

External Supervisor and Consultants - Approval of Doctoral Supervisors Policy

As part of the consultation with Boards of Studies on the Approval of Doctoral Degree Supervisors (31st August 2016) clarification of the roles for External Supervisor and Consultant were sought. The following guidance has been developed for discussion and approval by the City Graduate School Committee.

Recommended Actions

The City Graduate School Committee should **discuss** and **approve**:

1. Guidance on the role of external supervisors and consultants

Roles and responsibilities– External Supervisor and Consultant

Both first (Category A) and second (Category B) supervisors should normally be employed by the University. However, there may be circumstances when it is necessary, and in the best interests of the students, to appoint an external supervisor. Such circumstances might include:

- to support vocational, industrial or clinical aspects of the research degree or where students are undertaking research with a relevant external body
- to provide specialist advice on a particular area of a student's research which is outside the expertise of the supervisory team
- to ensure that a research student has access to resources required for the research that are otherwise inaccessible to the student.
- on the retirement of the first supervisor during the period of a student's doctoral degree
- when a supervisor has moved to another institution but is able to continue to supervise at a distance¹

The **External Supervisor role** was summarized as follows as someone who:

- 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).

External supervisors may not act as the first supervisor, this role must be undertaken by a member of University staff. The external supervision arrangement would be subject to a signed formal agreement which should include the following and should be signed by the Institution and the external supervisor:

- a statement that the supervisor must comply with the University's Regulations, policies and procedures to ensure the consistency of the supervision (see Appendix 1)
- a statement which confirms that any funding bodies or sponsors have been informed (if the appointment follows any change in supervisory circumstances)

¹ It may also be more appropriate in some circumstances, at the discretion of the Board of Studies, for the student to transfer to the supervisor's new institution.

- (where the supervisor has moved to a new Institution), an explicit statement that the new institution gives permission for the academic to finish their supervisory duties
- the notice period should the external supervisor decide for any reason that they can no longer continue to supervise the student

The **Consultant role** was summarized as follows:

- 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 a supervisor but may provide specialist advice on a particular area of a student's research which is outside the expertise of the supervisory team.

A consultant does not have a contractual relationship with the University. However, a signed formal agreement which covers the following is recommended with:

- An explicit statement that sets out role and responsibilities of the consultant (or agreement to the Institution Guidelines – Appendix 1)
- A statement that the consultant must comply with the University's Regulations, policies and procedures to ensure the consistency of the support given
- The notice period should the consultant decide for any reason that they can no longer continue to support the student.

Full Guidelines for both External Supervisor (with a defined contractual relationship with the University) and Consultant are given in Appendix 1.

Appendix 1 – Current and Proposed Guidelines for External Supervisor and new Guidelines for the Consultant role

Proposed changes to the former category are shown in red. The differences between the role of External Supervisor and Consultant are shown in red.

Current guidelines External Supervisor	Proposed Change External Supervisor	Proposed guidelines Consultant
Agree frequency and nature of supervision required at any particular stage of the research project, taking into account the student's mode of study and the particular requirements of the research project	Agree frequency and nature of supervision required at any particular stage of the research project, taking into account the student's mode of study and the particular requirements of the research project	Provide support for the formal supervision process at any particular stage of the research project, taking into account the student's mode of study and the particular requirements of the research project
In liaison with the internal supervisor, consider the draft learning contract and the supervisor/supervisee agreement, with the student to help clarify understanding of respective roles and responsibilities during the period of candidature.	In liaison with the internal supervisor, consider the draft learning contract and the supervisor/supervisee agreement, with the student to help clarify understanding of respective roles and responsibilities during the period of candidature.	In liaison with the supervisors, support the development of the draft learning contract and the supervisor/supervisee agreement with the student, to help clarify understanding of respective roles and responsibilities during the period of candidature (including that of the Consultant vis a vie that of supervisor)
Ensure that a record of formal supervision meetings, including date, duration, summary of discussion and advice given, are maintained.	Ensure that a record of formal supervision meetings, including date, duration, summary of discussion and advice given, are maintained	Ensure that a record of formal meetings with the Consultant , including date, duration, summary of discussion and advice given, are maintained.
Agree a process for dealing with any urgent difficulties such as contact by telephone, email or the arrangement of additional meetings at short notice.	Agree a process for dealing with any urgent issues such as contact by telephone, email or the arrangement of additional meetings at short notice	Agree a process for dealing with any urgent issues such as contact by telephone, email or the arrangement of additional meetings at short notice
Ensure sufficient available time to dedicate to the needs of each particular student under supervision and ensure that supervisory meetings are uninterrupted as far as possible, by telephone calls, personal callers and School/Departmental business.	Ensure sufficient available time to dedicate to the needs of each particular student under supervision and ensure that supervisory meetings are uninterrupted as far as possible, by telephone calls, personal callers and School/Departmental business	Ensure sufficient available time to dedicate to the needs of each particular student with whom the Consultant is working
Advise the student on the selection of a suitable research project, ensuring that the proposed research can be completed satisfactorily and	Advise the student on the selection of a suitable research project, ensuring that the proposed research can be completed satisfactorily and	If appropriate to the time the Consultant is appointed, support the selection of a suitable research project, taking into consideration that the proposed

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within the relevant maximum period of study	within the relevant maximum period of study	research can be completed satisfactorily and within the relevant maximum period of study
Provide guidance on the quality and standards expected of the research project	Provide guidance on the quality and standards expected of the research project	Provide guidance on the quality and standards expected of the research project
Provide guidance on relevant literature and sources, research methods, and the avoidance of plagiarism and breach of copyright.	Provide guidance on relevant literature and sources, research methods, and the avoidance of plagiarism and breach of copyright.	Provide guidance on relevant literature and sources, research methods, and the avoidance of plagiarism and breach of copyright
In liaison with the internal supervisor, establish and maintain a timetable for the completion of the project, including completion dates for each successive stage, taking into consideration the requirements of relevant funding bodies	In liaison with the internal supervisor, establish and maintain a timetable for the completion of the project, including completion dates for each successive stage, taking into consideration the requirements of relevant funding bodies	In liaison with the internal supervisor, support the timetable for the completion of the project
Review the timetable regularly and set agreed, and achievable, targets	Review the timetable regularly and set agreed, and achievable, targets	Support the supervisors to review the timetable regularly and in the setting of agreed, and achievable, targets
Possess sufficient knowledge of the research area to provide accurate advice and guidance	Possess sufficient knowledge of the research area to provide accurate advice and guidance	Possess sufficient knowledge of the research area to provide accurate advice and guidance
Provide constructive criticism of written material promptly in accordance with the agreed timetable	Provide constructive criticism of written material promptly in accordance with the agreed timetable	Provide specialist advice, input and/or access to resources to support the research project within the scope of the agreement and the defined timetable and constructive criticism of written material
In liaison with the internal supervisor, advise the student of any inadequacy in standards of work normally expected from research students, or slow progress, orally and in writing and suggest/arrange appropriate developmental support	In liaison with the internal supervisor, advise the student of any inadequacy in standards of work normally expected from research students, or slow progress, orally and in writing and suggest/arrange appropriate developmental support	In liaison with the supervisors, advise the student of any inadequacy in standards of work normally expected from research students, or slow progress, orally and in writing and suggest appropriate developmental support to the supervisors that may help the student
Take note of feedback from the student and take appropriate action according to University's framework for student engagement.	Take note of feedback from the student and take appropriate action according to University's framework for student engagement.	Take note of feedback from the student and advise the supervisors on appropriate action (noting the University's framework for student engagement)

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In liaison with the internal supervisor, arrange training on subject-specific and generic skills as appropriate.	In liaison with the internal supervisor, arrange training on subject-specific and generic skills as appropriate	Advise the supervisors on any aspects of training on subject-specific and generic skills as appropriate
In liaison with the internal supervisor, provide written reports of the student's progress annually through the annual progress review in accordance with the requirements of the School and the University and to other external funding bodies when needed	In liaison with the internal supervisor, provide written reports of the student's progress annually through the annual progress review in accordance with the requirements of the School and the University and to other external funding bodies when needed	Provide written reports of the student's progress annually, in support of the requirements of the School and the University and to other external funding bodies when needed and requested by the supervisors
In liaison with internal supervisor, monitor student's attendance as appropriate and inform the internal supervisor of any absence or withdrawal	In liaison with internal supervisor, monitor student's attendance as appropriate and inform the internal supervisor of any absence or withdrawal	Where formally requested by the Institution, monitor the student's attendance as appropriate (especially where requested when the student is formally seconded to work with the Consultant)
Introduce your supervisees to other workers/researchers in the field and to appropriate academic bodies and learned societies	Introduce your supervisees to other workers/researchers in the field and to appropriate academic bodies and learned societies	Introduce the student to other workers/researchers in the field and to appropriate academic bodies and learned societies as appropriate
Arrange for the student to present work to staff and/or other students at seminars and conferences	Arrange for the student to present work to staff and/or other students at seminars and conferences	Advise on the student presenting work to staff and/or other students at seminars and conferences
Read and comment on a draft of the complete thesis	Read and comment on a draft of the complete thesis	As time permits, read and comment on a draft of the complete thesis providing feedback.
Provide advice on writing up the research or parts of it for publication	Provide advice on writing up the research or parts of it for publication or in the development of patents	Provide advice on writing up the research or parts of it for publication or in the development of patents
In liaison with the internal supervisor, ensure that the student understands the procedures for the submission of thesis and assist the student in preparing for the oral examination	In liaison with the internal supervisor, ensure that the student understands the procedures for the submission of thesis and assist the student in preparing for the oral examination	Support the supervisors to help the student to understand the procedures for the submission of thesis and assist where possible the student in preparing for the oral examination
In liaison with the internal supervisor, provide guidance, encouragement and counsel regarding the future career plans of the student	In liaison with the internal supervisor, provide guidance, encouragement and counsel regarding the future career plans of the student	In liaison with the supervisors, provide guidance, encouragement and counsel regarding the future career plans of the student
Advise the student in advance of any planned periods of absence	Advise the student in advance of any planned periods of absence	Help the student to be aware in advance of any planned periods

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and, in liaison with internal supervisor, ensure that appropriate arrangements for alternative supervision are in place if away for longer than a semester or 8 weeks during the summer; ensure that the student is informed of, and in agreement with, the alternative arrangements	and, in liaison with internal supervisor, ensure that appropriate arrangements for alternative supervision are in place if away for longer than a semester or 8 weeks during the summer; ensure that the student is informed of, and in agreement with, the alternative arrangements	of absence and seek to make arrangements for support as needed during that absence.
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