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# **Taking a break: doctoral summer schools as transformative pedagogies**

*Miriam Zukas and Linda Lundgaard Andersen*

## **Abstract**

This chapter focuses on the doctoral summer school as a challenging pedagogy for doctoral education, in which the traditional supervisory relationship and the disciplinary curriculum are deconstructed through intensive group processes. We draw on our experiences as pedagogues on the Roskilde University Graduate School in Lifelong Learning which has hosted an international summer school for the last ten years. We describe the new learning spaces created and explore the democratic group processes and the collaborative action learning involved when discipline and stage of study are set to the side in this multi-paradigmatic, multi-national context. Despite the wide range of participants in terms of length of study, focus and methodological approach, the respite from supervisory pedagogies and the careful critiques of multi-national peer ‘opponents’ is often transformative in the doctoral students’ research subjectivities and continuing journeys.

**Keywords:** doctoral summer school; doctoral pedagogy; transformative learning

## **Introduction**

Within the context of a book that seeks to examine pedagogy for doctoral study which moves beyond the pedagogy of (mostly one-to-one) supervision, and to develop practice-based conversations beyond the handbook, this chapter examines a specific phenomenon through a case study: the development of the doctoral summer school. The case examined here is the Roskilde University Graduate School in Lifelong Learning annual doctoral Summer School. Both authors have been involved with the Summer School over a number of years. We describe its features and context and then analyse the differences between the summer school and the traditional mode of supervision, raising a number of questions about the learning and pedagogies involved within each sphere. We end by suggesting that the summer school is often transformative in terms of doctoral students’ research subjectivities and continuing journeys – and therefore provides a convincing argument for including this pedagogy as a part of doctoral programmes.

We begin our journey with five vignettes or composite pictures of the kinds of people who participate in the summer school, before outlining the development of the programme in the context of the highly-specific pedagogic context of Roskilde University.

## **Doctoral students taking a transformative break - vignettes<sup>1</sup>**

Elena is a young Italian woman who is in the initial stages of her PhD. She is enthusiastic about her subject area in lifelong learning and very engaged with the PhD project. She has chosen to attend the Summer School because, although she enjoys an environment in which she is supervised with other PhD students, she feels that her supervisor does not have the expertise in educational research which she requires. She has found the Summer School enormously helpful, both in terms of the content and the pedagogies. She would like to take what she experiences as a very different and more productive atmosphere of supervision – one she feels to be both respectful and more egalitarian – away with her, but is concerned about how to do this.

Elisabeth is from one of the Eastern EU countries. She is in the middle of her PhD. She feels that her participation in the Summer School is critical for deepening her scholarly research, not least because the relocation to another country offers both different perspectives and rich substance related to her chosen area (some of the lecturers have expertise in that area). She is highly critical of the system within which she is studying, and she is concerned that she will not be able to voice that critique in the context of her own country.

Jan is a student from RUC, part way through his PhD. He attended the Summer School the previous year, as he was starting his studies, because he knew it was a requirement that he attend at some stage. He found it a little bewildering and he did not feel he got the most out of the experience. This year, he feels ready to engage and is looking forward to meeting the ‘other’ – that is, international PhD students who work in different systems - to get a sense of his own journey and to try out his ideas in a different context. He feels that the RUC context is well-organised and supportive, but it can be a bit insular and wants to expose his ideas to a more critical hearing from outside. He is particularly keen on the chance to work with new professors as well as his own in a variety of different formats.

Jane is from the Far East and is struggling to complete her PhD in a context in which she works full-time as an academic, and feels that she has little support from her own colleagues. She says that her conditions of work are intense: for example, those scoring lowest on student evaluations may be required to leave. She knows what she is trying to do and why, and has come to the Summer School to draw strength from others who will support her, and who will offer a different view. She decides by the end of the Summer School that, in order to retain her moral and ethical integrity, she will risk her job by completing her PhD.

Joanna feels that she is stuck: she has to go through a process of upgrading her status in her own country by submitting her final proposal and her research questions. But she still doesn't know how to narrow them down. She hopes for some help from colleagues and facilitators, but she's not sure what help she needs. During her presentation, she is confronted by her peers with the issue of having to give up on some aspects of the research which she holds most dear. She breaks down in tears because she had really wanted to do it all. By the end of the Summer School she has come to understand, through her discussions with her peers, that researching always necessitates difficult choices, and she is ready to focus.

### **Entering the communities of research: the summer school format**

As shown above, many participants, particularly those from abroad, come to the Summer School because they have issues about some aspect of their doctoral study which they wish to explore or to resolve. For those from Roskilde, it is required that they attend at least one Summer School during their PhD study. Participants arrive at the Summer School imbued with a wide range of values associated with doctoral study and situated within different phases of thesis work. Despite the Summer School's organisational home, participants may not see their research as being specifically about societal and subjective understandings of lifelong learning (be the focus learning, education or training) – that is, they may have a strong or weaker affiliation with lifelong learning research traditions and scope. Their background and values depend on many factors in addition to the cultural context: the disciplinary context and the doctoral tradition in which their own PhD is being undertaken, the nature of the academic project they are undertaking, the supervisor's own values and views of doctoral study, the institutional, national and cultural expectations of doctoral study and achievement, and so on, as our vignettes show. The vignettes also illustrate how some participants take significant decisions about their studies as a result of the Summer School.

In summary, the objectives of the Danish summer school in lifelong learning are to create learning arenas for stimulating and challenging scholarly discussions as well as to bridge different national and academic traditions and universities. The fact that individuals from between eight and fourteen different national backgrounds attend each year implies that the summer school meets this objective. The probability, therefore, of forming scholarly and academic networks is very much enhanced because the group of PhD students attending is so differentiated. The summer school format and those facilitating encourage a stimulating, informal and fun learning environment, including carefully planned case visits and study trips in the busy schedule since these elements have proven to be important in establishing a thriving and stimulating learning environment. As described in more detail below, participants are formally required to prepare a research paper which they will present and which will then be constructively and critically opposed. In addition, the summer school also involves workshops in which discussions and opposition take place; lectures by national and international scholars; and a symposium, where a creative work format is applied in academic settings.

### **Description of the study school: access and format**

The Summer School has taken place annually for the last ten years and is a priority for the Graduate School and the Department of Psychology and Education, within whose auspices it takes place. Each year both PhD students from the Graduate School and their supervisors agree upon a significant theme focusing on learning but also situating this phenomenon in a broad and international context. The theme is carefully woven in order to open up space for a differentiated group of international PhD students from different knowledge fields. The criteria for selecting applicants combine relevance and quality of the proposed paper and PhD

abstract which are submitted beforehand with a consideration of the overall differentiation of the group in regard of gender, nationality and research area and topic. Usually between twenty and twenty-five students from eight to twelve different nationalities attend. The Summer School identifies a course fee, but in general it has been possible for students with limited access to funding to apply for a reduction in costs.

The invited guest professors – usually two or three – are carefully selected and approached. They need to be able to embody dynamic, scholarly excellent and respectful doctoral training practice and to be willing to, and truly interested in, taking responsibility for but also granting co-ownership to the PhD students for summer school processes and products. The international invited professors are then paired with Danish supervisors and each team moderates one of the three workshops each year. The pairing is carefully considered taking into account gender, professional background, theoretical and methodological positions. This is important because since the span of different scholars has proved to be influential in helping to achieve the summer school objectives.

### **Summer schools as scholarly venues**

The starting point for the summer school as doctoral pedagogy was initiated through a formal requirement of a five year research grant for the Graduate School of Lifelong Learning. The Danish government was led by an international incentive advocating the importance of strengthening international networking and positioning as part of the infrastructure of Danish research. The rationale for the summer school as a venue for international PhD students reflects the current requirements for doctoral studies and programmes in general. Doctoral programmes are scholarly activities deeply and profoundly rooted within international scientific culture and traditions. Consequently doctoral students are required to take part in and accustom themselves to the academic and scientific world of peers. In many disciplines the summer school tradition is a venue for intensive scientific meetings transgressing ordinary individualised academic life. Summer schools function as a highly specialised and advanced setting where junior and senior scholars from a multitude of national and cultural backgrounds come together to share and develop their interest for a specific topic. In many cases the structure and the educational approach reflect a democratic learning environment where the PhD students are supposed to present their research in workshops or the format of a roundtable. Likewise the summer school frames the presence of a number of excellent professors or top scholars from all over the world to present their work as well as engage in discussions with the PhD students. In doing so the summer school establishes an unusual academic environment and format advocating egalitarian values such as collaboration, respectful critique, mutual learning and inspiration; thereby the summer school actually represents a counterpoint to the majority of participants' academic university cultures.

The specific features and profile of the summer school under discussion here were developed closely intertwined with the pedagogy of Roskilde University as well as the sponsoring Department of Educational Studies. The University, one of the Danish reform universities, was

established at the beginning of the 1970s as an innovative place for advanced learning in order to cope with new needs for qualification and reform. Reform or modern universities as opposed to the 'old' classic universities were intended to be adapted to the development of society, labour markets and information technology; in order to do this, they utilised an experimental pedagogical study structure (Jensen and Olesen, 1999). Studies at Roskilde University have a distinctive philosophy and innovative approach to education: they are organized as project work, characterized by problem orientation, participant direction, exemplarity, inter-disciplinarity and collaborative learning (Ou and Nielsen 2003). The students are situated as active learners in project studies in collaboration with professors, and these project studies are rooted in university courses and workshops. Identifying, formulating and maintaining a shared focus in a project group is a difficult and complex process of negotiation and therefore 'open skills' such as argumentation and negotiation are indispensable (Bjørn and Hertzum, 2006). The learning involved is collaborative, active and participatory, directed in a dialogue between the teacher/professor as a facilitator, expert and supervisor (Barkley, Cross and Major 2005). The different dimensions of this new teacher/supervisor role represents a transformation from exercising the role of the didactic expert in the academic field towards a role including and refining a focus on processes, methodological dimensions and a reflexive approach. The philosophical intention, in summary, is that students should be actively involved in the pedagogical and knowledge-making processes. Thus, students and teachers participate together in acquiring, constructing, and negotiating the meaning of knowledge (Danielsen and Nielsen 2010). It is within this tradition that the summer school has been developed by academics politically committed to and well-versed in these collaborative and participatory pedagogies.

### **The main features of the summer school**

Preparation and socialisation begins with a call on the Summer School website for participation from PhD students and graduate students presently engaged in educational research. The invitation is intended to be inclusive, both in terms of topic ('all projects dealing with learning or contexts of learning can find their space') and stage of study ('from the preliminary research plan to complete articles ready to be submitted'). Each year as described earlier, a theme is developed, intentionally kept as loose as possible (eg "Lifelong Learning: Inside-Outside Education" or "Lifelong Learning between Policy and Practice") to give shape to the proceedings.<sup>ii</sup> But within this open invitation, certain preferences already emerge: the website suggests that "we advocate a multi-cultural, multi-national, multi-paradigmatic approach to (qualitative) research [brackets in the original]", and also invites would-be participants to expect "highly-qualified and challenging discussions".

The website makes clear that participants' own work will be at the heart of the curriculum, and that it is a precondition that participants submit a research paper addressing a theme or problem in the participant's work. Participants are notified that the paper will be available to others beforehand, and that it will need to be in a form and length which makes reading in advance 'realistic'. This is embedded at application stage, when participants are expected to

provide the name and abstract of the paper, as well as giving details of their current research and a brief statement of how the Summer School is relevant to their research. The supervisor is also involved at this stage because would-be participants need to provide a supervisory supporting statement with their applications.

The Summer School, usually a fortnight long, is constituted through parallel workshops, lectures and a two-day symposium. Each workshop (with some eight to ten participants) is convened by two professors – usually one from the host department and one from elsewhere – usually abroad. These workshops are regarded as the ‘core’ context for learning and carefully set up by the facilitating professors so that the intention – ‘to discuss critically and constructively the research work of the participants’ – is articulated repeatedly. Timetables are negotiated early on, to ensure that everyone has the chance to have their paper discussed. Participants are expected to read each other’s papers, and to act as discussant for another’s paper in their workshop. The role of discussant (sometimes referred to as ‘opponent’ as well) is carefully spelled out on the website – ‘you are obliged to present a qualified perspective on the paper based on a careful preparation. You are expected to present your considerations in a respectful, constructive and critical manner ...Some participants find it ‘tricky’ to criticize another author’s paper, but it may help you using opens questions ... The idea is to facilitate and stimulate further thinking regarding the setting of the research questions, the method(s), theory(ies) ...’. The role of the rest of the group as constructively critical peers is also explained. These demands reflect the pedagogical intentions of Roskilde University, as outlined above, making explicit that the participants are expected, from the start, to have a shared focus and to engage actively in collaborative learning

The role of professors within the workshops is also explicated. They are expected to moderate and to ‘safeguard the scientific relevance and quality of the discussion’ – in other words, not to act as supervisors, but instead to steer and to guide the group discussion. As well as facilitating workshops, participating professors are expected to give at least one lecture, offering different methodological and theoretical (international) perspectives on the theme of the Summer School. These lectures could be regarded as a reciprocal activity, in that participants have a chance to comment upon and critique the work of their facilitators; however, the terminology and implied pedagogy, as well as hierarchies of academe, do not give easy rise to such reciprocity. Nevertheless, participants often comment positively about these opportunities to engage in the academic critique of professors’ work without being concerned about repercussions, real or imagined. Again, as outlined above, this culture of reflexivity and the focus on processes and methodological dimensions is well-embedded historically and practically in the broader university culture.

The Summer School involves a two-day symposium which is usually scheduled half-way through and offers a change of theme, pace and pedagogy: for example, it might focus on research methodologies and involve hands-on exercises, group discussions and other organised activities in which participants are reorganised into new groups to ‘facilitate further discussions and relations’. The interlude might also involve additional staff from other parts of the university or elsewhere.

A wide range of less formal learning opportunities also shapes the Summer School. There is an unspoken but nevertheless forceful expectation that participants and professors eat together in the day and most evenings, with great attention given to the quality of the catering in order to encourage full participation. It is also felt that this symbolises for participants their value and the importance of their doctoral work. Almost every year the PhD students' evaluation summary highlights the quality and significance of the summer school's 'caring environment' accentuating how the students experience this as a token of equality and respect, which many of them rarely encounter in their home academic settings. A social agenda is also explicitly negotiated at the start of each day ("Today's work and leisure"), and often participants organise visits and other outings as part of the Summer School. Finally, near the ending of the summer school the PhD students are invited to self-organise a panel discussion on the conditions and work situation of doctoral students across nationalities and disciplinary traditions and they usually put a lot of energy in organising a detailed and enlightening event pointing to the multitude of challenges and problems but also sharing and building a platform of strategies of how to survive a PhD.

### **Conceptualising the doctoral summer school**

Doctoral supervision and the whole process of developing as a doctoral candidate has been likened to a community of practice, in Lave and Wenger's (1991) terms (for example, Malcolm and Zukas, 2000; Lee and Boud, 2009; Pearson, Cowan and Liston, 2009). Doctoral students are engaged in learning in practice through social relations. Their participation in the practices of research, writing and scholarship as well as academic critique and debate (particularly but not only with their supervisors) forms the basis for their developing identities as full members of the discipline. Their increasing participation in the disciplinary community through a series of structured activities (for example drawing up a research proposal, gaining ethical approval, giving seminar papers, and writing appropriately) over time might be characterised as the learning curriculum. One important feature, though, of these social relations is that for those working in social sciences – here specifically educational and lifelong learning research – there is a primary social relation through which all else is structured. In Lave and Wenger's language, this one-to-one (or one-to-a few, in the case of joint supervision) might be characterised as an apprenticeship with newcomer students and old-timer supervisors.

There are a number of issues then with such an analysis: the first is the nature of the community to which a doctoral student is being apprenticed. Like others, Hodkinson and Hodkinson (2004) raised questions about the socio-spatial delineation of the community itself: by community, do we mean the broad community of scholars studying education and lifelong learning? Or do we mean a rather narrower community of the supervisor(s) and fellow doctoral-candidates? For many of those coming to the Summer School, it would seem that this narrower interpretation has, to that point, been a more appropriate description. Second, the assumption that the positions of novice (peripheral participant) and expert (full participant) are stable or uniform has also been challenged (for example, Fuller and Unwin, 2004). In tradi-

tional supervision, supervisors may learn from doctoral students and doctoral students may learn from other doctoral students. Nevertheless, the supervisor as expert is privileged and other forms of learning are regarded as secondary or even incidental. And third, the ‘community of practice’ notion has been critiqued for its inherent conservatism (Hager, 2005) in the sense that novices seem unlikely to intervene, let alone transform, the community. Again, though, because the doctoral process is based primarily on a narrow range of social relations with a principal focus on the development of the individual scholar, rather than the broader community, it seems likely that this reflects accurately the community of practice of supervision.

How might we then characterise learning in the Summer School? One way is through comparison and contrast with the ongoing learning within supervision and we have drawn up a table to try and illustrate what we mean (Table 1 below). We see each pair of features as a continuum – but we have over-stated the case in order to make a point. For example, whilst continuing assessment of written work is primarily the responsibility of the supervisor(s) within the classic doctoral context, nevertheless individuals may receive feedback from peers and a number of other sources. However, within the Summer School, assessment is primarily the responsibility of peers, rather than supervisors.

<b>Apprenticeship: Modelling one to one</b>	<b>Communities of research: Modelling many to many</b>
<b>Primary relationship: supervisor-supervisee</b>	Primary relationship: peer group
<b>Governance: institutional agreements and conditions</b>	Loose governance: democratic, self-governance
<b>Values: dependent on specifics (supervisor, context, disciplinary assumptions, etc)</b>	Values: collaboration, respectful critique, egalitarian
<b>Intermittent contact</b>	Ongoing
<b>Long-term, developmental</b>	Short-term, intense
<b>Uni-disciplinary</b>	Multi- and inter-disciplinary
<b>Assessment in the hands of the supervisor, ongoing critique</b>	Assessment in the hands of peers, peer critique and discussion.
<b>Classical learning scenery (offices, seminar rooms)</b>	Informal learning scenery ( trains, kitchens, study trips )
<b>Outcomes: long-term, thesis apprenticeship modelling</b>	Outcomes: short-term, critical doctoral awareness and engagement, networking: Communities of research (Lave & Wenger)

**Table 1: Contrasting features of supervision and summer school**

In order to contrast the community of practice of one-to-one supervision with the Summer School, we have chosen to use the term ‘community of research’ to characterise the latter. In doing so, we highlight the following features. First, we believe that the broader interpretation

of community discussed above is appropriate: participants engage with others working in a much wider range of educational research than they are likely to have encountered to date. This often facilitates meta-level discussions and emergent understandings of what it means to be part of a 'lifelong learning research community'.

Second, participants in the Summer School are peers, rather than novices. They are required (as set out above) to participate fully (rather than peripherally) in practice, critiquing each other's work in appropriate ways. What is important here is that the primary relationship is with peers, rather than experts, and that this relationship is 'many-to-many', rather than one-to-one (few). The stable position of the supervisor described above is indirectly challenged as participants take up 'knowing' identities or positions of identities. Sometimes, this could result in disruptions to the supervisory relationship when participants return home; however, peer groups are often involved in working together through the politics of such disruptions, recognising the power relations upon which supervision (and later sponsorship) depends.

Third, whilst the doctoral project is still a major focus for participating in the Summer School, it is not the only one. Other activities include critiquing colleagues' work, developing critical awareness of the processes of writing and broader social development. The collaborative and generally open processes contrast strongly with individualised – even private – processes of supervision.

### **Supervisors in unfamiliar territory**

So far, we have focused on the doctoral participants in the community of research of the Summer School. Participating professors might also find themselves in unfamiliar territory: no longer supervisors but instead members of a peer community in which they too have to practise new forms of discourse and pedagogy, rather than rely on the familiar hierarchical relations. Their acculturation, too, might require careful negotiation. For example, to step back from the supervisory position could be disconcerting – what is it that one can contribute if one is no longer a supervisor one to one? Given the meta-level analyses of both the field and supervision itself which are likely to occupy at least some time within the workshops, a certain reflexivity and openness about one's own research processes and supervisory practices might be appropriate. So, as we noted above, the philosophical intention to engage participants in knowledge-making processes, so long a part of the University's collective project, may require considerable acclimatisation on the part of visiting professors. And further – commenting upon a wide range of projects situated within unfamiliar fields and employing unfamiliar theories and methodologies is disconcerting for those whose academic careers have been built on specialisation. The engagement with, for example, positivist methodologies when one has taken a firm interpretivist stance demands high levels of reflexivity – even self-control – in this context.

Moving on to the issue of collaboration, which again is such a central aspect of the Summer School, this might be counter-cultural for some. In her research on doctoral education in the United States, Jones (2009) makes the observation that many students undertaking doctoral

programmes in chemistry and neuroscience report having only one supervisor or mentor, whilst those working in the humanities tend to work with a dissertation committee, involving several members of faculty. However, those working in laboratory sciences tend to enjoy frequent contact with their advisors, as well as other peers in the course of their empirical work, whilst those in the humanities enjoy only intermittent contact with advisors and are often isolated from peers, particularly if they work in order to support their study. She suggests that, as a result, intellectual collaboration is a strong (and usually essential) feature of the science doctoral curriculum; however desirable, it is much less integrated into humanities doctoral work. Even though there may be opportunities for collaboration, such as editing journals or running conferences, the difference lies in the nature of the doctoral product: a display of individual effort, rather than the product of a collaborative project.

The typical lifelong learning doctoral experience is predominantly a display of individual effort. The project is chosen and worked up by the student, with guidance through supervision. It is not necessarily part of the doctoral tradition that peers will read draft papers and give feedback. And although there may be opportunities to present research to others in workshops and seminars, there are rarely opportunities for peer collaboration, or critical support since traditional organising often appears to advantage the senior approach in the forms of supervisor(s) rather than peers. The experience, therefore, of an entire group of peers and senior academics reading one's work and offering 'respectful, constructive and critical' feedback may be entirely new. Stepping inside the supervisor's shoes for a moment – that is, being asked to read and give such feedback to a differentiated group of peers – could also be a novel experience.

The nature of the critique offered may also be strange: as made clear by the Summer School guidance, this is not the polite but sometimes harsh cut and thrust of academic debate. Instead, a pedagogical stance in relation to one's peers is needed, requiring 'opponents' to 'facilitate and stimulate further thinking'. For some participants, this is even more challenging than being on the receiving end: after all, their education to date will have depended on their ability to dissect and even demolish the work of others. To be expected to respond constructively to ideas which are incomplete or ill-considered; to be respectful about research with which one might violently disagree; to be critical about work in a field about which one knows little: this demands skill and empathy. Unlike the power asymmetry of supervision, such pedagogy is also egalitarian – or at least, is intended to be so.

But how are participants inducted in these new critical practices? The skills of the facilitating professors in pairing and ordering participants come into play. The early involvement of experienced participants (those already used to acting as opponents) ensures that Summer School novices understand what is required. The professors' own critical engagement also models what is meant by 'respectful, constructive and critical' feedback. The timing and management of that feedback, as well as the quality (and the way in which it might differ from supervisory feedback), would usually help participants understand the Summer School ethos. Also the use of 'scripted learning' as a tool from collaborative learning pedagogy provides a useful learning arena in which the participants learn to engage in a critical but constructive way with research papers, theoretical concepts or methodology (Barkley, Cross and

Major 2005). In scripted learning the students are guided step by step in a process of developing a critical stance to a paper, or a book segment or a theory that the workshop participants have chosen to work on. The outcome of this is subsequently presented and discussed in a workshop plenary and facilitated by the workshop professors.

### **Learning from the Summer School**

Each year, those running the Summer School have evaluated systematically the participants (both students and staff) in order to understand better the experiences of participants and ways in which to improve the planning for future years. The evaluations indicate that the Summer School is a powerful and sometimes life-changing event for those involved. Collectively, they also point to systematic learning and longer-term outcomes.

First, as the vignettes and description above shows, at a meta-level, the Summer School develops what might be called critical doctoral awareness on the part of both students and professors. In other words, the format, process and different work tasks provide a space to reflect on the doctoral process and on supervision in a context such that individuals recognise that ‘It doesn’t have to be this way’. Supervisors might wish to change their own practices as a result, for example by providing more opportunities for collective supervision; students might seek more peer support from the Summer School colleagues and/or other colleagues in a more systematic way or they build an electronic network for future discussions and conference sharing.

But this is not a story full of happy endings: there are dangers too. For Elena, whose experience was described at the beginning of this chapter, the Summer School proved to be frustrating in the long term because she felt that she was unable to change the pedagogies of supervision and doctoral programming back home. Elisabeth, too, was relieved by the support she received on the Summer School but was so concerned about the contradictions between the system within which she was working and the findings of her thesis that she felt she might not be able to submit within that country. She moved her candidature as a result. Jane lost touch with colleagues, and they became concerned that she lost her job soon after the Summer School. For Jan the outcome of the summer school led to a more solid approach in his PhD work because the Summer School provided him with a contested arena within which his research question and his choices of theory, method and data were challenged and thoroughly discussed. In this way he was able to consolidate and refine his own and unique scholarly work.

Second, the Summer School is an interlude in a much longer process; although we portrayed it as contrasting with the one-to-one nature of supervision, of course, it is entirely reliant on that process to frame the Summer School. For example, in the end, professors working on the Summer School do not have supervisory responsibility for participants; and students are accountable to their parent institution, and not to the Summer School. The relative freedom from the strictures of responsibility and assessment requirements, as well as a certain level of disciplinary openness and a high degree of collegiality, is refreshing by contrast. But the fact

is that participants are connected by a common purpose which will be realised outside the bubble in space and time. The Summer School is not a replacement for supervision; but it offers both participants and supervisors the opportunity to engage in learning that is interdisciplinary, collaborative, critical and relatively egalitarian: in other words, for a short time, to engage as full members of a community of researchers. The longer lasting outcome of the summer school might be that fact that the phd students for a decisive moment experience a rewarding and egalitarian academic culture, interaction and approach to knowledge production provide them with an incentive from which they might find inspiration and gain strength to do their part of changing academic culture and manners in their own academic department and settings.

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<sup>i</sup> These vignettes are based on a number of individuals who have attended the Summer School in the past. Details have been altered in order to ensure anonymity.

<sup>ii</sup> In 2010, the theme was elaborated as follows: "It will deal with learning in formal education and training as well as learning in all the other arenas where people engage and learn: Workplaces, evening classes, local communities, cultural and political activities, family life. It is the ambition to promote research approaches which will make the notion of lifelong learning a framework for critical rethinking of education and education research." This inclusive elaboration follows a similar pattern to previous years.