

SUPERVISORS’ “ROADMAP”

OPENING MOVES
<p>Supervisors should make their areas of expertise (and interest) known to potential students (e.g. on departmental/personal web pages). Ideally, the student should approach the supervisor. The choice of supervisor must be to the student’s satisfaction</p> <p>The supervisor must assess the student’s suitability in terms of previous work and general aptitude, and find out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What field/area/topic the student wishes to research • What s/he expects to find • How s/he intends to go about this (survey, case studies, etc.) • Contact details <p>The supervisor must assess whether s/he feels the supervisor/student relationship is going to work, and lay down basic ground rules¹. The supervisor should also decide how to record the supervision process so as to have evidence that all was in order. At this stage the supervisor should give advice on/examples of suitable reading, and also consider whether a co-supervisor is needed. The student should be encouraged to keep orderly records of the literature, and to use EndNote.</p> <p>If conferment of status is required, the supervisor should assist the student with the motivation. The supervisor should find out what PG (or other) forms are used and have copies ready at the relevant times.</p>
PREPARATION FOR THE RESEARCH
<p>Proposal preparation and acceptance can run from 6 months to a year or more. The focus should be on thorough preparation for the actual research project. The supervisor should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate the preparation and proposal writing process. • Vet the proposal and ensure that it is feasible, appropriate, original, correct and fulfils the necessary departmental criteria. • Assist the HOD with choice of a Departmental Reviewer/Panel. • Ensure that the proposal goes quickly through the relevant channels until HDC ratification. • Inform the student as to the proposal’s progress through the system. • Make sure all significant dates are recorded on the Progress Report: supervisor form (PG 5b) and also given to the student (for form PG 5a).
THE ACTUAL RESEARCH
<p>If the preparation has been done properly during the proposal writing process, the student should be able to go out and do the empirical work largely on his/her own. However, the supervisor must be available for consultation, help and advice throughout the carrying out of the empirical work, and should ensure that the student keeps orderly records/field notes on the work <i>and backups of all files stored on computer.</i></p> <p>The supervisor should encourage the student to analyse the data independently using the method identified in the research proposal, and assist only when the student is stuck or reaches an impasse. The supervisor should, however, advise on issues such as the need to repeat data gathering, gather more data or have further procedures to act as a check or follow up interviews, and should check that the data is analysed properly and rendering the anticipated results .</p>
WRITING UP THE THESIS
<p>The supervisor should suggest techniques for getting the thesis content down on paper, and respond suitably to various drafts. Responses made in discussion (where the student takes notes) are better than lengthy written editorial responses using redlining (tedious, and often not directed at the cause of the problem but the symptoms). The supervisor must have enough contact with the student while the rough draft are produced (and keep copies) to ensure that the student actually wrote the thesis. Any indication/s of plagiarism (i.e. unacknowledged citations)</p>

¹ It is more important to specify non-negotiable issues, such as “Never phone me on weekends,” than wish lists of how everyone will perform (they don’t, in real life).

must be spotted and dealt with immediately.

Whether the thesis is written up chapter by chapter or as a complete draft and then structured, the supervisor should ensure firstly, that the content is appropriate and next, that the structure facilitates clear unfolding of the thesis argument. Fine proofing and editing can (and should) be left until near the end (i.e. the chapter or thesis), but the supervisor must ensure that this is done by a competent proof-reader/editor and that the end results are acceptable within the given discipline.

As the thesis is being written up, the supervisor should identify suitable examiners and approach them to see if they are available and willing to examine the thesis. The supervisor then makes recommendations to the HOD, who appoints the examiners.

When or before the first complete draft of the thesis is produced, the supervisor should ensure that the student submits PG7 indicating that the thesis will be submitted and giving the approximate date. The Faculty Officer should be informed so that courier arrangements can be made well in advance.

ENDGAME

When (or just before) the first complete draft of the thesis is produced, the supervisor should ensure that the student submits PG7 indicating when the thesis will be submitted. The Faculty Officer should be informed so that courier arrangements can be made well in advance.

When the complete thesis draft is produced, this is usually the beginning of the process of polishing and refining for examination, and not the end. At this stage the complete thesis must be in one file, including cover page, abstract, table of contents, thesis body, appendices and bibliography. This is because the thesis will be assessed as a whole by the examiners, and also because students have difficulty handling such a large electronic document. The supervisor must make sure that the student has a copy of the examination criteria, and should work through the thesis with the student to ensure that these have been fulfilled. Final editing and proofing should be done right at the end, but by now most errors should have been eliminated. The supervisor must check that an exemplary standard of correctness is achieved before examination copies of the thesis are submitted. The final thesis copy should be put through Turnitin to protect both the student and the supervisor from accusations of plagiarism.

The supervisor signs form PG9 and signs off the title page of the thesis only when satisfied that it is ready for examination. The student may insist on submission (it is his/her right) against the supervisor's advice, whereupon the HOD signs off the thesis.

The supervisor should check that courier arrangements have been made, ensure that the thesis has been posted and that the examiners are informed of any deadlines, and ensure that the examiners have received copies of the thesis.

AFTERMATH

After the results come in and have been processed, the supervisor should let the student know the results (usually after FRC approval for an uncomplicated pass²), make sure that the student has copies of any required corrections or changes, and assist with these if/as necessary. The supervisor signs off form PG 12 to state that all necessary corrections have been done, and tells the student to produce one hard bound library copy and a .pdf copy of the final thesis version. The supervisor signs off the library copy and ensures that both copies have been handed in to the Faculty Officer (thesis is important as the pass date is calculated from this date).

In the case of a doctoral student graduating, the supervisor should ensure that a short abstract of the research is written and given to the Faculty Officer for the Graduation Programme. The supervisor should inform the Graduation Planners (Corporate Affairs) that s/he will need to sit on the stage so as to be able to read out the abstract when the student is capped.

² This was recommended by the HDC, but is up to each Faculty to decide.

CRITICAL PATH FOR POSTGRADUATE QUALIFICATIONS (this is contained in more detail in the text of the Guide)	
STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITIES	UNIVERSITY'S RESPONSIBILITIES
1 APPLICATION AND PRE-REGISTRATION FOR HIGHER DEGREE	
The prospective student approaches the HoD with a proposed research topic and Supervisor (if available) and completes form PG1 (<i>Notification of Proposed Research Topic and Supervisor</i>) together with the HoD. The prospective student completes the preliminary registration form and submits it, together with form PG 1 and all supporting documents, to the Faculty Officer. See section 3.1 for further information.	The Faculty Officer processes the prospective student's registration and retains form PG1 on record after it has been noted by the FRC and signed by the Executive Dean/FRC Chair. <i>The HoD is to update form PG1 if/as needed (e.g. when appointment of Supervisor/s occurs).</i>
2 APPOINTMENT OF SUPERVISOR	
The student may accept the nominated Supervisor or request another person.	The HoD appoints a suitable Supervisor, and updates form PG 1 if/as necessary. Note: The approval process is faculty specific.
3 CONTRACT AGREEMENT BETWEEN STUDENT AND SUPERVISOR	
The student negotiates a contract with the Supervisor, which is included on form PG1.	The Supervisor completes (or updates) form PG1, and the appointment is noted at the FRC.
4 SUBMISSION OF RESEARCH PROPOSAL TO FRC	
The student submits a Research Proposal to the Supervisor on form PG4a (<i>Research Proposal and Ratification of Research Proposal by the Higher Degrees Committee</i>), and prepares the Research Budget, which can be accessed after ratification by the HDC.	The <i>Checklist and Evaluation of Research Proposal</i> section of form PG4a must be completed by a suitably qualified Reviewer prior to submission of the proposal to the FRC. The Supervisor then signs where necessary and submits form PG4a via the HoD to the FRC. A section of PG4a (pages1-2/3) serves before the HDC for ratification.
5 SUPERVISOR AND STUDENT PROGRESS REPORTS	
The student completes an annual progress report on form PG5a (<i>Annual Progress Report: Student</i>) and submits it via the HoD to the FRC.	The Supervisor completes an annual progress report on form PG5b (<i>Annual Progress Report: Supervisor</i>) and submits it via the HoD to the FRC.

6	INTERRUPTION/EXTENSION/TERMINATION OF STUDIES	
In the case of unavoidable interruptions/delays or requests for extension or termination of studies, the student must complete PG6 (<i>Application for Interruption/Extension/Termination of Studies</i>).	The Supervisor checks completed form PG6 and submits it via the HoD to Faculty Board.	
7	NOTIFICATION OF INTENTION TO SUBMIT THESIS/DISSERTATION FOR EXAMINATION	
The student submits PG7 (<i>Notice of Intention to Submit Dissertation/Thesis for Examination</i>) to the HoD <i>at least 3 months in advance</i> of the intended date of exam submission of dissertation/thesis.	The HoD, in consultation with the Supervisor, should identify suitably qualified Examiners <i>at least 3 months in advance</i> of the anticipated submission date. The HoD is to forward form PG7 to the Faculty Officer.	
8	NOMINATION OF EXAMINERS	
	The HoD, in consultation with the Supervisor, submits names of suitable Examiners to the FRC for approval on form PG8 (<i>Nomination of Examiners</i>).	
9	EXAMINATION RESULTS	
The student undertakes any amendments as may be recommended by examiners before submitting the prescribed number of print and electronic copies to the Faculty Office.	The HoD, via the FRC, submits Examiners' results and recommendations on forms PG10 and PG11 to the HDC for approval. The Faculty Officer notifies the student of the decision after HDC approval.	
10	GRADUATION - CONGRATULATIONS!	