

SUPERVISION

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McCormack [McCormack, 1998] described that “being a postgraduate supervisor is intellectually and emotionally interesting work. It opens up new opportunities to: work with academically able students; collaborate in the area of research and publication; share ideas; and learn about new areas or different of approaches to research

Available from:
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/228653967_Effective_supervision_A_case_study_in_engineering_research [accessed Apr 25 2018].

Brown and Atkins described the supervision of postgraduate students as “the most complex and subtle form of teaching in which we engage” [Brown and Atkins, 1988].

Parsloe said “the most satisfying part of my very privileged job as a social work teacher” [Parsloe, 1993]. In fact, supervision is a distinctive teaching and learning process used for graduate research education.

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Questions that some of you might be asking..

- ▶ Who can be a supervisor?
- ▶ How to be a supervisor?
- ▶ What are the roles and obligations?
- ▶ How to best supervise, guide and monitor?
- ▶ Code of practice?
- ▶ When to say that it is MSc / PhD?

The Process..

Most important..matching a candidate with a potential supervisor.

- ▶ Title?
- ▶ Rules? Pre-requisites?
- ▶ Chemistry?
- ▶ What's your main criteria of supervisee?

The Process..

- ▶ Contribution to knowledge?
- ▶ Title?
- ▶ Objectives and Scopes?
- ▶ Literature Review?

The Process..obligations

- ▶ Supervisor and the supervisee are interconnected in a complex, contractual system of rights and responsibilities which highlight the importance of accountability and quality assurance.

The Process.. obligations

Supervisor:

- ▶ has the right to expect the institution to ensure that its policies and practices do not put the quality of supervision at risk.
- ▶ has the right to expect the supervisees to fulfil their side of “the contract”

The Process.. obligations

Supervisors are:

- ▶ responsible to the university for ensuring that the supervision they provide satisfies the criteria recorded in the university's Quality Assurance Guidelines.
- ▶ responsible for ensuring that those they supervise perform to the best of their ability through activities which help them to enhance their knowledge and skills.

The Process.. obligations

Supervisees are:

- ▶ has the right to expect the supervisor to provide quality supervision and for the institution to provide necessary facilities.
- ▶ responsible to the supervisor for the quality of the research they are conducting and to the institution

The Process.. obligations

Supervisors and supervisees relate to each other in many different ways:

- ▶ the supervisee is dependent on the supervisor;
- ▶ the supervisee becomes increasingly independent as the supervisor takes on the role of coach

The Process.. obligations

Supervisors and supervisees relate to each other in many different ways:

- ▶ the supervisee becomes independent, supported by the mentoring of the supervisor;
- ▶ the supervisor and supervisee become interdependent in a peer-peer relationship

The Process.. obligations

A good supervisor is neither a teacher nor a coach.

The fundamental role of the good supervisor is to act as a **mentor**: supporting, encouraging, building confidence, and being aware of the changing needs of the supervisee.

General Responsibilities

- ▶ Giving guidance and advice - do not expect the student to know everything. Treat your student as a future colleague/emerging scholar.
- ▶ Monitoring the progress of the research (how?)
- ▶ Initiating regular contact

General Responsibilities

- ▶ Being aware of the supervisee's developmental needs - this includes the supervisee's need to be provided with academic and emotional support.
- ▶ Giving both oral and written feedback on the supervisee's work. Encourage and not demotivate the student.

General Responsibilities

- ▶ Ensuring ethical and professional conduct.
- ▶ Giving both oral and written feedback on the supervisee's work. Encourage and not demotivate the student.
- ▶ Dealing with serious personal or institutional problems. Be there for the students.
- ▶ Structuring and recording meetings.

General Responsibilities

- ▶ Encouraging the formation of **peer support** groups.
- ▶ Supervise until completion.
- ▶ Determining when to submit a thesis for examination.

Expectations

- ▶ Identifying/ finalizing topic of research
- ▶ Describing research issues.
- ▶ Facilitates preparation of a research proposal
- ▶ Helping with oral presentations
- ▶ Obtaining reading materials
- ▶ Helping with networking
- ▶ Assisting in the writing of the thesis
- ▶ Helping to prepare for the viva voce.
- ▶ Providing emotional, social and other kinds of non-academic support

Expectations

How can the supervisor ensures that supervisee:

- ▶ Has a clear idea of what they would like to research on.
- ▶ Is self-motivated
- ▶ Work consistently
- ▶ Work on the feedback given to them
- ▶ Complete on time (GoT)
- ▶ Ultimate responsibility for their own work

Expectations

How can the supervisor ensures that supervisee:

- ▶ Is independent.
- ▶ Is proficient in the language
- ▶ Do their own or out source editing and proof-reading

Expectations - of students

- ▶ Read drafts before supervisory meetings.
- ▶ Readily available when there is a need
- ▶ Collegial, open-minded and supportive
- ▶ Provide constructive feedback
- ▶ A clear understanding of the research area
- ▶ Show keen interest in the research that is being conducted
- ▶ Punctual for supervisory meetings

Expectations - of students

Avoids these characteristics:

- ▶ Too busy to be effective
- ▶ Poor feedback
- ▶ Lack of commitment and interest
- ▶ Tensions/conflict within the supervisory team
- ▶ Conflicting/unrealistic expectations
- ▶ Selfishness and disrespectfulness
- ▶ Personality clashes