LDK Activity Plan

for the Academic Year 2020/2021

According to article 1 of the statutes of Lund Doctoral Student Union/Lunds doktorandkår (henceforth LDK) shall:

> *'work to monitor and contribute to the development of third cycle education at Lund University'.*

In the light of this purpose, the following activity plan has been drafted for the academic year 2020/2021.

DOMB

LDK shall help the Doctoral Student Ombudsman to fulfil the DOMB Activity Plan 2020/2021.

Support the councils

LDK shall support its councils and help them with issues that might come up at their faculties.

Canvas as an information platform

LDK has asked the Canvas project group to create a LDK "course" in canvas where all PhD students automatically are put in when they get hired or register as active PhD students. This should enable LDK to have an information repository where HOWTOs, FAQs, announcements and other information can be put and made available. The advantage of this is that it will be easy for PhD students to look up information for themselves. Some PhD students will even stumble upon LDK when they go into Canvas for the first time. LDK shall follow up on this.

Internationalization (and other obstacles)

In the academic year 2020/2021 LDK shall focus on reducing some of the obstacles that face international doctoral students, which includes:

English translation of university documents

Improve translation service at the university and make it a part of regular workflow to send important documents and meeting protocols to translation.

Swedish courses

Establish good courses in Swedish available during working hours. There is a need for a fair and uniform access to this across faculties.

Bi-lingual meetings

Work towards a broader acceptance of speaking English at formal meetings at the university,

while at the same time encouraging PhD students to make use of the opportunity to learn Swedish.

Other support
Many PhD students have to work in Latex for their scientific output given traditions in their field. However, the templates from Media Tryck and other templates provided by the university do not support this writing environment, so PhD students writing in Latex can not get help for the layout of their thesis and also need to figure out for themselves how to apply the university template when doing posters, presentations and other outputs benefitting from using the official university layout.

Supervisor education
The central level research education board has on its activity plan to investigate and hopefully improve the education given to supervisors of PhD students. LDK shall take an active role in this work as improvements in this field would lead to a quality improvement of our education.

Prolongation more clear
All doctoral students should, if they so wish, be able to take part in the work of LDK and its councils, regardless of their employment situation. LDK shall therefore:
- improve the information to doctoral students regarding prolongation after commitments and other LDK related commissions of trust,
- work to improve the knowledge among the faculties and supervisors about student union work,
- ensure that the guidelines for prolongation properly reflects the workload, and work for a predictable and transparent prolongation infrastructure,
- work to ensure that all PhD students can get a yearly prolongation report, so that they do not have to wait till the very end of their education to discover exactly how much prolongation that will be awarded.

Doctoral rights and career planning
It is unclear what rights and obligations PhD students have, and even their supervisors are often unaware of this. There is a need for a comprehensive compilation of these laws, regulations and policies. Further, the salaries are not equal for all PhD students and future career paths are not equally accessible. LDK shall therefore:
- work on having the university compile a list of rights and obligations to new PhD students, so it is clear what they can demand and should supply. LDK shall review and collaborate, but not take the responsibility for its production.
- keep in touch with the trade unions on topics such as departments PhD students receiving different salaries for the exact same job. This is a trade union question, but of general interest to LDK.
- strive for having a more clear academic career path for the PhD students, as currently it can be discouraging. In particular there is a gender issue that needs to be solved.

Sustainable LDK presidium workload

Working in LDK presidium entails a huge workload. The presidium of 2020/21 should evaluate what tasks are necessary. Some of the traditional tasks are the following:

- attend and influence the decisions made by the chair's collegium (ordförandekollegiet), *1 day per week,*
- represent doctoral students' perspective in the Research Board as well as the Research Programmes Board, *1 day per month,*
- represent LDK at LUS' Governing assembly (LUS Ting), *1 day per month,*
- take active part in LUS' nomination committee, *14 days or more during the year*
- appoint representatives to the university-wide boards and councils that are constituted through LUS' elections, *variable workload*.

All of these tasks require Swedish language skills, and thus falls on the external director, which is an unreasonable large work burden. LDK shall consider if these tasks could be cut down and not attend everything.

Investigate benefits of being a LUS member

LDK represents PhD students at a central level at the university. However, since some PhD students are not members of LDK but of Teknologkåren, LUS believes that it is upon them to represent PhD students at a central level. This leaves the question on what role LDK really plays, does it add a superfluous layer between the councils and LUS, or should LDK seek a more independent role working in parallel with LUS, similar to the structure seen on the faculties? LDK shall consider what recommendations can be made on this and seek avenues for increasing our contact with the central administration.