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The Faculty of Law - allocation  
PhD programme  
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## Short presentation

Hamish's PhD thesis is provisionally titled "*The Capacity of Private Contracts for the Supply of Energy to Subsume Public Interest Principles in English and Danish Law*". Supervised by Ole Hansen, the project will explore electricity supply contracts in Denmark and the United Kingdom through studying the influence of systemic public interest considerations on private contractual relations. This will involve investigating the capacity of contract to act as a governance tool in realizing public goals, such as sustainability and security of supply, as well as the implications of emerging trends such as digitalization in this landscape.

Hamish holds an LLB (First Class Honours) in Scots law from the University of Glasgow. He also holds an LLM from the University of Copenhagen.

Prior to starting his PhD, he has worked in CEPRI as a research assistant primarily focusing on energy, with a particular emphasis on electricity market structures, the uptake of developing renewable energy technologies and the private governance of essential services.

## Employment

### Enrolled PhD student

The Faculty of Law - allocation

København S  
31 Jul 2021 → nu

### PhD fellow

PhD programme

København S, Denmark  
1 Sep 2020 → nu

### PhD fellow

PhD programme

København S, Denmark  
31 Aug 2020 → 23 Feb 2023

## Research outputs

### Unilateral variation clauses in Platform-User agreements

Hansen, Ole & Ritchie, Hamish George, 2022, In: *European Review of Private Law*. 30, 6, p. 929-950 22 p.

### Private Governance of Electricity Supply to End Users: The Range and Limitations of Unilateral Variation Clauses and Contractual Discretion in Commercial Electricity Supply Contracts

Hansen, Ole & Ritchie, Hamish George, 2021, In: *European Energy and Environmental Law Review*. 30, 6, p. 242-254 13 p.

## PhD Research:

The process of liberalising and privatising energy systems has seen electricity supply, formerly a largely nationalised endeavour, delegated to the private sector to promote public welfare through markets. However, the functioning of a competitive market is only one of several potentially competing goals in European energy policy. There remain persistent public interest notions in electricity supply, manifesting in extensive public regulation, that reflect the systemic importance

of secure and environmentally friendly energy supply to society. This has created a complex interaction between the public interest and a web of private relationships that now shape the electricity sector, potentially straining traditional normative conceptions of contract law. Particularly in the supply market, contracts between private suppliers and end users can be argued to hold an administrative dimension, blurring the lines between doctrinal understandings of public and private law.

The PhD project will attempt to provide a novel analysis of the legal nature of contractual agreements within the Danish and British supply markets. It is hoped that the thesis will fill existing gaps in literature on the theoretical impact of liberalisation on private contracts for energy supply. Studying the relationship between contract, regulation and the contours of public law provides an avenue to determine the nature and effect of the unusual contractual terms typical within the sector.