Research Supervision Recognition Programme

Dr Owen Gower, Director

UK Council for Graduate Education

Aims of the Research Supervision Recognition Programme

1. Develop and publish a *Good Supervisory Practice Framework* that sets benchmarks for supervision and articulates the increasingly complex roles performed by research supervisors.

2. Offer guidance for those who wish to develop their pedagogical practices through structured self-reflection on their supervisory experiences

3. Offer opportunities for good supervisory practice to be recognised through peer-review and a national award

4. Create a comprehensive, scholarly resource library which makes the extensive body of research into doctoral supervision accessible to all those involved in research supervision
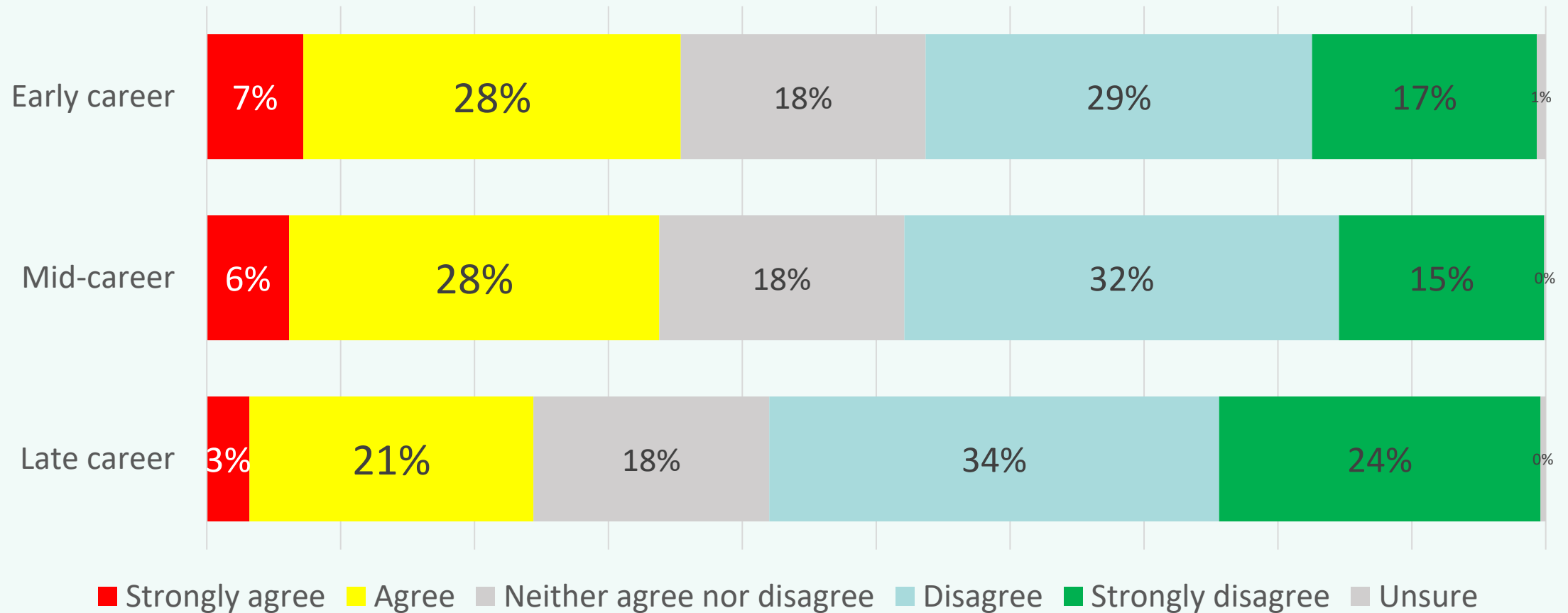
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Update on Progress

- Supervisors from 54 institutions have submitted applications for peer-review

- 260 applications in total (with 80% success)

- *Good Supervisory Practice Framework* is now embedded in *many* institutional supervisor development training programmes

- New website now has searchable abstracts of *all* scholarship on doctoral pedagogy: **www.supervision.ukcge.ac.uk**
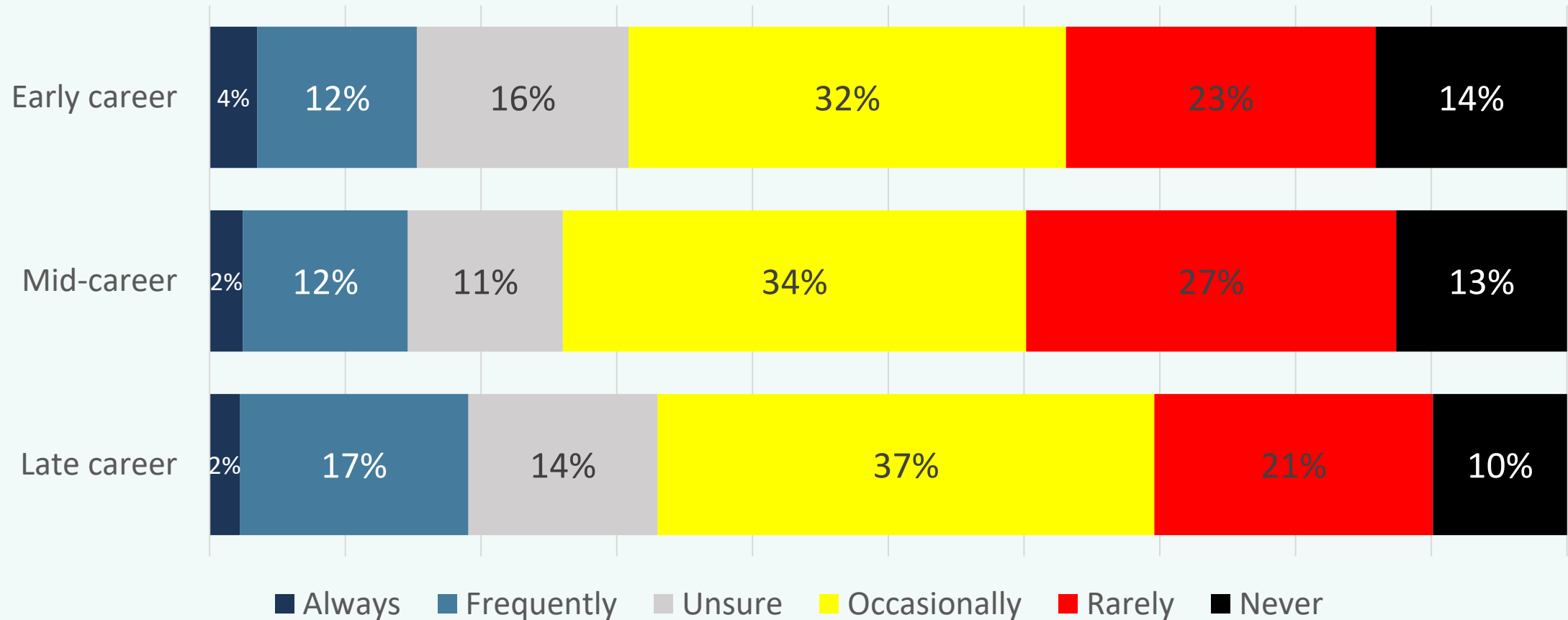
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"You don't learn from experience, you learn from reflecting on experience"

John Dewey (probably)

Supervisory anxiety by career stage

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
Early career	7%	28%	18%	29%	17%	1%
Mid-career	6%	28%	18%	32%	15%	0%
Late career	3%	21%	18%	34%	24%	0%

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Time to reflect on supervisory practice by career stage

Early career: Always 4%, Frequently 12%, Unsure 16%, Occasionally 32%, Rarely 23%, Never 14%

Mid-career: Always 2%, Frequently 12%, Unsure 11%, Occasionally 34%, Rarely 27%, Never 13%

Late career: Always 2%, Frequently 17%, Unsure 14%, Occasionally 37%, Rarely 21%, Never 10%

■ Always ■ Frequently ■ Unsure ■ Occasionally ■ Rarely ■ Never

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Time to reflect by supervisory anxiety

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
Always	4%	18%	12%	27%	37%	1%
Frequently	4%	19%	20%	37%	19%	0%
Occasionally	4%	26%	18%	35%	17%	0%
Rarely	7%	29%	18%	32%	14%	0%
Never	9%	25%	17%	25%	23%	0%
Unsure	5%	28%	17%	27%	21%	1%

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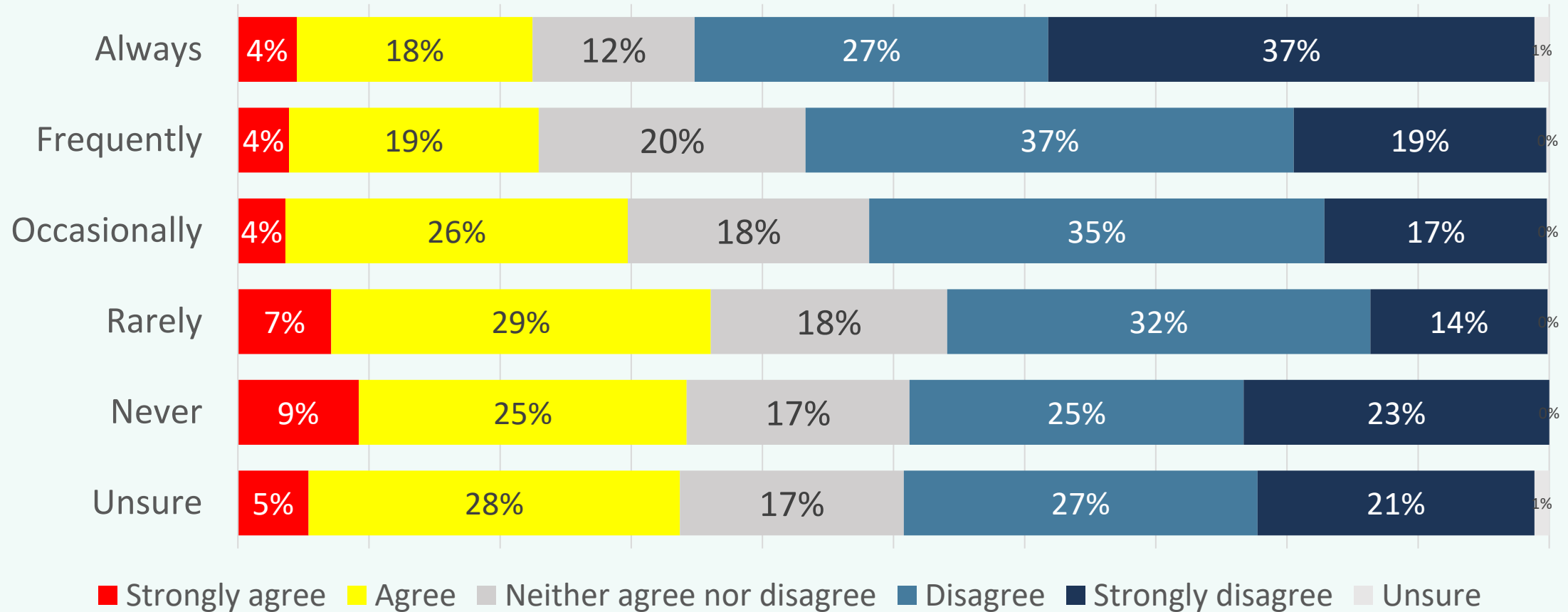
Recognising *Associate* Supervision

Dr Kay Guccione
Head of Research Culture
& Researcher
Development

and founder member of
the Postdoc Fanclub

University of Glasgow

Supervision, a key determinant of doctoral 'success' is an important and complex interpersonal practice.

Research Staff (ECRs; post-docs) play a key, if still somewhat un-recognised, role in the development and support of PGRs

And are not always seen as educational assets, or understood to possess supervision skills or experience.

But they should be…

'I never thought of this work as supervision, but it definitely is!'
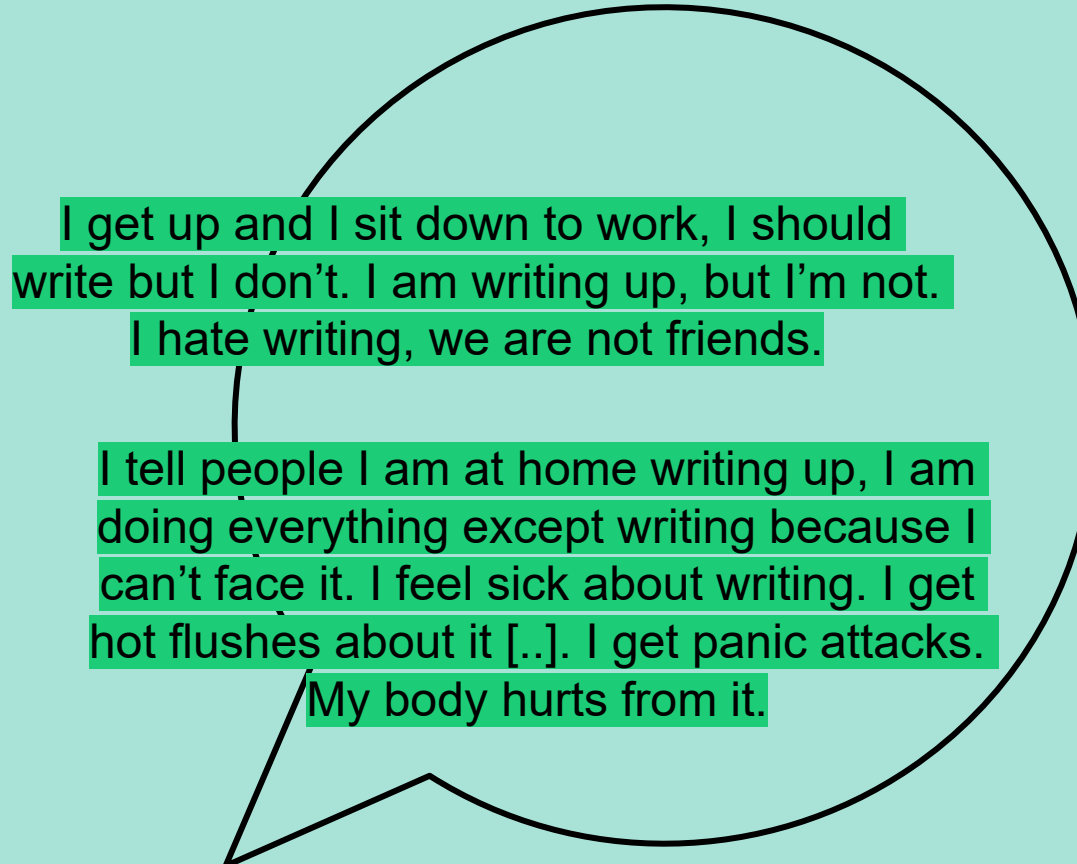
Thesis Mentor

Pedagogical framing for Thesis Mentoring

PGR mentees: Writing is a difficult practice. One-to-one coaching (Godskesen and Kobayashi, 2015) can provide a space for critical reflection on writing difficulties, supporting resolution, positive progress, and reducing drop out.

Research Staff mentors: Calls for doctoral supervisor training to be 'writing-centred' (Guerin et al, 2017; Caley, 2020) and simultaneously for researcher development to be experienced-based (McAlpine et al., 2013; Guccione et al., 2018), built through practice.

Design choices: Self-referred thesis writers, Solution Focused coaching approach, confidential, cross disciplinary, complementarity, mentor/ee training, mentor toolkits, 8 meetings, 16-weeks.
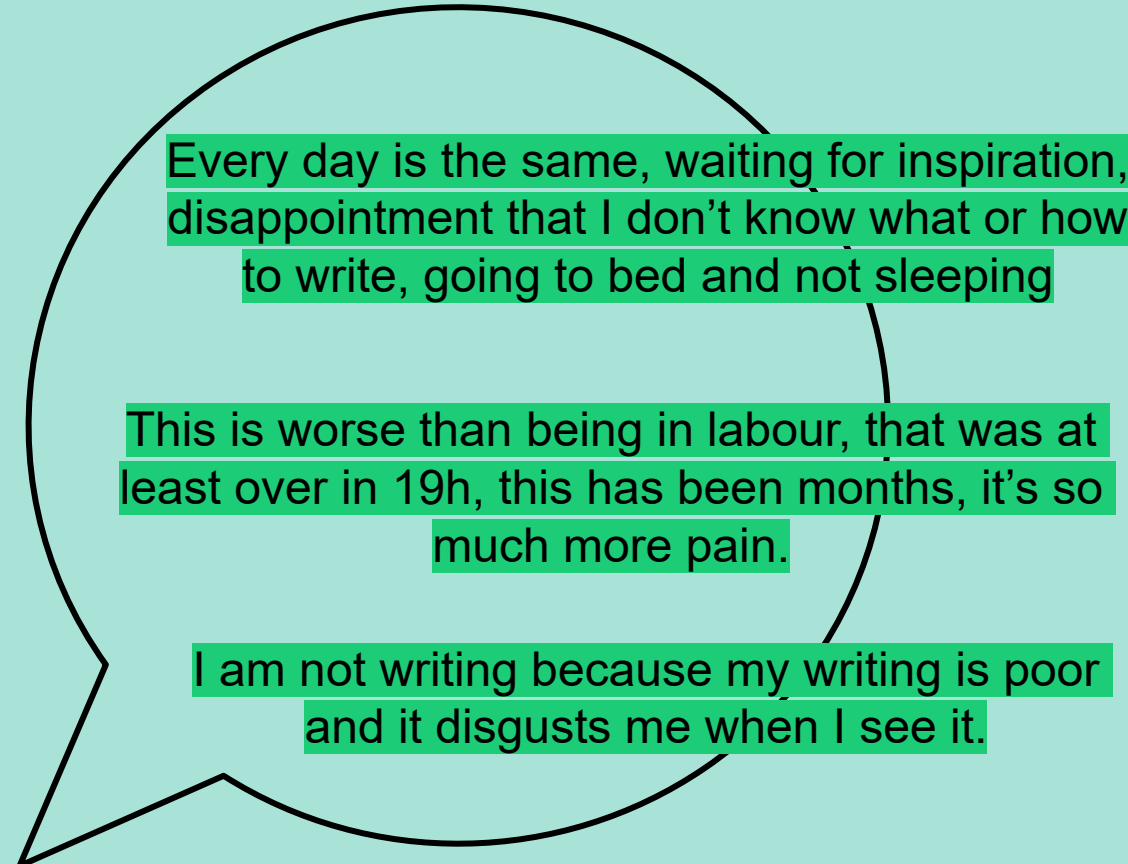
I get up and I sit down to work, I should write but I don't. I am writing up, but I'm not. I hate writing, we are not friends.

I tell people I am at home writing up, I am doing everything except writing because I can't face it. I feel sick about writing. I get hot flushes about it [..]. I get panic attacks. My body hurts from it.

Every day is the same, waiting for inspiration, disappointment that I don't know what or how to write, going to bed and not sleeping

This is worse than being in labour, that was at least over in 19h, this has been months, it's so much more pain.

I am not writing because my writing is poor and it disgusts me when I see it.

Skip to the end: themes related to **mentor** development (196 mentor exit surveys and 7 x 2h interviews)

1. Mentors develop general supervisory self-awareness and skill sets that facilitate the building of trusting learning alliances.

2. Mentors develop greater understanding of the enablers and disablers of doctoral writing.

1. Mentors develop general supervisory self-awareness and skill sets that facilitate the building of trusting learning alliances

Research Staff described how they had learned to build trust and to form an alliance with their mentees.

- Working with clear role descriptions, shared understanding, boundaries and limitations;
- Open listening and empathy in paying attention to the mentee's objectives and expectations;
- Co-creating solutions to writing blocks and barriers.

2. Mentors develop greater understanding of the enablers and disablers of doctoral writing

Research Staff described how they had developed a greater awareness of the role of the supervisor in:

- Encouraging early and frequent writing and embedding a sense of drafting and refinement as a continuous or cyclical doctoral process;
- Giving feedback that builds confidence as well as competence in writing;
- Building students' self-awareness and problem-solving skills by taking time to engage in a critical reflective dialogue.

Associate Supervisors: educational assets

1. Research staff can develop as 'writing focused' supervisors, building partnerships and devising individualised solutions for enabling doctoral writing.

2. Research staff combine cognitive (lists, planning) and emotional/motivational (listening, empathy) strategies to unstick thesis writers and support mental health.

3. Research staff develop an awareness of supervision as a 'learned and developed practice', not automatic, and not easy.

4. Research staff develop engaged information seeking strategies to inform their development and practice.

5. Research staff make a contribution to PGR writing development, that supervisors cannot: neutral, near-peer, non-evaluative/judgmental.

We should develop and recognise Research Staff as talented practitioners of supervision, with a unique educational contribution *and* with time to learn the craft

Other ducks in the row…

New expanded pedagogies of supervision are now required. **Call for supervision as an 'ecology' of multi-player systems, not a limited dyad** (Bengtsen, 2016)…

and many **agents of the 'Hidden Curriculum'** all contribute to doctoral education (Elliot et al, 2020)

And a number of strategic drivers ask this of us…

The **Researcher Concordat** (2019) says institutions must:

- *…Recognise the full range of researchers' contributions, and the diversity of personal circumstances.*
- *Ensure that excellent people management is championed throughout the organisation…*

The UK **Technician Commitment** sets out Recognition, through awards and professional registration, as one of it's 4 key areas.

We want to open up possibilities for **Research Professional Staff** to have their important work recognised as specialist educational practice.

Levels of Recognition

We offer two levels of recognition, depending on experience

The depth of reflection required, and the standards employed in the review process, are the same for both levels of recognition.

Recognised Supervisor

If you have supervised doctoral researchers through to completion, you will have the experience to demonstrate the alignment of your practice to **all criteria within the Good Supervisory Practice framework**.

Your application must also include 2 references —

- 1 from a *former* doctoral candidate,
- and 1 from a colleague who can authenticate your supervisory experience.

Recognised Associate Supervisor

If you are an early career researcher, a post-doctoral fellow, a technician, or a member of professional services staff, some aspects of the Good Supervisory Practice Framework may not apply to you.

Applying for the Recognised Associate Supervisor Award requires evidence against **5 of the 10 criteria** of the Good Supervisory Practice framework, of which **3 are compulsory and 2 are elective**.

Your application for the Associate award must also include 2 supporting documents —

- 1 completed *Supervision Observation Report*
- and 1 reference from a colleague who can authenticate your supervisory experience

The UKCGE Recognised Associate Supervisor Award

Eligibility:

research associates, research fellows, 'visiting' researchers, teaching associates, research technicians, research facility managers, and doctoral school managers, plus other colleges who work closely with doctoral researchers in a learning or learning support capacity.

As for the 'full' Recognised Research Supervisor Award, the Associate Award:

- Same standards of practice
- Retrospective recognition
- But also developmental in itself
- Not linked to a specific role
- Not linked to a number of completions
- Promotion? Institution choice

Hat tip to Dr Elizabeth Adams, to Dr Owen Gower, Prof. Stan Taylor and to the many researchers at the University of Sheffield who gave their time as mentors.

3 blog articles from pilot research staff and technician pilot recipients, about their experience.

https://supervisingphds.wordpress.com/2021/10/26/once-a-learner-always-a-learner/

https://theauditorium.blog/2022/05/26/praise-and-encouragement-goes-a-long-way-towards-building-confidence-in-laboratory-work/

https://supervisingphds.wordpress.com/2021/10/22/you-cant-be-what-you-cant-see/

Clear applications for evidencing skills in leadership and line management.

Developing whole cultures of self-aware supervision

- Use the term Associate Supervision
- Utilising your talent – create the structures for practice (thesis, induction, careers)
- Put your research staff on the supervisory team. And your technicians? Professional Services colleagues?
- Promotion criteria, this is a gendered practice.

Include Associate Supervisors in supervisor communities and conversations

In a recent national supervisor survey (UKCGE, 2021) 73% of respondents reported that they enhanced their supervisory practice through discussions with colleagues, and that the most helpful 'training' they had received was discussing experiences with other, or more senior supervisors.

Who is it for?

All doctoral supervisors at the University of Glasgow are invited to join the Supervisor Community of Practice'.

The invitation is open to all staff practicing PGR supervision, whether as supervisor, part of a supervisory team, or informally as an associate supe means we are a collective community of over 3000 research and academi across the university.

Communities of Practice are groups of people who have a shared interes in a specific area of work. They interact regularly to share information, co ideas, improve their skills, and actively work on advancing the knowledg practice in that area.

In a recent national survey (UKCGE, 2021) 73% of respondents reported t enhanced their supervisory practice through discussions with colleagues the most helpful 'training' they had received was discussing experiences or more senior supervisors. Read the headline findings here.

The UK Council for Graduate Education's Good Supervisory Practice Fra

Give them access points to expertise:

Research Supervisors Network

A forum for all those involved in research supervision to share resources, expertise and experiences

This network provides a forum for discussion & learning, enabling supervisors to support each other in enhancing their own practice.

Regular workshops, seminars and webinars, delivered by world leading experts in the development of research supervisory practice, provide further opportunities for research supervision professional to evaluate and enhance their own practice.

1,447
Members of the network

246
Institutions represented

UK Council for Graduate Education

RESEARCH SUPERVISORS NETWORK: RESOURCE

THE RESEARCH SUPERVISOR'S BIBLIOGRAPHY

FOURTH EDITION
Professor Stan **Taylor**

RESEARCH SUPERVISORS NETWORK
UK Council for Graduate Education

Translate for them...

SUPERVISING PhDs

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22ND JUN 2023 · EDIT

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This is a guest post by Dr Yukari Seko, Assistant Professor in the School of Professional Communication and Asmaa Malik, Associate Professor in the School of Journalism at Toronto Metropolitan University. This

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Supervisor Development Reading Group

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Dr Kay Guccione (University of Glasgow) and Dr Sian Vaughan (Birmingham City University) host a monthly reading group on Zoom, focusing on developing supervisory practice.
Each month we invite a different host from the community to select a paper, article, book chapter, policy, or resource to discuss. Papers are provided in advance and we request that...

'I never thought of this work as supervision, but it definitely is!'

Professor Heather Mortiboys

Dr Heather Mortiboys is a Senior Research Fellow at Sheffield University where her primary focus is mitochondria in neurodegenerative diseases, particularly Parkinson's. Her lab uses patient derived primary and reprogrammed cells differentiated into dopaminergic neurons and astrocytes, to understand what causesmitochondrial dysfunction in Parkinson's; then using this knowledge to identify small molecules which can improve or restore mitochondrial function.

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