



Supervision Expectation

Exercise 1 : Expectation in Supervision

- **Step 1** - Take 5 minutes to rank your views on the statements shown in the 'Expectations in Supervision' questionnaire.
- **Step 2** - In pairs, discuss your rankings and agree a position representing each of your views for each category.

Expectations in Supervision

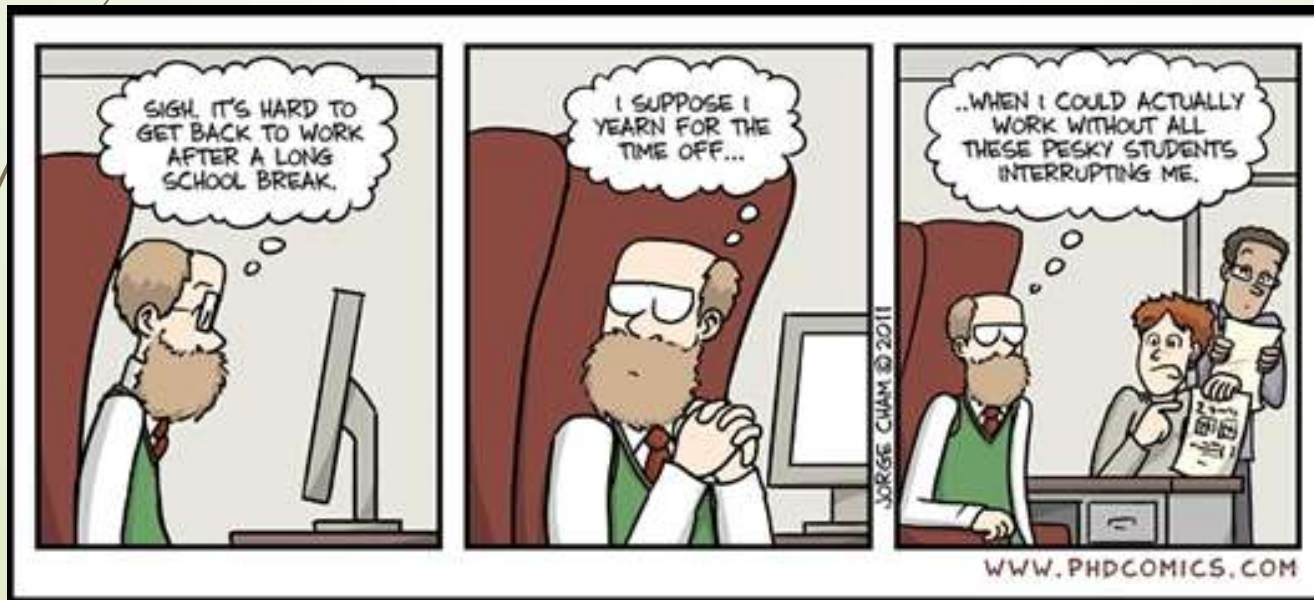
1.	It is the supervisor's responsibility to select a research topic	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	The student is responsible for selecting her/his own topic
2.	It is the supervisor who decides which theoretical framework or methodology is most appropriate	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	Students should decide which theoretical framework or methodology they wish to use
3.	The supervisor should develop an appropriate program and timetable of research and study for the student	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	The supervisor should leave the development of the program of study to the student

4.	The supervisor is responsible for ensuring that the student is introduced to the appropriate services and facilities of the department and University	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	It is the student's responsibility to ensure that she/he has located and accessed all relevant services and facilities for research
5.	Supervisors should only accept students when they have specific knowledge of the student's chosen topic	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	Supervisors should feel free to accept students, even if they do not have specific knowledge of the student's topic
6.	A warm, supportive relationship between supervisor and student is important for successful candidature	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	A personal, supportive relationship is inadvisable because it may obstruct objectivity for both student and supervisor during candidature
7.	The supervisor should insist on regular meetings with the student	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	The student should decide when she/he wants to meet with the supervisor

8.	The supervisor should check regularly that the student is working consistently and on task	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	The student should work independently and not have to account for how and where time is spent
9.	The supervisor is responsible for providing emotional support & encouragement to the student	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	Personal counselling and support are not the responsibility of the supervisor—students should look elsewhere
10.	The supervisor should insist on seeing all drafts of work to ensure that the student is on the right track	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	Students should submit drafts of work only when they want constructive criticism from the supervisor
11.	The supervisor should assist in the writing of the thesis if necessary	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	The writing of the thesis should only ever be the student's own work
12.	The supervisor is responsible for decisions regarding the standard of the thesis	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	The student is responsible for decisions concerning the standard of the thesis

Exercise 2: Discuss what student should expect from a supervisor ?

- In pairs, discuss what should student expect from a supervisor?



Students' expectations of supervisors

- To read their work well in advanced before supervisory meetings
- To be punctual for supervisory meetings
- To have a clear understanding of research area
- To show keen interest in the research being conducted
- To provide constructively critical feedback
- To be friendly, open and supportive
- To be available when needed
- To have the courtesy not to conduct a telephone conversation during a supervision meeting
- To facilitate supervisory meetings enabling exchange of ideas
- To be sufficiently involved in their success to help them get jobs

Philips, E.M. and Pugh, D.S. (1987) , How to get a PhD. Milton Keynes: Open University Press :

Exercise 3: Discuss what should a supervisor expect of student ?

- In pairs discuss what should a supervisor expect of student?

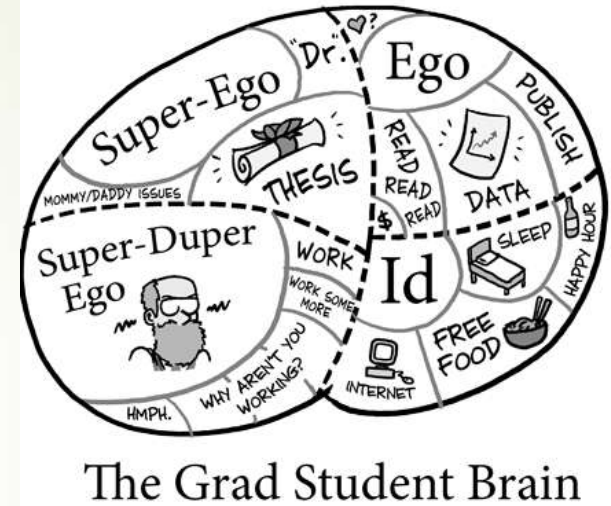


What should a supervisor expect from students?

- ❖ To have a clear idea of the research issues
- ❖ To be self-motivated
- ❖ To work consistently
- ❖ To turn up on time for meetings
- ❖ Be prepared for meeting
- ❖ To take responsibility for keeping notes of meetings
- ❖ To work on feedbacks given to them
- ❖ To complete on time
- ❖ To take responsibility for own work
- ❖ To be independent
- ❖ To be proficient in language
- ❖ To carry out agreed actions
- ❖ Stick to agreed deadlines
- ❖ To inform any issues
- ❖ Listen
- ❖ Abide rules and regulations
- ❖ Work harmoniously with other
- ❖ To do their own or out sourcing editing and proof-reading

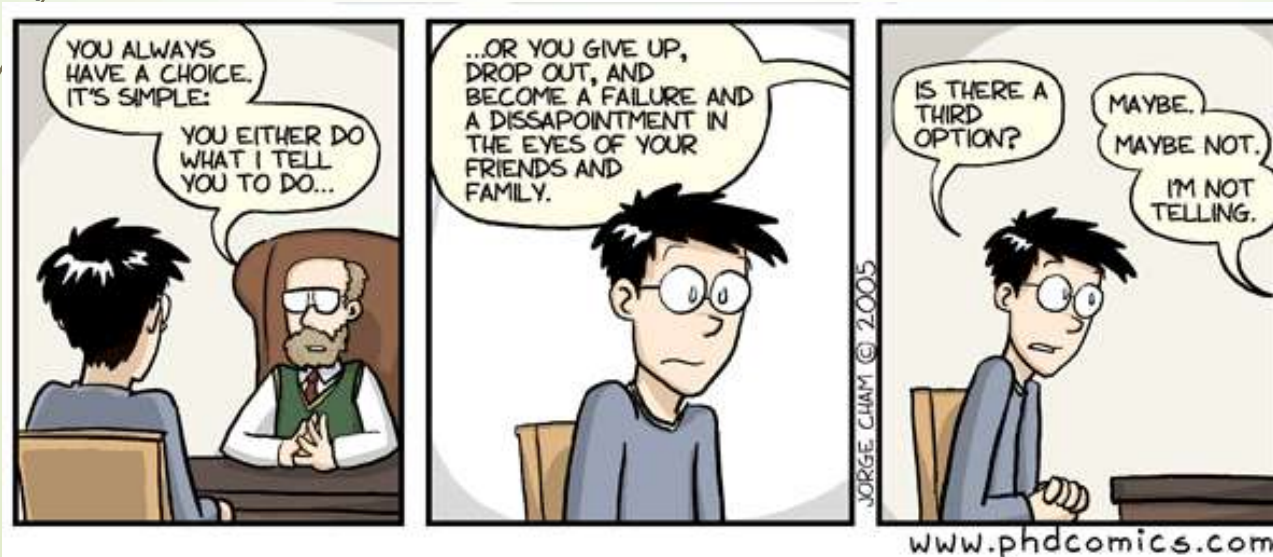
Potential issues for STUDENTS ...

- Lack of guidance from academic or support staff
- Lack of availability of resources
- Lack of confidence – is my work good enough?
- Lack of knowledge in subject area
- Lack of direction (e.g., the never-ending thesis)
- Feeling isolated, lonely or unsupported
- Not enjoying the topic
- Difficulties with supervisor, other students, etc.
- Anxiety about getting through successfully or not knowing what is expected
- Funding constraints or financial difficulties
- Unexpected personal problems or conflicting life commitments
- Practical issues: money, lifestyle, getting hold of the supervisor
- Ethical issues: are we being used?
- Supervisor being too prescriptive 'my way is the only way'



Potential issues for SUPERVISORS ...

- Poor communications - Doesn't give enough information, Unclear instruction, advice and comments
 - Often making inconsistent advice
 - Lack enthusiasm - Never gives fierce criticism and tough pushback that forces students to confront their weaknesses, take risks, stop whining, cut the excuses, get over fears and progress..
 - Overly dependent on students
- Lack commitment – never around
 - Steals supervisees' work
 - Abusive, negative and undermining
 - Unresponsive



Overcoming issues supervisee perspectives....


- Keep expectations realistic and discuss expectations at the beginning
- Draw up an agenda for the meetings
- Supervisee should record the outcome of meetings and email to supervisor(s)/use PhD Logbook / File / Folder
- Arrange next meeting ahead of time
- Alert supervisor(s) to problems as they arise
- Give sufficient notice for requests
- Be organised
- Be professional
- Be open, flexible and honest

SUPERVISION RECORD
FYP 1 (BEKU 4792)

WEEK	SUPERVISOR COMMENT	SIGNATURE
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SUPERVISION RECORD
FYP 2 (BEKU 4894)

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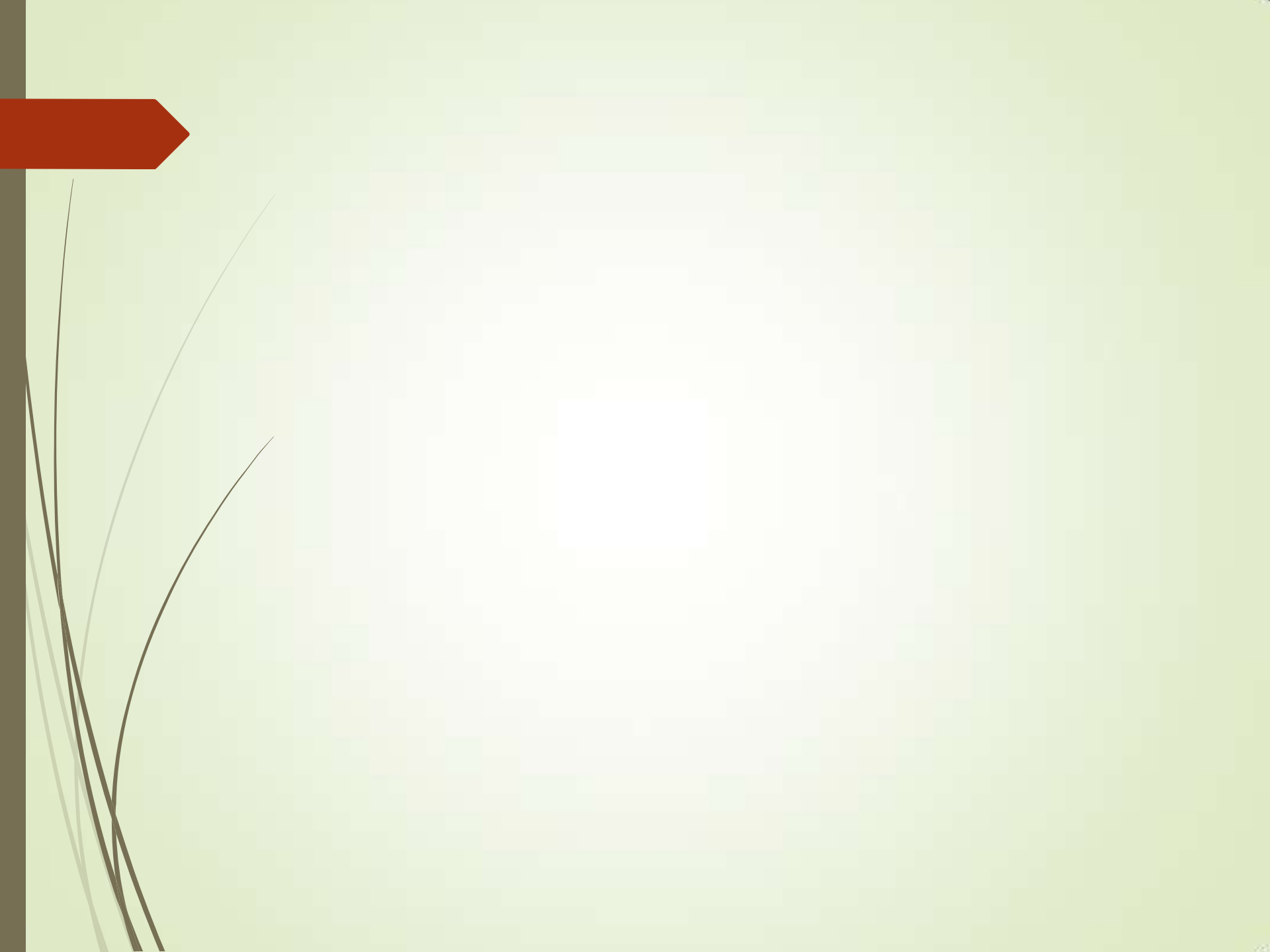


A. Supervisor's Responsibilities

1. Meet regularly with students and be contactable at other times.
2. Arrange substitute supervision during extended absences.
3. Advise on course selection.
4. Assist in the preparation for comprehensive or oral examinations.
5. Help prepare conference and journal presentations based on work done in the program and assist with applications for support to attend suitable conferences at a reasonable distance and on whose programs students earn a place.
6. Help apply for funds to cover direct research costs and to provide stipends to full-time students.
7. Provide feedback within a mutually agreed time-frame on written work submitted for review.

B. Students' Responsibilities

1. Regularly pursue work and keep the supervisor informed of progress or problems.
2. To a mutually agreed degree that respects other responsibilities and priorities, contribute to advancing team activities that further the common good of all of us working together--e.g., workshops for teachers, parent contacts, library orders, data bases, maintaining bibliographies and mailing lists, convening meetings, maintaining computers and supplies. These tasks will be equitably distributed.
3. Join in the preparation of conference presentations and publications on research and other activities done with faculty members.
4. With appropriate guidance, prepare a draft version of the thesis or major report, normally within 3 months of its final presentation for master's degrees, or 6 months for doctoral degrees; after that point the supervisor may take over such preparation and the order of authorship may be changed (within APA and McGill authorship guidelines).
5. Apply for scholarships and bursaries, especially FQRSC, McGill, and SSHRC (where eligible).
6. Participate to a mutually agreed extent in teaching-related activities such as the TA course.
7. Take a professional role in one's discipline by undertaking at least one student or regular membership in an appropriate professional or academic organization.
8. Keep at McGill a copy of raw data, coding sheets, instruments, and subject-identification data.
9. Upon graduation, leave with the supervisor a printed copy of the main research report, and an electronic copy in modifiable form (e.g., not PDF) of any data and the text of the thesis or project.
10. Use Microsoft Word and APA style for written submissions.
11. Report annually in writing on progress and contributions (department and university forms).
12. Regularly attend and participate in research-team meetings.





Supervising Josephine

Dear John,


Thank you for running a thought-provoking and thorough session last Thursday. I enjoyed the day very much, and I think I got a lot out of it.

I talked to you about my own experience of being a supervisor, and although that episode is now over, I would value your thoughts - you are also welcome to consider this as a story you might use in future if it is helpful.

My name is April and my story starts as a new lecturer. I was one year post-PhD, and lucky to get a lectureship so early on. I was keen and eager, as you might guess. I was also rather naive.

When I started my role, I was offered the opportunity to second supervise a PhD student who had already been accepted in the department. Her first supervisor was an eminent Professor, and someone whose work had some crossover with my own.

Before continuing to the next episode discuss what April should do this stage.



I was flattered to be asked and said yes. I did not think to ask to look at her CV, or consider her work so far.

This student (I will call her Josephine) was working on a self-funded PhD. She seemed to have a plan for work developed with her first supervisor (I will call him Tom). For the first year, I was not really involved in their meetings, which was ok for me, I had limited expertise in her subject area, and my own experience of a second supervisor was rather 'hands off'. I assumed that all was going well, and I'd be asked to meetings or to advise when it was necessary.

Before continuing to the next episode discuss the situation and anything should do now.

3.

At the end of the first year, Tom retired. This meant that I was now, technically, responsible for this student. Tom still remained very much involved, but I felt that the responsibility for this student to complete was on me. There was no formal recognition of this from the department or the graduate school, it was more that I became primary supervisor by name only.

We started to work more as a team, and I noticed that things were not, perhaps, going so well. Josephine's writing was still rather patchy in quality, and things that should have been completed were still on-going.

She passed her upgrade, but I had strong reservations about this, and talked to the Head of PG studies in my department about them. She conceded that the upgrade report was not excellent, but was judged to have passed so there was little that could be done.

Discuss the situation. Have you any suggestions for April?

Josephine was a difficult student to supervise. She had a strong personality (not a negative point!), but often fought against advice that we were giving. I had not experienced supervisions that turned into arguments; and I often felt like we were battling with Josephine, especially when we were discussing aspects about her work that needed considerable development.

There were a few occasions that I suspected that Josephine's work was not quite her own - the style of writing changed (it became more fluent), and it was not difficult to find some sections had been pasted in from Wikipedia.

I was furious - what a waste of my time! I talked with Tom about this, and to the Head of PG studies in my department. We had a long conversation with Josephine, showing her that we had found sections that were clearly plagiarised.

No-one seemed entirely sure what to do about plagiarism discovered at the draft stage, and no formal action was taken. Josephine denied ever having plagiarised - saying that it was more likely that the Wikipedia page had used the same source material as her.

Before continuing to the next episode discuss what April should do now.


Josephine worked as well as studying, and there was a rather long period where she did not come to meetings or get in touch. At this time, she was required to give a second year presentation of her work to her peers.

It was terrible; no theory, lots of very descriptive data - nothing that would have taken much time to throw together. I was embarrassed. She was also late to the session, and was rude to the administrative staff who called her to see when she would be arriving.

There were several supervision sessions that felt like we were going round in circles. We would ask for changes and these would not happen. We covered the same ground over and over again.

It was clear to me that she was falling behind, and when we did finally meet with her again, I pushed to put her on probation. I did this as much to protect Tom and me, as to make it clear to Josephine that her work was not up to standard. We made it clear that moving to probation status was not any punishment, but a clear way of tracking our responsibilities as supervisors, and hers as a student. We set out very clear goals that were agreed by all of us. We agreed submission dates for chapters, and dates when we would provide feedback.

Discuss how to respond to a student's poor performance.




Work was pretty much kept to schedule, with drafts being submitted at the very last moment on each of the deadline days. Tom and I were able to stick to our own feedback deadlines.

In one of her emails, I noticed that she identified herself as a Director of an agency. I was interested, and clicked through. This agency offered academic writing for others - an essay writing service for students at all levels (including PhD).

I felt very uncomfortable about this. Although not illegal, I found it deeply unethical, and something that reflected badly on me, Tom and the University as a whole. Josephine did not advertise this agency on her University email, but she did identify herself as a PhD candidate and this Director on the same email address.

How should supervisors react to this kind of situation?



Later that year, we discovered that she had submitted at least two papers to journals, and had not notified us, nor included us in the writing process, as co-authors, or even acknowledged our input. All of the work submitted had received considerable input from Tom and me, and we were confused as to why we would not have been included in the submission of the work.

We had previously dealt with a similar situation with Josephine; so she was entirely clear about expectations relating to the publication of her PhD work. We had previously told her that given she was on probation, her time would be better spent improving her thesis, than trying to get work published. We were of the opinion that her work was not of sufficient quality to be published.

Discuss the issues that arise here and the role of publication in the doctoral student's career.


Tom decided to refer this matter on to the Postgraduate committee within our department. The Head of Research in the department suggested that this would be grounds for further probation, and so we pursued this option again.

Once again, we set out very firm expectations about when work would be submitted, and when it would be returned with feedback.

Josephine resisted being put on probation, and complained to the Graduate School. The Graduate School agreed that she should be on probation.

Tom and I spent two months working very hard commenting on drafts, and suggesting significant re-writes. We turned around drafts within days, and the thesis was submitted days before the four-year deadline. We had been under considerable pressure from the department not to let our students 'go over' this deadline, as it reflected badly on us, and we would be at risk of losing research council funding. For what it is worth, I agree with this - I would be very cross if a student like Josephine could ruin the efforts of the department to have a good completion record. It is my opinion that Josephine's work was never up to PhD standard, but that we were put in a position where we needed to make sure that her thesis would not fail outright.

Discuss the role of supervisors as the student nears completion.



Josephine's thesis was examined, and she was given pass with corrections, which were completed. She obtained a PhD. The external examiner was selected from a shortlist suggested by Tom, and the academic who came was capable and respected. As far as I can tell, he gave a thorough viva and made extremely constructive comments for corrections.

Some months later, the police came to the department looking for her. She also contacted Tom to request that he act as a counter-signatory to her new passport, which contained her 'new name'. We passed this on to the University legal team. We never did find out exactly what was going on.

I learned some lessons from this. I am now much more careful about whom I accept as a PhD student; and I am very clear about my expectations about work and feedback provision.

I also realise that there are certainly two sides to every story - and I can't imagine that we were 100% correct in all of our decisions. We tried to be even-handed and go by the regulations, and the Graduate School supported us in this. However, working with such a difficult student was a huge workload for no reward. I do not feel like we advanced knowledge through her thesis, and I have had none of the tangible 'rewards' that being a supervisor might usually bring (e.g. publications, a new colleague to collaborate with).

I hope that it might be useful to you, and I would value your thoughts.

All best wishes,
April

Team task

What lessons are there here for

- 1. Doctoral students**
- 2. Supervisors, and**
- 3. Institutions?**

