

# Introduction to Doctoral Training

Hong Tri, NGUYEN

October 2019

## Abstract

This is a learning diary for the course named “920001J - Introduction to Doctoral Training” at the University of Oulu, Finland. This course is organized and aimed to doctoral candidates as an initial point in order to support to recognize about their roles and also motivations during their doctoral training period.

## Question 1

- What expectations do you have towards the doctoral training in general? What kind of role will your attitudes have on conducting the research project?

The doctoral training is one of important periods to become a researcher in the academia or industry. During this period, a doctoral student can have many chances not only to cooperate with experts in specific fields, but also learn crucial skills in a professional environment. As any doctoral students, I expect to learn and obtain project skills (project management, team working, problem solving and organizing meetings and events), entrepreneurship (networking and innovation), communication skills (writing and public speaking) and knowledge skills (critical thinking, teaching and training).

Doctoral students should be clear on a research plan to which the managing and sustaining progress should be accordant and related. To form a qualified research plan which can be considered as the direction or the main road of the research project, I do not only study on current works or literature reviews, but also frequently discussed with my supervisors so that I can obviously obtain my specific works including the main idea, state-of-the-art approaches and methodologies.

## Question 2

- What role do you think your doctoral training will have in your future career? What actions could you take to maximize the positive outcomes? How could you use your personal competence and skills portfolio to achieve your goals?

Clearly, after doctoral training, as any others researchers, I expect propose and work in a group or individual with or without supervisors. Hence, during the doctoral training, the doctoral students can gain the way to manage a research project including planning the research, working individual, building network and solving problems.

There are many reasons to achieve good outcomes, but to maximize those results, it requires a clear purpose and plan. However, to successfully follow the plan, time management is a crucial element which helps to balance between work and personal life. Thus, I do not face to stress and refresh to be ready to continue working.

After gaining a bachelor and a master degree in Vietnam and Italy, respectively, I am really confident to quickly adapt the a new environment. In addition, with the passion on obtaining knowledge and a hard-working student, I definitely follow and satisfy requirements from my supervisor.

### Question 3

- What do you consider as the most important questions at the moment related to your doctoral training process? What is getting you closer to your goals? What is standing in the way of your success? What would be important to get more information or knowledge about? What is the key role of supervisor and follow up meeting? what will they affect to my study and my career in the future?

One of my concerns is the role of different parties (i.e supervisor, follow-up group and my research group). Since I desire to become a researcher, the doctoral training is definitely important to me as an opportunity to practice and improve research skills. To be successfully closer to the aim, I have to be highly motivated and carefully plan the work.

In the doctoral training, the supervisor's role is very important due to information support and supervisory commitment. Particularly, through encouragement and invaluable feedback of supervisors from regular reporting and meetings, I can definitely optimize and balance my timetable not only in major parts of my research plan, but also my personal life. In detail, as an expert in the research environment, they can answer and advise technical issues including critical thinking, motivation, evaluation of experiment and result. Moreover, they can be sympathetic to their students in the beginning of the research career. In other words, supervisor obviously plays a crucial role to support a doctoral student to succeed and become a qualified research in the future. The follow-up group is to support the progress of my training and my career plans. In addition, they are responsible for following the doctoral student's research plan and feedback to improve the productivity. In other words, the follow-up group can be seen as an intermediary who evaluates both doctoral student and supervisor. Last but not at least, this group takes a stand on the proposal of pre-examiners and opponents for the doctoral student's thesis.

### Question 4

- What is your research environment like? How do you interact with these different groups? How do the different groups help you to become a specialist in your field?

In my case, the research environment is clear policies, practices, procedures to support me and other researchers. With regular reports and meetings, we often meet each others for discussion on our study. In addition, once per month we have meetings with other research groups in our center for general discussion, but that is also a perfect time for students and researchers presenting their work in order to gain feedback and comments. The university is also a channel where they organize regular meetings as forums for researchers. I am strongly believe that researchers from different topics and perspectives can give advise and questions which I have not considered before. From those ideas, I can clearly understand my work and raise a change to collaborate.

### Question 5

- How are your own research group and principal supervisor affecting the way you do your own research?

Obviously, the research group and supervisor play the key role during the doctoral training. In particular, those are experienced one who have been working and doing research for a long time. Thus, they can give many qualified advice including the background, approaches, examination of results and preparation of the thesis. Working with a perfect supervisor and research group that means they advise and provide basic prerequisites, information, emotion and instrumental support. With these advice and supports, the doctoral students can conveniently and easily focus on their study and work.

## Question 6

- What do you expect from UniOGS?

From the UniOGS side, doctoral students expect the organization to support strong commitment and motivation as information and instructions. The information is really essential for foreign students, especially non-EU students. Doctoral students can easily integrate the new environment. In addition, UniOGS can be a channel which supports to connect doctoral students through events and courses. To sum up, the UniOGS should form an environment with qualified facilities where doctoral students can be motivated to develop and execute a coherent doctoral training plan through regular reporting and meeting with experienced experts as supervisors.

## Acknowledgement

I would like to say thank to UniOGS for organizing the course which support us, PhD students, to have an overview on our work and our study. In addition, this work have done by L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X through a use of *overleaf*<sup>1</sup>.

---

<sup>1</sup><https://www.overleaf.com/>