



DOCTORAL DEGREE SUPERVISORS' POLICY

1. Scope and Purpose

The University is committed to ensuring that all doctoral students are provided with the appropriate academic and professional support to complete their doctoral studies in the requisite time. This policy ensures that doctoral students will be supervised by a team with the relevant knowledge and experience to support them successfully throughout their studies.

The University requires that all members of academic staff that undertake supervision of doctoral students have the appropriate qualifications, research expertise and experience.

2. General Principles

- All doctoral students, who are registered at the University, shall be allocated at least two internal supervisors. Doctoral students may be further allocated an external supervisor. One supervisor will be designated as the first supervisor.
- All supervisors shall attend appropriate training to support excellent supervisory practice. Exceptional circumstances that might exempt staff from attending training will be considered by the Chair of the Doctoral College Board of Studies.

3. Definitions

First supervisor

The first supervisor is a member of academic staff who takes overall responsibility for the supervision of a doctoral student. This includes engagement with training and development, timely progression, responsibility for ensuring records of progress are up to date on Research Manager, and compliance with research governance and integrity.

A staff member acting as first supervisor must be research active and meet the criteria for a Category A supervisor, specified below, at the time of appointment as first supervisor. Such criteria may need to be interpreted differently for Professional Doctorates due to the emphasis on applied practice. Further, the first supervisor will have oversight of the supervision undertaken by Category B supervisors and will be encouraged to mentor colleagues who are Category B supervisors such that they can apply for Category A status.

Second Supervisor

A member of academic staff who meets the Category A or Category B supervisor requirements.

Internal Supervisor

A member of staff with an academic contract where they are employed under City's academic Terms and Conditions.

Category A

Members of academic staff who are approved as Category A supervisors must meet the following criteria:

- have a contractual relationship with the University, with an appointment of at least 20% FTE under City's academic Terms and Conditions;
- have supervised at least one doctoral student to successful completion; and,
- have successfully completed supervision training at City or another institution. The training provided at City may include but is not limited to: relevant elements taken from the MA in Academic Practice or their equivalent; the University's doctoral degree regulations, policies and procedures; the [Framework for Good Practice in Research](#).

All supervisors are expected to use Research Manager to maintain records of supervision meetings and monitor doctoral student progress.

Category B

Members of the current academic staff who are approved as Category B supervisors must meet the following criteria:

- have a contractual relationship with the University, with an appointment of at least 20% FTE under City's academic Terms and Conditions;
- be overseen by the first supervisor who has overall responsibility for the student's progress;
- have successfully completed supervision training at City or another institution. The training provided at City may include but is not limited to: relevant elements taken from the MA in Academic Practice or their equivalent; the University's doctoral degree regulations, policies and procedures; the [Framework for Good Practice in Research](#). All supervisors are expected to use Research Manager to maintain records of supervision meetings and monitor doctoral student progress although the first supervisor has ultimate responsibility.

External Supervisor

External supervisors are appointed to add specialist expertise to the supervisory team. They are individuals who do not have an academic contract of employment with the University but will either have a defined relationship with the University, for example, as emeritus or honorary staff, or will sign an agreement to act as external supervisors.

- An external supervisor cannot act as a first supervisor or second supervisor.
- An external supervisor must have appropriate professional experience when supervising doctoral students undertaking a professional doctorate.

Consultant

- Consultants are industrial collaborators or any other academic colleagues who do not have a contractual relationship with the University.
- A consultant is appointed to provide specialist advice on a particular area of a student's research (e.g. assist with one publication) for a short period of time in area that is outside the expertise of the supervisory team. A consultant is not expected to be involved in the student's development or provide input/feedback long-term.
- A consultant must have appropriate professional experience when supervising doctoral students undertaking a professional doctorate.

4. Approval of Doctoral Supervisors Categories

The supervision category of new academic staff members shall be discussed on appointment. School Research Degrees Programmes Committees or their equivalent shall retain a record of approved supervisors which shall be reviewed annually through the doctoral degree annual programme evaluation exercise.

The Doctoral College Board of Studies will approve the doctoral supervisors' categories upon recommendation of the Chair of the Research Degrees Programmes Committee or their delegate.

5. Change in Supervision Arrangements

It may be necessary for a change of supervision arrangements to be considered for the following reasons:

- the first supervisor is on sabbatical leave;
- the supervisor leaves the University;
- the supervisor is on long-term sick leave;
- a breakdown of the student/supervisor relationship that has serious consequences for the completion of the project and the well-being of both parties involved.
- additional expertise required due to project changes

If a doctoral student is experiencing difficulties, they should consult with their supervisor(s) directly and/or the Senior Tutor/Director of Research within the department within which they are registered. A student may equally raise the issue with another senior member of staff within the School in the first instance.

Note that in instances where funding is attached to a particular research project, it may not be possible for a change in supervision arrangements to be approved. Students are advised to check the Terms and Conditions of their studentship, and whether it is possible to continue with the project following a change in supervision arrangements.

6. Procedure

Schools should use the form in Annex A for the appointment or change of supervisory status for Category A and B supervisors.

Appointment or Change of Supervisory Status: (Category A & B)

The form below has been converted into an IT ServiceNow form. To apply for your supervisory status, please complete the form available [here](#).

Please note that the School Research Degrees Programmes Committees or their equivalent are responsible for the consideration, approval and review of category A and B supervisor status and for the amendments of staff records using ServiceNow. The Chair of the Research Degrees Programmes Committee or their delegate are expected to report changes in supervisory status to the Doctoral College Board of Studies for approval.

| | |
|---|--|
| Name | |
| School | |
| Department | |
| Contractual Relationship with City, University of London | |
| Details of supervising a doctoral student to successful completion (applicable for Category A applications) | |
| Indicate relevant training already undertaken including date of completion | |

Declaration that that you have read and engage with the policies/processes below:

| | |
|--|---------------------|
| Senate Regulations 23, 24, 25 available here | Date of completion: |
| Doctoral Researcher policies available here | Date of Completion: |
| Framework for Good Practice in Research available here | Date of Completion: |

To be completed by the Committee Secretary

| | |
|------------------|--|
| Date of approval | |
|------------------|--|

To be completed by the CDC Committee Secretary

| Policy Title | |
|--|---|
| Doctoral Degree Supervisors' Policy | |
| Policy Enabling Owner and Department | Responsible for Implementation and Department |
| Doctoral College | School Board of Studies Doctoral College Board of Studies |
| Approving Body | Date of Approval |
| Senate, upon recommendation from the Doctoral College Board of Studies | 22/04/2009 (APPSC) 06/05/2015 (Senate) 23/02/2023 (CDC BoS) 22/03/2023 (Senate) 08/11/2023 (CDC BoS) 13/12/2023 (Senate) |
| Last Reviewed | Review Due Date |
| December 2023 | January 2026 |
| Publication of Policy (<i>tick as appropriate</i>) | |
| For public access online (internet)? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | For staff access only (intranet)? <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Queries about this policy should be referred to | |
| Doctoral College, doctoralcollege@city.ac.uk | |