff highlighted the difficulties in carrying out quantitative empirical research due to the high costs for fieldwork involved.

Possible areas of improvement for IMER:

1. The Faculty should discuss whether a MUSA-HK in analogy to NMOG-HK would better serve the interests of both doctoral candidates and supervisors within IMER and US.
2. Specify criteria should be established for how “ability to collaborate” can be assessed.
3. Steps should be taken to better synchronize the introduction to the Department with that at University and Faculty levels, and to clarify for both staff and doctoral candidates who is responsible for decision-making at different levels.
4. An information package should be developed to improve the introduction for new doctoral candidates, particularly those from outside Sweden.
5. Staff and doctoral candidates should discuss and develop guidelines for completion of the university ISP form to make it work better for IMER.
6. Criteria should be developed for each level in doctoral education (20%, 50%, 75% and 90%) and who decides when a thesis is ready for defence should be clarified.
7. Ways of further supporting staff and candidates in spoken and written English should be looked at to assure depth in discussions and texts.
8. The possibility of developing a methodology course relevant to doctoral candidates from MUSA should be investigated.
9. Ways of limiting the effect of financial constraints on doctoral candidate’s possibilities to undertake fieldwork should be investigated.
10. Ways should be sought to improve the coherency of MUSA in conjunction with the move to Niagara.

Urban Studies

Doctoral education in Urban Studies (US) has been conducted at Mah since 2012, when the University gained the rights to award doctoral degrees within the research area "Migration, Urbanization and Societal change" (MUSA). US is defined as the scientific study of the content, form, planning and transformation of urban areas and at Mah the focus is on the parts of the subject relevant to MUSA. There are clear links to the other subject within MUSA, namely International Migration and Ethnic Relations (IMER) and the two research areas work together through the cooperative body MUSA-SO. The Faculty of Culture and Society funds equal numbers of doctoral candidates in each doctoral research subject and the leadership report an intention to continue this policy. According to the central statistics, there were 5 doctoral candidates enrolled in US during the autumn of 2014. The relatively small number of doctoral candidates enrolled in US means that strategies are needed to increase the level of external funding and ensure a vital research environment for the doctoral candidates.

The Education Process

Information

A website with formal information both in Swedish and English has been developed by the Faculty during the autumn of 2014, resulting in an electronic study handbook. This is good idea, facilitating easy revision of documents associated with doctoral education. The doctoral candidate representatives suggested that the formal documents could be complemented with information about the actual experience of being a doctoral candidate at the Faculty including, for instance, a section for FAQs. Doctoral candidates in US also benefit from regular information on activities within MUSA via It's Learning and email.

Recruitment and Admission

US is a major research area internationally, although less well established in Sweden. The research area is unique and relatively new to Mah and as yet no doctoral candidates have graduated in the subject. Doctoral candidate positions are advertised in both English and Swedish. Vacancies are advertised on the University website after approval by the Head of Department and the Dean. Applicants are assessed according to the general requirements for admission as well as specific criteria depending on the project orientation. "Ability to collaborate" was one of the criteria but there are no clear guidelines as to how this is assessed. Most doctoral candidates in US have their education from Faculties at Mah other than Culture and Society, or other Swedish universities. Only one doctoral candidate has their undergraduate education in US. The differing academic backgrounds and knowledge, which could be a problem, do not appear to be regarded as such by either staff or candidates. Steps are being taken to increase the competitiveness of undergraduates at Mah, through the inclusion of 1-year master students in research projects and the initiation of an optional module where undergraduates are able to participate in research. A new 2-year Master education in US will begin in the autumn of this year.

Introduction

The introduction of doctoral candidates in US is reported as working well although some problems regarding practical details have been experienced. The introduction at University level is complemented by an introduction where candidates receive more concrete information about doctoral studies at Faculty level. On the Department level, the introduction is carried out by the supervisor and the Head of Department. Doctoral candidates report difficulties with the integration of the introduction at these different levels. Information is available in English but in practice it is difficult to know what information is given at what level and in which language, and some information may be missed. For instance, one doctoral

candidate appeared unaware that it is possible to change supervisors and although this is clearly stated in the study handbook, highlights a problem with the flow of information. It is important that all doctoral candidates have a good introduction to their studies and the introduction should be adjusted according to suit the needs of, for instance, candidates from abroad.

The Individual Study Plan

In the self-assessment, the ISP is described as an important document for governing doctoral studies and regulating the collaboration between the doctoral candidate and the supervisor, Department and Faculty. The doctoral candidates reported a positive attitude towards the ISP, which was not regarded as an administrative burden but rather as a worthwhile document. The ISP is drawn up within 3 months of acceptance to doctoral studies and reviewed annually by the Supervisors Board for US (US-HK). If considered necessary, the ISP can also be reviewed by the Faculty Board. The doctoral candidates called for better use of the ISP in the planning of teaching and other duties at the Faculty. A discrepancy was noted regarding the allocation of such duties where the Faculty leadership was concerned about the high levels of engagement whereas the doctoral candidate representatives reported that they were not offered the possibility of undertaking 20% teaching. The discussions at the hearings highlighted the importance of using the ISP as an instrument, not only for follow-up but also for planning the different elements relevant to doctoral studies.

Realization of the Goals for Doctoral Education and Courses

The goals for doctoral education are fulfilled through dissertation and its oral defence as well as courses. Doctoral candidates in US hold a start seminar after 1 year as well as 50 %, 75 % and 90 % seminars. The 50 % seminar is only undertaken after the doctoral has completed 30 ECTS in courses and the seminar has been approved by the supervisor and one representative from US and IMER. Currently, the criteria for each level are not clearly defined. This is particularly important with regard to the salary increments for doctoral candidates at 50 % and 75 %. Before the defence is approved, the completed thesis is read by a docent or professor.

Doctoral candidates in US are required to take a total of 60 ECTS including an introductory course of 15 ECTS in MUSA, followed by an introduction to Urban Studies and an advanced course in Urban Studies of 7,5 ECTS each. It should be seen as positive that doctoral candidates in US have access to relevant courses at Mah and the assessor group considers it important that these continue to be offered. The courses are run in English making them available to candidates who do not speak Swedish. However at the hearing, the doctoral candidates raised the potential problem of reaching sufficient depth in discussions and texts using English when language is such an important tool in the humanities and social sciences. There was a general consensus that the language skills of both candidates and staff needed to be developed if courses were to continue in English. There is currently no requirement for a particular level of English for doctoral candidates entering US although “communication skills” are assessed. From the course plans it does not appear that the MUSA and US courses cover the breadth and depth in research methodology and it is not clear how doctoral candidates gain this knowledge. According to the University statistics, no US candidates have participated in the generic course in Research Methodology offered by Mah and steps are required to ensure that candidates in US gain the required skills in research methodology to meet the goals for doctoral education.

The research environment

Day-to-day contact between senior researchers and doctoral candidates takes place within the research projects and at seminars. As well as departmental seminars in US and global political studies (GPS), doctoral candidates in US have access to the MUSA brown bag seminars,

which are well attended. Candidates present their 20, 50, 75 and 90 % seminars in this forum. An annual retreat provides a regular meeting point for the exchange of ideas and collaboration between candidates and supervisors. The self-evaluation describes extensive contact with external agencies through commissioned research and assessments and these provide input from Society as well as relevant questions for future research although it is unclear how doctoral candidates benefit from these activities.

Supervision

There are twelve professors and four docents associated with US, spanning a broad range of competencies. In addition to this there are 25 lecturers with a doctoral degree that are also affiliated with US. Of these three are also supervisors. Although the supply of main supervisors and supervisors is very good it is noted in the evaluation that the new agreement on working hours for professors is proposed as a threat since it affects the possibility of recruiting new staff and also the ability to maintain the research competence of those currently supervising. The time for supervision is 80 hours per year and this is noted in the supervisor's "tjänstgöringskort". The transfer of skills from senior to junior supervisors is mostly by joint supervision. There is also the annual retreat for the doctoral candidates and the supervisors where questions about supervision are discussed.

There are discussions in US-HK about the main supervisor and the supervisor. In parallel with this, the head of department also discusses this issue with the candidate and thus there is some influence from the latter on the processes. So far, there have been no changes of supervisor. The chair of FFN (the Vice Dean for Research) makes the formal decision on supervisors. There are external supervisors in some cases. In cases where the candidate is financed with external money the project leader is often the main supervisor but this is discussed and there are also examples where this is not the case. The relation between the project leader and the supervisor is mentioned as a potential problem and steps should be taken to ensure that doctoral candidates are not disadvantaged by possible conflicts of interest between them. In the SWOT analysis, it is considered a weakness that the academic part can be less pronounced in some external projects. The adequacy of supervision is secured mainly through the interplay between the doctoral candidate and the supervisor. The US-HK also has a responsibility to follow this up at the time for the yearly revision of the ISP. The supervisor normally goes through the ISP at the US-HK and then the progress is discussed. The candidates have representatives on the board. The procedures around supervision and revision of the ISP are established and appear to work well.

Publishing

Both monographs and compilation theses are used although the latter form is more frequent for those working in projects. Courses in writing and publishing are available but few candidates attend them. The candidates present texts at conferences and at the brown-bag seminars. English is the main language at US and the fact that the candidates are forced to communicate in English has a positive impact on their writing. The Faculty has arranged a candidate day about publishing and the Language Editing Group (LEG) at Mah also serves as a valuable resource for doctoral candidates. No specific issues concerning writing and publishing are discussed in the evaluation and the conclusion must thus be drawn that this is not a major problem.

Internationalization

English is the language of choice for courses and seminars in US. Doctoral candidates are encouraged to participate in the international research arena through attendance at international research courses and scientific conferences. These have largely to be financed from the "backpack" and are opportunities are therefore limited. A specific issue raised by

both staff and candidates in relation to internationalization is the lack of availability of scholarships to undertake research abroad. This is perceived as a problem, not only for those already enrolled as doctoral candidates but also for future recruitment.

Career Planning

Since no doctoral candidates in US have yet defended their theses, the efficacy of career planning has yet to be put to the test. However, newly examined candidates should be well qualified for both senior positions in public administration and academic careers. In preparation for academia, doctoral candidates participate in teaching. However, this possibility is open mainly to Swedish-speaking candidates and is dependent upon the financial status of the Department. Candidates are also given the opportunity to become involved in organization of seminars in order to stimulate contact with their future profession. At the hearing, the candidate representatives raised the need for more strategic measures in career planning, *e.g* support in preparing a pedagogical portfolio and more inclusion in grant-writing and research projects.

Financing

Each doctoral candidate receives a “backpack” containing 50 000 SEK to cover costs during their studies. There appeared to be differences between different doctoral studies regarding what they were expected to pay for, some had received grants for attendance at courses and conferences whereas others had not. A policy regarding this is needed. At the hearing, the doctoral candidate representatives expressed disappointment that some types of study may be prohibited by financial constraints that were not made clear to them at the time of appointment.

Possible areas of improvement for US:

1. Steps should be taken to better synchronize the introduction to the Department with that at University and Faculty levels, and to clarify for both staff and doctoral candidates who is responsible for decision-making at different levels.
2. The Departmental head should have the doctoral candidate’s ISP available during the annual appraisal so that doctoral research education can be better coordinated with departmental commitments and teaching.
3. Specify criteria should be established for how “ability to collaborate” can be assessed.
4. An information package should be developed to improve the introduction for new doctoral candidates, particularly those from overseas.
5. The possibility of developing a methodology course relevant to doctoral candidates from MUSA should be investigated.
6. Staff and doctoral candidates should discuss and develop guidelines to ensure that candidates will not be disadvantaged by possible conflicts of interest between the project leader and supervisor roles and that academic stringency is maintained in all doctoral projects.
7. Steps should be taken to limit the effect of financial constraints on doctoral candidate’s possibilities to undertake fieldwork abroad.
8. Strategies should continue to be developed to allow English-speaking doctoral candidates to participate in teaching
9. Ways should be sought to improve the coherency of MUSA in conjunction with the move to Niagara.