



UPPSALA
UNIVERSITET

Institutionen för informationsteknologi

Decision by the IT Board 2018-03-08, Diary entry IT 2018/34

About PhD students' leave of absence for internship etc.

In case of discrepancies with the Swedish original of this translation, the Swedish version is used.

Background

Among the recommendations of the KoF17 panel to our Department were the following:

- *provide incentive to have PhD get a broader exposure to outside culture (companies, other universities, abroad),*
- *simplify the process for the PhD students and let them know it is easy and put some pressure so that they benefit of it,*

One reason why the KoF17 panel drew attention to this seems to be feedback from our PhD students that there are difficulties associated with leaves of absence for internships in industry.

There are no problems concerning internships at companies, foreign universities, etc, which are undertaken within the framework of a PhD student's employment at Uppsala University, i.e. when the Department accounts for the costs, and the stay is considered to be part of the postgraduate programme. The difficulty arises if the internship is paid by the company, etc, and can't be fully credited in postgraduate education.

The Problem

When the stay does not take place within the framework of the employment at Uppsala University, the student must apply for a leave of absence. If the work performed during the stay can't be fully credited in the postgraduate studies, the doctoral student will need to have a prolongation of his/her employment to compensate for the postgraduate study period "consumed" during the stay. The latter is the scope of this decision.

According to HF (Higher Education Ordinance) Chapter 5, Section 7
/... The total employment period may, however, not exceed the time corresponding to full-time third-cycle study for four years./.../ The total period of employment may, however, exceed that stated in the third paragraph if special grounds exist. Such grounds may comprise leave of absence because of illness, leave of absence for service in the defence forces or an elected position in a trade union or student organisation, or parental leave.

One may not be employed as a PhD student for longer than the equivalent of four years full-time employment. When one takes a leave of absence one is still employed, for example: three months' full-time leave incur consumption of three months of the full-time four-year work and this can't be compensated by a three-month extension when the four full-time years have expired. The exceptions listed in the quote above from Chapter 5, Section 7 (sickness, etc.) should be considered as an exhaustive list of the applicable cases.



Solution

The above-described problem can be managed by using the "Assistant with Doctoral Student Duties" form of employment when there is a need for extension beyond the four-year full-time work that the PhD student employment can offer. This practice exists already at the Department. However, the routines around this could be improved to provide greater clarity for the doctoral student.

An applicable routine could be as follows:

When a PhD student applies for a leave of absence for a purpose considered to be of value for postgraduate education, for example an internship with relevant content, then a document is written where the Department ensures that when the doctoral employment ends, the doctoral student will instead be employed as an "Assistant with Doctoral Student Duties" for a period that at most corresponds to the leave, however never longer than to the date of the defence.

Comment

The form of employment "PhD student" constitutes a specific basis of time limitation according to the Higher Education Ordinance (HF). When switching to the "Assistant with Doctoral Student Duties" form of employment, the rules "general fixed-term employment" (ALVA) become applicable. According to the Act of Employment Protection (Lagen om Anställningsskydd - LAS), one is allowed to work as a fixed-term employee for at most two years with ALVA as the basis of time limitation. The above-described solution means that the PhD students will start using their "ALVA time". This means that they have fewer than two years left for further fixed-term employment in Sweden after the defence. However, it should be emphasised that the form of postdoctoral employment "PostDoc" (as does "PhD Student") constitutes a specific time limitation case, so the above-mentioned routine does not affect the possibilities for Swedish postdoctoral employment.

Employment as an "Assistant with Doctoral Student Duties" to compensate for internship

In order to compensate for the period when (*name of PhD Student*) has been on leave of absence due to an internship at (*hosting entity*) (*name of Ph D Student*) will, when his/her employment ends, get employment as an "Assistant with Doctoral Student Duties"¹ for max *X months* [*X = time span of leave due to the internship*], though at most to the date of defence.

Uppsala (date)

Approved:

(Name)
Main advisor

(Name)
Head of Division

Decision:

(Name)
Head of Dept.

¹ Assistant with Doctoral Student Duties refers to ALVA.