

Good Practice in the Supervision & Mentoring of Postgraduate Students

It Takes an Academy to Raise a Scholar



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Appendix F

Exploring the Expectations of Supervisor and Graduate Student

Read each of the statements below and then estimate your position in each. For example with statement 1, if you believe very strongly that it is the supervisor's responsibility to select a good topic you should put a ring round '1'. If you think that both the supervisor and researcher should equally be involved you put a ring round '3' and if you think it is definitely the student's responsibility to select a topic, put a ring round '5'.

You might find it useful to use this as a stimulus for discussion during one of the initial supervision meetings. If both the supervisor and graduate student complete their own form it can serve as a catalyst for negotiation. This form may also be useful for renegotiating the relationship throughout the supervision.

1. It is the supervisor's responsibility to select a research topic.	1 2 3 4 5	The graduate student is responsible for selecting their own topic.
2. It is the supervisor who decides which theoretical framework or methodology is most appropriate.	1 2 3 4 5	The graduate student should decide which theoretical framework or methodology they wish to use.
3. The supervisor should develop an appropriate programme and timetable of research and study for the graduate student.	1 2 3 4 5	The supervisor should leave the development of the programme of study to the graduate student.
4. The supervisor is responsible for ensuring that the graduate student is introduced to the appropriate services and facilities of the department and university.	1 2 3 4 5	It is the graduate student's responsibility to ensure that they have located and accessed all the relevant services and facilities for research.
5. A warm, supportive relationship between supervisor and graduate student is important for successful candidature.	1 2 3 4 5	A personal, supportive relationship is inadvisable because it may obstruct objectivity for both graduate student and supervisor during the candidature.
6. The supervisor should insist on regular meetings with the graduate student.	1 2 3 4 5	The graduate student should decide when they want to meet with the supervisor.

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

Adapted from: Vitae. Careers Research and Advisory Centre (CRAC) Limited. 2011. www.vitae.ac.uk.