

## Follow-up Groups at Turku School of Economics

A follow-up group is often provided as a support for doctoral candidates in the different faculties of the University of Turku. Since 2018, Turku School of Economics has also offered follow-up groups for doctoral candidates.

The purpose of the follow-up group is to support the doctoral candidate's progress in their studies as well as their career planning after graduation. Furthermore, the goal is to strengthen the doctoral candidate's career plans, and the quality of doctoral dissertations.

A follow-up group can be appointed to each doctoral candidate completing their dissertation at Turku School of Economics if they so wish. The group is appointed so that the doctoral candidate delivers to the Doctoral Programme Coordinator an updated supervision plan (the supervisors and the subject's professor responsible for doctoral training sign the plan as well), which includes the members of the follow-up group or where they have been added if the group is formed later on. Next, the members of the follow-up group are added to the UGIS system (by the Coordinator) under the doctoral candidate's information.

The doctoral candidate discusses the matter with the planned members of the follow-up group and contacts them. If necessary, the supervisor helps in finding suitable persons.

The member of the follow-up group can be a doctor familiar with the field of the dissertation or an external expert with practical experience in the field if they will advance the expertise required by the research project or the doctoral candidate's career plans.

- At least one of the members should be from the University of Turku (an employee or a docent), but this is not mandatory. It is recommended that the follow-up group has 2–4 members.
- Appointing a follow-up group is recommended especially when there is a need to make a person who cannot be a supervisor according to the rules of Turku School of Economics an official part of the dissertation process. The members are officially recorded in the electronic UGIS system.

The doctoral candidates report their progress to the Doctoral Programme each year and deliver the report also to the follow-up group. It is recommended that the group meets once a year. The doctoral candidate convenes the annual meeting of the follow-up group and it should be held at the beginning of the year when the follow-up report is handed in. In addition, the supervisors can participate in the meeting but the doctoral candidate makes the decision on their participation.

If they prefer, the doctoral candidate can also convene the group between the annual meetings and can meet the members without the supervisors. Conference calls and other technological solutions can be utilised in organising the meeting if necessary.

In the meeting, the doctoral candidate can, in addition to presenting their progress, discuss issues concerning their doctoral training and future career. The follow-up group gives the doctoral candidate feedback according to good practice (appropriate, responsible and encouraging) on the progress of his/her studies. The meetings of the follow-up group (as well as the meetings with the supervisors) are recorded in the UGIS system which makes it easier to return to the discussed issues in the group's next meeting. The doctoral candidate takes minutes of each meeting and records them in the UGIS system.