

**Code of Conduct:
PhD candidate participation in student supervision**

PhD candidates are often involved in the supervision of Bachelor and Master students, e.g. during internships and theses. How this is implemented varies between disciplines, institutes and working groups. In order to provide some transparent and agreed upon guidelines, VDS CoBeNe is introducing the present code of conduct. PIs and PhD students associated with CoBeNe are required to comply with this Code when, respectively, involving their PhD candidates and when participating in student supervision. They as well as third parties (e.g. at TAC meetings) can refer to the Code in case of deviations and disagreements.

§ 1 - Scope

1. This code applies to every PI associated with the VDS CoBeNe and every PhD candidate in the VDS CoBeNe.

§ 2 - Types and topics of supervision

1. PhD candidates can in principle be involved in the supervision of Bachelor theses, Master theses, interns, and teach modules which include student supervision (for example, TEWA, Fachliteratureseminar, Bachelorarbeitsseminar, Masterarbeitsseminar).
2. It is strongly encouraged that PhD candidates do not take on supervision-intensive types of modules (such as the aforementioned Fachliteratureseminar, Bachelorarbeitsseminar, Masterarbeitsseminar, as examples in the Psychology curriculum) which may exceed their capacities and experience by themselves. Such types of modules should only be co-taught with a senior colleague, in which case the actual workload should be distributed according to the teaching credits received. Any deviations from this must be discussed with the TAC members.
3. Ideally, in such a co-teaching setting, the PhD candidate's workload should lie between 25 and 50 % of the total workload of the course.
4. PhD candidates shall regularly report to their PI and the members of their TAC whether their current workload regarding student supervision, both in the context of teaching and of individual students, is acceptable. In case the workload exceeds this level or is found by the candidate to be affecting their research and PhD study progress, measures to reduce the workload shall be taken by PI and PhD candidate immediately.
5. PhD candidates shall only be involved in participation in the supervision of students that engage in research that is of direct relevance to their PhD research (e.g. student research that directly connects to a study in their PhD, e.g. by collecting data, compiling a literature overview). Exceptions are only possible if the PhD candidate explicitly wishes to get involved with a different topic/project. Importantly, in such cases, the initiative to do so has to come from the PhD candidate. Supervisors cannot assign such participation in supervision.
6. PhD candidates shall not be involved in supervision until their second PhD year. Exceptions are possible upon explicit, mutual agreement.

§ 3 - Quantity of students

1. Generally, PhD candidates shall not be involved in the supervision of more than two students at a time.
2. Deviations from this rule are possible if, after consulting the TAC members, it is decided that this is in the PhD candidate's interest and will not endanger their own research progress. This consultation does not have to take place at a TAC Meeting but can be undertaken at any point when the need arises.
3. In particular, PhD candidates who do not teach (e.g. because they are externally funded) and thus have no other duties which involve students are free to participate in the supervision of more than two students at a time if they explicitly wish to do so. Nevertheless, they, too, will regularly update their TAC members about their supervision workload and whether they find it to be interfering with their research or study progress.

§ 4 - Opt-in clause

1. PhD candidates shall not be expected to be involved in the supervision of students. They shall be asked if they are interested in it, and if so, have the possibility to opt in. This shall be done each semester.
2. If the PhD candidates do not want to be involved in supervision in any given semester, they shall not be pressured, nor shall it be a trade-off for support or other benefits.
3. If the PhD candidate has expressed an interest in being involved in supervision, they shall still have the possibility to decline supervision of a specific thesis (e.g. on grounds of a language barrier).

§ 5 - Tasks

1. PhD candidates can be involved in all steps of the supervision process except for thesis grading (including writing the final assessment report; they can however provide input to the report especially for those aspects they can evaluate best, such as e.g. autonomy of students in data collection). They shall not be made to take over the majority (i.e. more than 50 %) of the tasks, since they are not allowed to officially co-supervise and are not compensated for it.
2. PIs need to make sure that PhD candidates receive appropriate and regular support and supervision when participating in supervision. PIs cannot "delegate" supervision to their PhD candidates.
3. With theses in particular, the PhD candidate cannot be the sole point of contact for students. They also cannot be required to be present during Master thesis seminars.

§ 6 - Recognition

1. At the end of the PhD candidate's annual Progress Report (FSB) period, the PhD candidate shall receive a certificate detailing the amount of students they co-supervised and the tasks they took on. This shall be used to substantiate claims made on their CVs and hence carry the PI's signature. See the Appendix.
2. Within four weeks of receiving the certificate, the PhD candidate has the right to request corrections.
3. The certificate will be attached to the Progress Report (FSB).

§ 7 - Reporting (TAC)

1. The annual TAC meetings will be used to assess the extent of and satisfaction with involvement in student supervision.
2. To this end, the PI will be asked during the confidential exchange how many supervisions they involved the PhD candidate in and which tasks this involved.
3. The PhD candidate will be asked how many supervisions they have been involved in, which tasks this included, whether they are satisfied with this experience, whether the workload of supervision has been acceptable, and how they would like to handle this until the next TAC meeting (i.e. more or less supervision, different types of supervision, etc.).
4. Both the PI's and the PhD candidate's statements will be documented in writing in a designated section of the TAC meeting protocol.
5. The present VDS CoBeNe representative will ensure that PI and PhD candidate come to an agreement concerning supervision for the next year. If needed, they will be given the right and duty to intervene and mediate.
6. In case of questions or issues arising in between scheduled TAC meetings, the TAC members can be consulted at any time and shall be available to help resolve them.