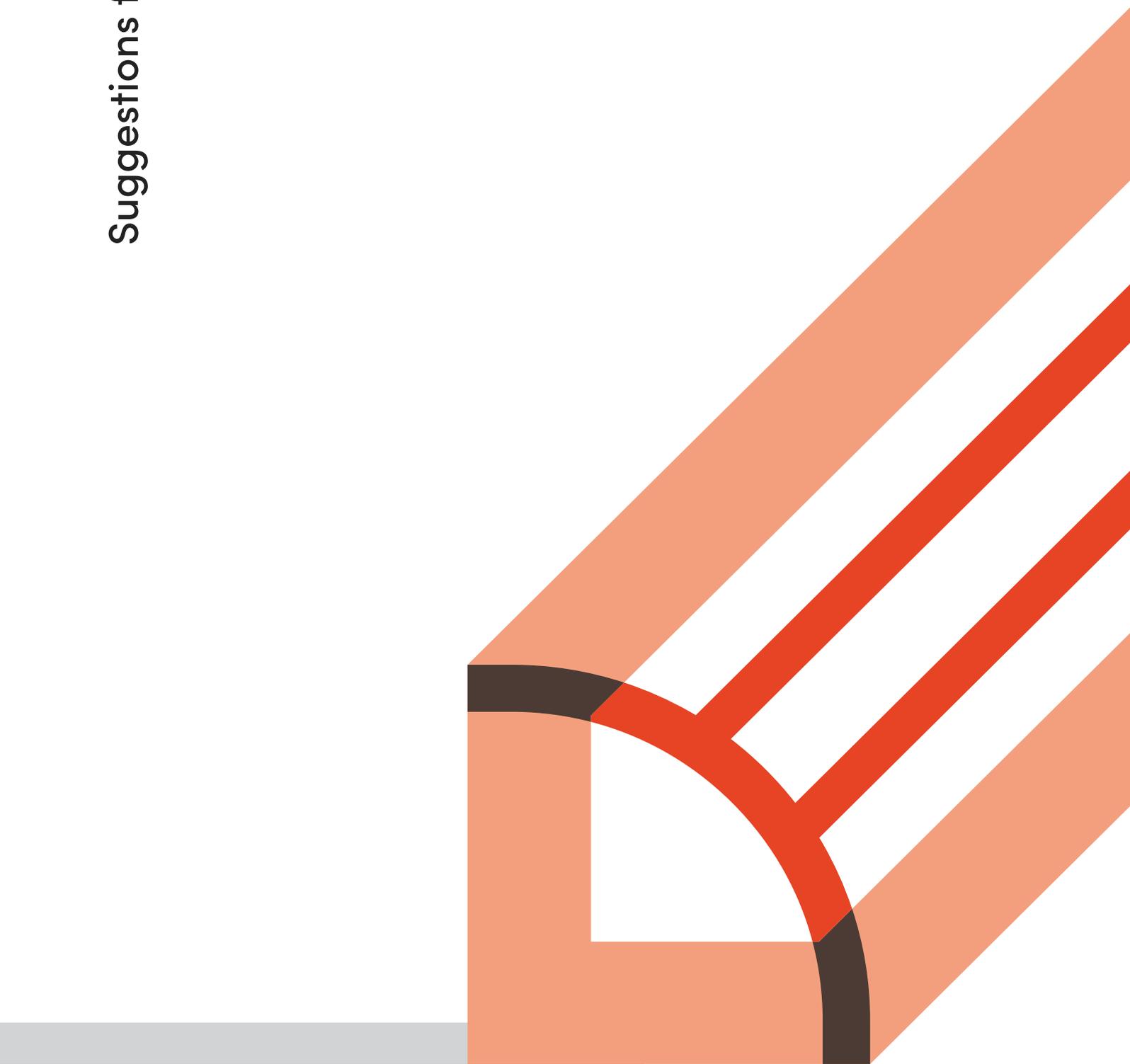


Suggestions for Conversation

Adaptation Plan for new PhD students



Notes and instructions

- This document is the second version of the Adaptation Plan (AP) for new PhD candidates at UCT Prague. All the points listed here are optional and it is up to the supervisor or the PhD candidate to decide whether it is beneficial to address them.
- It is recommended to summarize what the supervisor and the doctoral candidate have reached, what they have discussed, or what they have agreed upon in the spaces provided under each point (or in case of lack of space in the form of an appendix). Some points may not require a summary, which is perfectly fine. The completion of the notes is purely voluntary.
- It is recommended that both the supervisor and the PhD candidate have their own copy of the document at the end of the interview, so that both parties can refer back to the notes.
- The initial interview is quite extensive, given the large number of points, and depending on the time available to the participants, it may be beneficial to divide it by a break or even into two days. The remaining interviews are shorter.
- Although the document has 27 pages in total, in practice it has only 3 individual sections:
 - » On-boarding interview (Section A ≈ 8 pages),
 - » Ongoing interviews (sections B, C and D are *de facto* identical and each ≈ 3 pages) and
 - » Annual interview (section E ≈ 2 pages).
- **Document legend:**
 - » A.1 ORDER OF CONVERSATION (A/B/C/D/E).POINT NUMBER WITH DESCRIPTION (or sub-points)
 - » (INFORMATION FOR SUPERVISORS ON THE POINT, EXAMPLES AND SUGGESTIONS)
 - » SPACE FOR MEETING NOTES: ↓

If you are interested in a text document that you can customize, or if you find any errors in the document, feel free to contact us at losmanom@vscht.cz and/or valisj@vscht.cz. Also, if you are interested in sharing feedback with us, we would be happy to hear from you.

Sincerely,
Mili Losmanová and Jan Vališ.

A. First day

The date of the meeting: _____ Name of PhD candidate: _____

A.1. Motivation

When starting a new position and potentially a new university/faculty/institute, it is likely that the PhD candidate will not be familiar with, e.g., the usual procedures or the specific scope of their work. The Adaptation Plan (AP), which is part of the onboarding process, helps to integrate the newly arrived PhD candidate into the research group, institute, faculty and university quickly and efficiently by guiding the supervisor and the PhD candidate to clarify expectations, instruct them on the usual procedures and train them in the department and position at the time of entry and during the adaptation period. This document should serve as a guide for the development of the AP.

(Consider outlining the meaning of the AP to the PhD candidate, so they understand the purpose of the meeting.)

A.2. Overview of AP phases

(Just skim through for a general idea of the process. The order in 2.a and 2.c may vary)

A.2. a) At the start:

- i. Registration at the dean's office;
- ii. ERD: Electronic PhD Guide;
- iii. Survival Guide fliers;
- iv. Webinar (takes place every September);
- v. Interview with the supervisor.

A.2. b) Ongoing conversations with the supervisor:

- i. After 1 month of enrolment;
- ii. After 3 months of enrolment;
- iii. After 6 months of enrolment.

A.2. c) Overall evaluation after 12 months:

- i. Interview with the supervisor;
- ii. Preparation of the annual evaluation report.

A.3. Overview of AP parts

(This is not a complete list - add/exclude (i)relevant parts of the AP as needed)

Part of AP	Who will ensure	By which time	Checklist
Administration: study			
Administration: full-time/part-time/full-time			
Information about the studies			
Introduction to the group and the department			
Handover of documentation, manuals/ SOPs			
Handover of keys, office/workstation, PPE, PC and/or monitor, equipment, etc.			
Basic training (e.g. OSH/fire safety, pressure vessels)			

A.4. Values and standards

A.4. a) UCT Prague

(Consider inviting the PhD candidate to go through the Study and Examination Regulations (“Studijní a zkušební řád” in Czech, SZŘ), or at least the section on the DSP and the Code of Ethics (EK) of the University of Chemistry and Technology, Prague. Alternatively, consider excerpting the parts of the SZŘ/EK that you consider essential.)

A.4. b) Values and standards of the supervisor/group

(What do you value in your group? What do you appreciate and what do you dislike? E.g., quality/quantity of work, trustworthiness, punctuality, flexibility, communication...)

6.

A.5. Study obligations

(This section may not be necessarily discussed on the day of arrival, but due to Individual Study Plan (ISP) submission deadlines should not be delayed too much. The requirements for the number of courses in ISP from each category A or B may vary depending on the rules set by the study board of the DSP in question.)

A.5. a) Selection of subjects for the ISP

i. What subjects would be beneficial?

(Consider not only the contribution to research activity or professional application, but also the relationship to the core part of the State Doctoral Exam (SDE, “Státní závěrečná zkouška” in Czech, SDZ) – It is worth considering a preliminary selection of topics for the core part of the SDE on this occasion.)

ii. Subjects from the UCT Prague or outside?

iii. What is the course fulfilment plan?

(In which semester does the candidate plan to take which course? When does the candidate plan to take the core part of the state doctoral exam (SDZ)? It is a good idea to advise the candidate that, depending on the interest, the courses may not be offered every year/semester as they were at the undergraduate level, and it may therefore be advisable to contact the course instructor before enrolling in the ISP to verify when and under what conditions the course will be taught. It may also be useful to mention that the A–F grading scale is replaced by a binary pass/fail grade in the postgraduate ISP).

A.5. b) PGS conference at the University of Chemistry and Technology in English

(Some faculties allow for this obligation to be replaced, e.g. by giving a lecture in English at an international conference. Consider planning it with the doctoral candidate to fulfil this prerequisite to the core SDZ.)

A.5. c) Minimum 1 month stay abroad

i. Preferences on location and length of stay?

ii. What year/semester?

iii. How to finance the stay?

(Consider discussing the fulfilment of this statutory obligation at the beginning of the doctorate, or consider in advance the possibility of replacing the obligation, e.g. by publishing in an international research group)

A.5. d) Further education

(e.g. courses offered by professional societies, other courses offered by the school focusing not only on professional but also on transferable skills or languages, etc.)

A.5. e) Training that a PhD candidate should complete

(Consider which training is mandatory for the PhD candidate given the expected nature of the work (OSH, fire protection, first aid, pressure cylinders, stable pressure vessels, electrical, driving vehicles up to 3.5 tonnes...) and which could be beneficial for the PhD candidate (pedagogy, English for PhD candidates, Data Stewardship, etc.) Consider the timeframe in which the training should be completed.)

A.6. Position description

(Even if the PhD candidate is already accepted, there is still time to consider whether the position/topic is suitable for them, or to take steps at the beginning of the study to, for example, remedy any gaps in qualifications.)

A.6. a) Qualifications

(e.g. master's degree, B2+ level of English, elementary knowledge of MS Office...)

A.6. b) Main activities

(E.g. Work on an independent project within the framework of the dissertation, at least 2 impacted first-authored publications, at least 4 publications in total (i.e. including co-authorship), fulfil ISP or any other activity not directly related to the thesis.)

A.6. c) Sub-activities

(E.g. whether/to what extent is the candidate expected to teach laboratories (which tasks?), or exercises, or to consult bachelor or diploma theses. It is also possible to discuss the possibility of applying for grant competitions such as IGA, or participation in popularization events such as open house days.)

A.6. d) Financial security during the studies

(Can the candidate count on any other income beyond the basic doctoral scholarship, e.g., teaching scholarship or (partial) employment on a grant? If yes, what is the FTE equivalent? If not, are there alternative sources of livelihood for the candidate? Note that many of the stipends/scholarships are only for the candidates studying a Czech DSP. English DSP are usually not providing many of the stipends/scholarships.)

A.7. Scheduling time

A.7. a) “Working hours”

(SZŘ stipulates 40 h/week but this can be adjusted after agreement with the supervisor. What are the usual “business” hours?)

A.7. b) “Vacation”

(The SZŘ provides for 5 weeks but does not specify when and how the leave is to be taken.)

A.7. c) Home-office

(Under what circumstances? To whom is it reported?)

A.7. d) Reporting absences

(To whom/where do they report? InfSys/OKBase, by email, by phone...)

A.7. e) Work outside normal hours

(Inform the candidate that the approval of the head of the department is required. Under what conditions? Information about locking school doors in the evening/weekend.)

A.8. Communication

A.8. a) Time to reach

(When should the supervisor and the PhD candidate be usually available?)

A.8. b) Usual time limit for reply

(What is the usual/acceptable timeframe for the supervisor and the candidate to respond on non-urgent matters?)

A.8. c) Urgent reply period

(What is the timeframe for the supervisor and the candidate to expect a response in urgent cases?)

A.8. d) Preferred channels

(What are the preferred channels for routine communication and what are the preferred channels for emergencies? E.g., in person, by phone, SMS, email...)

10.

A.8. e) Meetings

(Is there a minimum advance with which to schedule meetings? Does anyone take notes and if so, who?)

A.9. Orientation around the campus

(Candidates don't need to know certain places at the campus during their undergraduate studies, so they may have no idea where they are even if they are alumni of UCT Prague. However, the biggest benefit can be expected for newcomers from other university/foreign countries.)

A.9. a) Department/group

(e.g. departmental secretariat, lab. technicians, chemical store, laboratories...)

A.9. b) School-wide

(e.g. Dean's Office, Dept. of Research and Transfer of Technology (VaTT), International Relations Dept. , Mailroom, Central Warehouse, NTK)

A.10. Orientation in the information systems

(Training on how to work with specific systems is probably better handled on an ad hoc basis, but it is possible to at least outline what systems are used for what for and where the candidate can find them.)

System	What is it for	Note
SIS – student role	ISP performance, scholarships paid, annual evaluation	
SIS – teacher role	Grading students, search for students	
InfSys (PGS only)	Recording and planning attendance, detection of the presence of colleagues	
OKBase (employees only)	Recording and planning attendance, financial matters, registration for trainings	
MIS	Management system, administration of IGA, OBD input	
OBD	Reporting of publication activity	
IOS	Internal orders	
iFIS – WebMailer	Control of grant funding	
Phone book	Contact for yourself and others	add your own office and phone line
Intranet	Other internal informatios	

B. 1 month after enrolment

The date of the meeting: _____ Name of PhD candidate: _____

B.1. Performance assessment

(Short statements are sufficient)

B.1. a) Knowledge of own job and responsibilities

(Does the PhD candidate understand what they are supposed to do and what is expected of them?)

B.1. b) Coping with the specific demands of your own work

(E.g., working with apparatus/instrument/software, data evaluation...)

B.1. c) Knowledge of common practices within the research group

(E.g., filling in the operating log, ordering chemicals...)

B.1. d) Identification of specific tasks to be assessed in Month 3

(E.g., performing specific experiments, preparing a publication...)

B.2. Personal access assessment

(We recommend that the candidate and the advisor pre-fill their respective columns and later discuss their views during the meeting.)

Property	Self-assessment by the candidate	Assessment by the advisor
Independence		
Adaptability		
Responsibility/conscientiousness/consistency		
Activity and initiative		
Assertiveness		
Cooperation within the group		
Collaboration within the institute/ UCT Prague/Academy of Sciences...		
Personal development (interest in electives/courses...)		

B.3. Evaluation by a PhD candidate

B.3. a) The course of AP

(Is the set AP being met? Have there been any problems? Should the plan be adjusted?...)

B.3. b) Using your own professional knowledge and skills

(Does the candidate feel that they can use their knowledge and skills in their work?)

B.3. c) Communication and feedback from the supervisor/group

(How does the candidate perceive communication and feedback? Is it sufficient/beneficial...?)

B.3. d) Atmosphere

(How does the candidate perceive the atmosphere at the workplace? Is the candidate integrated within the group/institute? Is the environment pleasant/stimulating...?)

B.3. e) Well-being

(E.g., does the candidate manage everything? Does the candidate need advice/help with anything?)

B.4. Is there anything the PhD candidate or the supervisor would like to add/ask?

C. 3 months after enrolment

The date of the meeting: _____ Name of PhD candidate: _____

C.1. Performance assessment

(Short statements are sufficient)

C.1. a) Knowledge of own job and responsibilities

(Does the PhD candidate understand what they are supposed to do and what is expected of them?)

C.1. b) Coping with the specific demands of your own work

(E.g., working with apparatus/instrument/software, data evaluation...)

C.1. c) Knowledge of common practices within the research group

(E.g., filling in the operating log, ordering chemicals...)

C.1. d) Knowledge of common practices within the department/faculty

(E.g., grading students in the SIS, administration of going abroad...)

C.1. e) Success in specific tasks identified at the last meeting and identification of new specific tasks to be considered at the next meeting

(E.g., performing specific experiments, preparing a publication...)

C.2. Personal access assessment

(The candidate and the advisor pre-fill their respective columns and later discuss their views)

Property	Self-assessment by the candidate	Assessment by the advisor
Independence		
Adaptability		
Responsibility/conscientiousness/consistency		
Activity and initiative		
Assertiveness		
Cooperation within the group		
Collaboration within the institute/ UCT Prague/Academy of Sciences...		
Personal development (interest in electives/courses...)		

C.3. Evaluation by a PhD candidate

C.3. a) The course of AP

(Is the set AP being met? Have there been any problems? Should the plan be adjusted?...)

C.3. b) Using your own professional knowledge and skills

(Does the candidate feel that they can use their knowledge and skills in their work?)

C.3. c) Communication and feedback from the supervisor/group

(How does the candidate perceive communication and feedback? Is it sufficient/beneficial...?)

C.3. d) Atmosphere

(How does the candidate perceive the atmosphere at the workplace? Is the candidate integrated within the group/institute? Is the environment pleasant/stimulating...?)

C.3. e) Well-being

(E.g., does the candidate manage everything? Does the candidate need advice/help with anything?)

C.4. Is there anything the PhD candidate or the supervisor would like to add/ask?

D. 6 months after enrolment

The date of the meeting: _____ Name of PhD candidate: _____

D.1. Performance assessment

(Short statements are sufficient)

D.1. a) Knowledge of own job and responsibilities

(Does the PhD candidate understand what they are supposed to do and what is expected of them?)

D.1. b) Coping with the specific demands of your own work

(E.g., working with apparatus/instrument/software, data evaluation...)

D.1. c) Knowledge of common practices within the research group

(E.g., filling in the operating log, ordering chemicals...)

D.1. d) Knowledge of common practices within the department/faculty

(E.g., grading students in the SIS, administration of going abroad...)

D.1. e) Success in specific tasks identified at the last meeting and identification of new specific tasks to be considered at the next meeting

(E.g., performing specific experiments, preparing a publication...)

D.2. Personal access assessment

(The candidate and the advisor pre-fill their respective columns and later discuss their views)

Property	Self-assessment by the candidate	Assessment by the advisor
Independence		
Adaptability		
Responsibility/conscientiousness/consistency		
Activity and initiative		
Assertiveness		
Cooperation within the group		
Collaboration within the institute/ UCT Prague/Academy of Sciences...		
Personal development (interest in electives/courses...)		

D.3. Evaluation by a PhD candidate

D.3. a) The course of AP

(Is the set AP being met? Have there been any problems? Should the plan be adjusted?...)

D.3. b) Using your own professional knowledge and skills

(Does the candidate feel that they can use their knowledge and skills in their work?)

D.3. c) Communication and feedback from the supervisor/group

(How does the candidate perceive communication and feedback? Is it sufficient/beneficial...?)

D.3. d) Atmosphere

(How does the candidate perceive the atmosphere at the workplace? Is the candidate integrated within the group/institute? Is the environment pleasant/stimulating...?)

D.3. e) Well-being

(E.g., does the candidate manage everything? Does the candidate need advice/help with anything?)

D.4. Is there anything the PhD candidate or the supervisor would like to add/ask?

E. 12 months after enrolment

(Although the content of this interview is directed towards the annual deadline, it might be useful to schedule it before the submission of the annual evaluation of doctoral candidates, usually by 31 July of the year.)

The date of the meeting: _____ **Name of PhD candidate:** _____

E.1. Overall assessment of AP performance

E.1. a) Knowledge of own job and responsibilities

E.1. b) Success in solving tasks

E.1. c) Overall assessment of personal approach

E.2. Overall evaluation by the PhD candidate

E.2. a) How does the candidate perceive AP?

(Was the onboarding successful? What was successful and what was not? How could the process be improved in the future for other PhD candidates?)

E.2. b) Was the first year of the PhD beneficial? How?

E.2. c) Using your own professional knowledge and skills

E.2. d) Atmosphere

E.2. e) Communication and feedback from the supervisor/group

E.2. f) Well-being during the first year

(e.g. Has the candidate mastered everything? Is there still something they need to help with?)

E.3. Is there anything the PhD candidate or the supervisor would like to add/ask?

Adaptation Plan for new PhD students

Suggestions for Conversation

Author: Mili Losmanová, Jan Vališ
Graphic Designer: Alexandra Molčanová
Version: 2024-08-25

University of Chemistry and Technology, Prague
Technická 3, 166 28 Prague, Czech Republic

