Approval of Doctoral Degree Supervisors

Scope
All academic and administrative staff who have a responsibility for overseeing the supervision of doctoral degree students. Specific arrangements for validated programmes are set out in the Validation and Institutional Partnerships Handbook.

Senate Regulations
Regulation 24 – Doctoral Programmes
Regulation 23 Masters' Degree by Research

Date approved/re-approved
APPSC 22 April 2009
Senate 6 May 2015

Date for review
To be reviewed on a periodic basis with allowance for minor annual updates of roles and responsibilities by Graduate School Committee as required.

To be read in conjunction with Section 9 of the University's Quality Manual and in particular the policy on the application for a Change in Supervision Arrangements and, when appropriate, the Validation and Institutional Partnerships Handbook.

Equality and Diversity statement

City, University of London is committed to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion in all its activities, processes, and culture, under its Public Sector Equality Duties and the Equality Act 2010. This includes promoting equality and diversity for all, irrespective of any protected characteristic, working pattern, family circumstance, socio-economic background, political belief or other irrelevant distinction.

Where relevant to the policy, decision-making panels will ensure a reasonable gender balance (with at least one man and one woman) and will actively consider representation of other protected groups.
Approval of Doctoral Degree Supervisors

Definition
The University is committed to ensuring that all doctoral students are provided with the appropriate academic and professional support to enable them to complete their doctoral study in the requisite time. The University Policy on the Approval of Doctoral Degree Supervisors ensures that doctoral students can be confident that they will be supervised by a team that has the relevant knowledge and experience to support them through their doctoral study successfully.

Policy
The University requires that all members of academic staff (or visiting members of staff with a formal contractual relationship with the University)¹ who undertake supervision of doctoral students have the appropriate qualifications, research expertise and experience to supervise a student through to successful completion. The ‘first supervisor’ will be Category A and will have at the time of appointment as supervisor an ARQM GPA score equal to or greater than 3* (determined at or since the last HEFCE research excellence exercise) and will be responsible for the overall progress of the student. Further, the ‘first supervisor’ will have oversight of the day-to-day supervision undertaken by Category B supervisors and will be encouraged to assist in the mentoring of members of academic staff who do not possess the appropriate supervisory experience to acquire such experience.

Principles

➢ Responsibility for the appointment and allocation of doctoral student supervisors rests with the Boards of Studies within which the supervisor, consultant or visiting member of staff, or other academic colleague is associated, is employed.
➢ All doctoral students of the University shall be allocated at least two supervisors and may be further allocated a consultant.
➢ The ‘first supervisor’, who takes overall responsibility, must be research excellent and meet the Category A criteria as specified below at the time of appointment as supervisor. A second person, who supports the supervision of the student, will come from one of the following groups:

Category A

• Members of the current academic staff who are approved as Category A supervisors must have a contractual relationship with the University, with an appointment of at least 20% FTE.
• Such supervisors will be demonstrably research excellent in a relevant discipline and have supervised at least one doctoral student to successful completion.
• Research excellence will be demonstrated by an ARQM GPA equal to or greater than 3* at the time of appointment as supervisor.
• Such supervisors will be responsible for and have oversight of the day-to-day supervision undertaken by Category B supervisors.

¹ The assignment of former members of academic staff with the title of Professor Emeritus, Fellow Emeritus or any such other honorary titles approved by Senate in accordance with Senate Regulation 7 at http://www.city.ac.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0006/237714/Senate_Regulation_7_Emeritus_Titles-20141016.pdf to one of the categories referred to in the Policy will be considered on an individual basis by Boards of Studies in relation to the contract in place.
Category B

- Members of the current academic staff or visiting members of staff who are approved as Category B supervisors must have a contractual relationship with the University, with an appointment of at least 20% FTE.
- Such supervisors may be appointed provided that they have appropriate research expertise but will not be the supervisor with overall responsibility (‘the first supervisor’).
- The day-to-day supervision undertaken by such supervisors will be overseen by the ‘first supervisor’ who has overall responsibility for the student’s progress.

External Supervisor

May not be a permanent member of University staff but will have a defined contractual relationship with the University to support the supervision as part of a supervisory team (led by a Category A supervisor as defined above and who takes overall responsibility).

Consultant

- An individual such as a visiting member of staff or industrial collaborator or any other academic colleague who does not have a contractual relationship with the University.
- A consultant may not be the main point of contact but may provide specialist advice on a particular area of a student's research which is outside the expertise of the supervisory team.

- The categorization of new members of academic staff shall be discussed at interview, agreed on appointment and approved by the Board of Studies on the recommendation of the Associate Dean for Research Students (or equivalent).
- Supervisors and/or consultants must have appropriate professional experience when supervising doctoral students undertaking a professional doctorate.
- Members of the supervisory team who have a contractual relationship with the University shall be required to undergo relevant preparation (normally through attendance on the Research Supervision module of the University’s MA in Academic Practice), be knowledgeable of the University’s doctoral degree regulations, policies and procedures, including the Framework for Good Practice in Research on Research Ethics and Integrity, and shall use Research and Progress (RaP) to maintain records of supervision meetings and to monitor doctoral student progress.

Monitoring and evaluation

- Responsibility for the implementation of the Policy and for monitoring its implementation rests with School Boards of Studies.
- Boards of Studies will monitor the appointment and categorization of doctoral supervisors at least annually and will ensure the continuity and quality of supervision in the event of a change in a supervisor’s ARQM GPA score.
- Members of the supervisory team may be removed either temporarily or permanently from the list of approved doctoral degree supervisors by the School Boards of Studies and/or be re-categorized if there is evidence of unsatisfactory supervision.
- the Vice-Chancellor, or nominee, may, in exceptional circumstances, approve the categorisation of a member of staff as Category A (for example when an ARQM score is unavailable).
- Boards of Studies shall retain a record of approved supervisors and consultants which shall be reviewed annually through the doctoral degree annual programme evaluation exercise.
- A performance based review will be undertaken by School Boards of Studies every 5 years during the normal Periodic Review of its doctoral degree programme(s).
- The City Graduate School Committee will receive a list of approved doctoral degree supervisors and consultants annually, and at any other time during the year if appropriate, to ensure that the Policy is being applied consistently and is in accordance with the requirements of Chapter B11: Research Degrees of the QAA Quality Code.