

RESEARCH SUPERVISION RECOGNITION PROGRAMME

Reviewer Resource:
Examples of Evidence

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How to Use this Document

This document provides examples of evidence that might be included in an applicant's reflective account of their supervisory practice.

If you have applied for recognition of your supervisory practice, this document will be very familiar to you. It provides detailed overviews of the criteria of good supervisory practice and examples of how applicants might evidence that practice in their reflections.

The examples of evidence included in this document are illustrative only; those submitting applications are likely to provide many different forms of evidence, depending on their experience.

Refer to the **Guide for Reviewers** for more information about how to undertake a review of an application.

Structure of this Document

Each criterion of good supervisory practice has its own section which begins with an overview of that criterion.

The **What to look for?** sections include suggestions of how applicants might have provided evidence and which supporting literature they might have cited.

Typical Examples of activities that good practice might include are highlighted in the pale blue boxes.

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1 Recruitment and Selection

Supervisors can be involved in recruitment activities in several ways, including publicising the areas within which they can offer supervision and reaching out to under-represented groups.

Supervisors should be involved in the selection of candidates from supporting intending applicants to develop their applications through to making final decisions and giving feedback.

What to look for? Example of Evidence & Literature

Applicants might include information about:

How they promote themselves and which channels they use to make known to potential candidates what they can/will supervise— web, conference, social media, other channels?

Which networks do they use to promote their work?

What principles guide their selection beyond respecting equity and diversity— what are they looking for? Have they rejected anyone if so why?

Typical Examples

- Publicising the areas of research within which they personally can offer supervision.
- Participating in campaigns to recruit candidates from groups that are under-represented in doctoral education.
- Assessing whether applicants are likely to make the transition to independent researchers.
- Assessing whether applicants' proposed research projects are realisable and whether they have (or can acquire) the knowledge and skills to complete them.
- Interviewing applicants.
- Making a final decision and giving feedback.

Many supervisors also have their own web sites to inform prospective applicants about the areas in which they can offer supervision. Such sites need to also inform prospective applicants how to go about constructing an application, how to get in touch, how to apply to the institution, and what would be involved if they were successful and became a candidate. A good example is the web site of Dr Adam Baker of the School of Computer Science, University of St Andrews (see <http://www.adambarker.org/phd-faq/>).

If the applicant has a personal web site, it could provide appropriate evidence.

While there has been considerable progress in opening up undergraduate education to historically under-represented groups, this seems to have been much less marked in doctoral education (see for example McCulloch and Thomas 2012, Wakeling and Kyriacou 2015). Some institutions and professional bodies have special initiatives intended to recruit candidates from these groups.

Applicants may be able to provide examples of outreach activities.

Once applications are in, judgements must be reached about the candidate and the research proposal. As Bernstein et al (2014) have argued, the crucial decision is whether they are capable of undertaking independent research.

Applicants might evidence this by outlining the ways in which they find out about research capability, for example, asking applicants for a research report or dissertation.

For the research proposal, a judgement must be made about whether it is suitable as a doctoral project, and whether it is doable and viable within the timeframe allowed.

An example might be if applicants co-operate with potential candidates on developing research proposals prior to making a formal application.

As well as an academic relationship, supervision is of course a personal relationship as well, and for that reason as Pells (2018) has suggested, good practice is to interview applicants, either face to face or, if that is not possible using technology.

Evidence may then be of the applicant's personal policy in interviewing applicants.

Once a decision has been taken in the light of the application, the interview, and usually references as well, this must be communicated to the applicant. Where the outcome is

favourable this is easy. But, where applicants have spent a lot of time and effort in putting together an application, it can come as a crushing blow to be rejected.

The applicant's evidence could be of the provision of an example of appropriate feedback to unsuccessful doctoral applicants.

2 Relationships with Candidates

Over the past three decades or so, the candidate population has become much more diverse in its composition, and supervisors need to be aware of this in forming effective relationships with candidates.

In order to do this, there is a need right from the start for supervisors and doctoral candidates to have clear expectations of each other and the first task is to discuss these and, where appropriate, negotiate how they are going to be met.

Also, candidates and supervisors need to be able to work effectively with each other. Because each grouping of individuals is, by definition, unique, then each relationship will be different depending upon the style(s) of the supervisor(s) and the characteristics of the candidate, which need to be aligned at the start to be successful.

That said, the relationship can and indeed should change over the course of time. As candidates move through their doctoral studies, their needs should change, and with that the nature of support that they require from their supervisors.

However, in a few cases, there may be serious issues leading to the potential or actual breakdown of the relationship, for which supervisors need to be prepared and aware of the sources of support both for candidates and themselves.

What to look for? Example of Evidence & Literature

Applicants might include information about:

How they build rapport with students.

How they set out or negotiate ground rules from the start to set expectations.

How their supervisees communicate with them— How often they read work and what is the turnaround.

What they expect from candidates and how they invite feedback on their supervisory practice.

If they are still in touch with supervisees, what their former candidates are doing now.

Whether the applicant is a referee and sponsor for them during and beyond the life of the doctoral project.

Quotes from supervisee alumni.

Typical Examples

- Acknowledging the increased diversity of the domestic candidate population and recognizing its implications for supervision.
- Acknowledging the increased diversity of the international candidate population and recognizing its implications for supervision.
- Discussing and agreeing expectations with candidates at the start of their studies.
- Being aware of supervisory styles and their relationship to student needs and being able to align them at the start of doctoral studies.
- Being aware of how student needs change over the course of doctoral studies and being able to maintain calibration of supervisory styles.
- Being aware of institutional policies and procedures in the event of the breakdown of a supervisory relationship and of sources of support for both parties.

Historically, the population of doctoral candidates has been disproportionately male, young, from high-status social-economic backgrounds, members of majority ethnic and/or racial groups, without a disability, and heterosexual (see for example Gardner 2009a, 2009b, Garner and Holley 2011, Petersen 2014). Now, it is much more diverse in terms of gender, age, class, race or ethnicity, disability, and sexuality (see for example Ostrove et al 2011, Offerman 2011, Gardner 2013, Wakeling and Hampden-Thomson 2013, Collins 2015, Okahana et al 2016). Candidates from non-traditional backgrounds but may face challenges in undertaking doctoral studies. for example. lack of confidence, isolation and discrimination.

As evidence, applicants may be able to give examples of how they have gone about forming effective relationships and supporting candidates to overcome challenges.

While there is a long tradition of doctoral candidates studying in countries other than their own, over the past two decades or so there has been a huge increase in the numbers studying abroad (see UNESCO 2015). Such candidates may face the same challenges as non-traditional home candidates plus others including culture shock (see Manathunga 2014), different expectations of academic roles (Winchester-Seeto et al 2014), different styles of learning (Goode 2007), research experience and skills (McClure 2007), and conventions for verbal and written communication (Doyle et al 2017).

For evidence, applicants may be able to give examples of how they have gone about establishing relationships with international students and supporting them in their studies.

Candidates will usually start their doctoral careers with some assumptions about what will be required of them and what support their supervisor will be required to offer but there is no guarantee that these will be complete or accurate (see for example Dann 2008, Kelly 2009, McAlpine 2013, Jindal-Snape and Ingram 2013, Holbrook et al 2014, Sambrook 2017). The upshot is that there can be mismatches between the expectations of candidates and supervisors which can adversely affect their relationship, and supervisors may need to ensure that these are calibrated.

Applicants might evidence this through spending time right at the start with the candidate going through the institution's Code of Practice or Handbook or checklist, pointing out the formal requirements and discussing how they will be met.

As numerous studies (see, for example, Pearson and Brew 2002, Davis 2004, Gatfield 2005, Grant 2005, Murphy et al 2007, Wright et al 2007, Deuchar 2008, Halse and Bansel 2012, Boehe 2014, Vehvilinen and Lofstrom 2014) have pointed out, supervisors may have preferred styles of supervision that embody different assumptions about the needs of candidates. As Malfoy and Webb (2000) have suggested, as long as there is a congruence between the supervisory style, the associated assumptions about the needs of candidates, and their actual needs, there should be no difficulties, problems can occur where there is incongruence.

Applicants might evidence calibrating styles and needs through the initiation of discussions with candidates, using prompts such as the well-known Brown-Atkins (1988) rating scale.

The relationship between the supervisor and the candidate is not a static one but should change over the course of the candidacy. Usually, at the start the candidate is heavily dependent upon the supervisor and then, as he or she grows and develops towards becoming a researcher in their own right, they should become less dependent and more autonomous (see McAlpine 2013, Benmore 2014, Bui 2014).

Applicant's evidence might be checking that styles and needs remain aligned either informally by raising the issue in supervisions or formally by using instruments such as Gurr's (2001) monitoring tool.

In the vast majority of cases, relationships with candidates proceed smoothly and they become friends for life, in a handful there may be serious problems; at the end of the day, supervisors and candidates are human beings who, for one reason or another, may fail to get on leading to serious problems in the relationship (see for example Gunnarsson et al 2013).

Here applicants could provide evidence that you know the relevant institutional procedures and sources of support both for candidates and for yourself.

3 Relationships with Co-supervisors

Historically, the model has been for candidates to have a single supervisor. But over the last three decades or so there has been a move to co- or team supervision to enhance the experience of doctoral candidates by reducing their reliance upon a single individual and giving them access to a broader range of expertise and support.

However, co-supervision can have a downside. The involvement of more supervisors in the process can create a potential for disagreement and divergence within the team and leave the candidate playing 'piggy in the middle' to the detriment of their experience.

What to look for? Example of Evidence & Literature

Applicants might include information about:

How they ensure equity and consistent feedback is given.

How they handle a difference of opinion in the supervision team.

How they communicate this to the student.

Student quotes that demonstrate how the applicant handle this relationship.

Typical Examples

- Clarifying roles with co-supervisors and candidates at the start of the candidacy.
- Clarifying expectations of the project with co-supervisors and the candidate.
- Regularly reviewing relations between supervisors and with candidates during the course of the candidacy.

Usually, supervisory teams include a designated main supervisor and one or more secondary supervisors. As Guerin and Green (2015) have argued, it is important that there is clarity within the team about the respective roles the supervisors will play and that this is understood by the student.

Applicant's evidence here might include consulting institutional and/or research council guidelines of primary and secondary supervisory roles and discussing them with co-supervisors and candidates.

This is particularly important where supervisors come from external organizations and may have a limited understanding of the degree as in the case of many professional doctorates (see, for example, Neumann 2005, Fillery-Travis et al 2017), practice-led doctorates (see, for example, Allpress et al 2012, Duxbury 2012) and industrial or commercial doctorates (Malfory 2011, Cuthbert and Molla 2014)

As well as clarity of roles, as Parker-Jenkins (2018) has pointed out, there is a need for co-supervisors to clarify their expectations of the research project itself, who supervises what (for example. one the theoretical foundation, the other the empirical), and arrangements for feedback to the candidate.

Applicant's evidence here might, for example, include informal discussion or formal review, for example using Grossman and Crowther's (2015) comprehensive list as a basis for negotiating who does what, when, where and how. Again, this is particularly important in the context of collaborative doctoral programmes.

As well as starting off on the right footing, as Taylor et al (2018) have argued, there is a need for regular reviews of the relationships of co-supervisors with each other and with the student. Such reviews, perhaps once or twice per year, might be undertaken with the candidate present and be used to identify problems stemming from co-supervision at a relatively early stage and before they delay, fatally or otherwise, the progress of the research.

Applicant's evidence might again include informal review or using Kiley's (2015a) questionnaire as a tool to check how things are going.

4 Supporting candidates' research projects

New doctoral candidates may have little or no experience of research, and hence little or no idea of what they are letting themselves in for. Supervisors may then need to induct them into research, including the nature of research itself, the key concepts, what it involves, and of good practice in undertaking it.

Unless the research project itself is pre-determined, supervisors will have a role in advising candidates about their choice of topic and then assisting them to produce a research proposal and to gain ethical approval. Irrespective of the discipline, supervisors will need to make sure that candidates have, or can acquire, the subject-specific knowledge and skills necessary for them to undertake their research topics. These may include the relevant experimental and technological skills to undertake their research projects, in the latter case including information searching, retrieval, storage, and sharing,

If, in these ways, candidates can be started down the slipway, sooner or later they are almost bound to encounter academic problems of one kind or another. It is important that if, and when, this happens, supervisors are aware and lend support.

What to look for? Example of Evidence & Literature

Applicants might include information about:

How they support their candidates? Do their candidates write, publish, get involved with outreach and public engagement?

How do applicants' candidates learn to be professional researchers?

Do applicants give candidates opportunities to do book reviews, shadow the applicant, go to conference on the applicant's behalf?

Typical Examples

- Discussing conceptions and misconceptions of research itself with candidates.
- Looking at key ‘threshold’ concepts in research.
- Considering issues of academic integrity, intellectual property rights, and co-publication.
- Advising on a choice of topic.
- Advising on theory, methodology and methods.
- Advising on a research proposal and plan.
- Advising on gaining ethical approval.
- Advising on skills development in relation to the project.
- Advising on issues arising in the course of the research.

As Meyer et al (2005) have shown, doctoral candidates may have odd conceptions or even misconceptions of research at the start of their studies, and there is a clear need for dialogue with supervisors to what research is ultimately about otherwise there can be a potential for conflict and/or delays to completion (see Meyer 2007, Garcia-Perez and Ayres 2012).

Applicant’s evidence here may take the form of a policy of asking candidates to critique a recent piece of research in the subject and discussing it with them.

There is a substantial literature (see, for example, Kiley 2009, Kiley and Wisker 2009, Trafford and Lesham 2009, Kiley 2015b) suggesting that many research candidates struggle to grasp key ‘threshold’ concepts of research, including those of research paradigms, research questions, theory, theoretical frameworks, methodology, methods, analysis, argument/thesis, and theorising findings. So, candidates may become ‘stuck’ in a state of liminality and consequently unable to progress their research. Again, you may help by, for

example, pointing to ‘model’ papers or books in the relevant literature and discussing key concepts with candidates.

A further necessary discussion may relate to the ethics of research in terms of integrity, intellectual property rights, and possibly authorship in relation to co-publication.

Applicants could evidence that they are aware of institutional policies in these areas and communicate these to candidates, for example, through a checklist.

In many cases, supervisors themselves obtain the funding for and design research projects, but in others there may be an element of discretion for the candidate. In such cases, supervisors as Taylor et al (2018) have described, have a system of outlining the key criteria – whether the project is worthwhile, doable in the time available, and viable in potentially leading to the creation of new knowledge – and encouraging candidates to apply them until a suitable project is found.

Applicants could supply a short case study of how they have gone about advising candidates about their choice of projects.

Candidates will also need advice about how to go about undertaking their research projects, including theories and theoretical frameworks, methodologies and methods, and you could give an example of how you have advised them about these matters.

Candidates will then have to produce a research proposal and plan, which can be problematic if they have little or no experience of research.

One thing that applicants might cite as evidence is asking candidates to look at the deliberately erroneous research proposals and plans set out in Delamont et al (2004) and critique them.

In order to undertake their research projects, candidates will need a range of skills, and it is important at the start to identify which ones they already have, those that they will need to acquire, and when and how they will be able to acquire them.

Here, applicants might cite as evidence conducting a development needs analysis early in the candidature.

Candidates may also need support when the research is under way. They may expect that research is conducted in the same way as it is published, i.e. a linear progression. But research in the real world can be very messy and progress is often two steps forward and one backwards. Candidates may, for cultural reasons (see for example Shen 2009, Magyar and Robinson-Pant 2011) or variously through ‘Top Gun’ (see Taylor and Beasley 2005) or ‘imposter’ syndromes (see Kearns 2015) be unwilling to acknowledge that they are ‘stuck’.

Applicants might provide evidence of re-assuring candidates experiencing problems that they would be met with a sympathetic response and encouraging them to identify ways forward.

5 Encouraging Candidates to Write and Giving Appropriate Feedback

Candidates need to produce written work throughout their studies to articulate what they are thinking, to reflect upon their findings, and to gain feedback. But candidates may prove reluctant to write particularly in the early stages and need encouragement and support from their supervisors to do so.

Once they have produced written work, supervisors must give feedback. It is important that feedback is high-quality and that it enables candidates to progress their research projects.

What to look for? Example of Evidence & Literature

Applicants might include information about:

Methods and approaches to keep candidates motivated, to get them to begin and to keep them writing.

Whether they set suggested output of words per week.

Expectations around publishing and giving conference papers, writing blogs, web material, using social media to get their message out.

Do applicant's candidates undertake any training to support their written and verbal communication of research?

Typical Examples

- Encouraging candidates to write from the start of their studies.
- Supporting the development of academic writing.
- Giving timely, constructive, and actionable feedback.

The traditional view was that writing could be left to the end when the final submission was produced. But the consensus now (see for example Kamler and Thomson 2006), Bitchener 2018) is that writing is or should be an integral part of the research process and that candidates need to start writing at the beginning of their studies and continue throughout.

Applicants evidence for this might include asking them to keep research journals/diaries and setting mini-projects involving written reports.

That said, it is not just a matter of producing text but of producing what is a highly specialised form of writing, namely academic writing. As a number of studies (see Can and Walker 2011, Lee and Murray 2013, Lindsay 2015) have shown, doctoral candidates rarely arrive at the start of their studies with the capacity to produce such writing and, left on their own, they may struggle to acquire it. In recognition of this, many institutions now provide courses in academic writing for doctoral candidates.

But it is still you as their supervisors who are the first readers of their texts and who at least arguably should provide guidance about their writing.

Evidence of such guidance may take the form of referring candidates to good examples in the literature or showing how to re-write a paragraph or two or encouraging them to join peer writing groups (see Aitchison 2010, Wellington 2010a, Carter and Kumar 2016, Wegener et al 2016).

Giving feedback on written work is of course one of, if not the, most vital functions of the supervisor. Such feedback needs to be timely in the sense of enabling candidates to move on with their studies (see, for example, Odema and Burgess 2015, Carter and Kumar 2016). It also needs to be constructive; as numerous studies (see for example Whitelock et al 2008, Wang and Li 2011, Can and Walker 2011, Aitchison and Mowbray 2013) have shown, candidates have a very strong emotional investment in their draft submissions, and criticism is often taken personally. Finally, as McAlpine and Amundsen (2012) have pointed out, it needs to be actionable in the sense that candidates can understand the points being made and incorporate changes.

Evidence would be of how applicants take these three considerations into account when they are giving feedback to candidates.

6 Supporting Candidates' Personal, Professional and Career Development

Doctoral candidates are subject to the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune in their personal lives. Supervisors need at least to be aware of personal issues, particularly in relation to well-being and mental health, and able to direct candidates towards the relevant professional services. They also need to recognise that they may be role models for their candidates, particularly in achieving a work-life balance.

Supervisors also have a responsibility to support the professional development of doctoral candidates in terms of socialization within their disciplinary community and, where appropriate, in undertaking teaching duties in the subject.

Traditionally, such activities helped to support doctoral candidates to prepare for academic careers, and supervisors have had a direct role in informing them about faculty work and life. In recent years, however, only a minority of doctoral graduates have become academics, while the majority have found employment in other spheres. Here, supervisors may have a role in supporting candidates to prepare for non-academic careers.

What to look for? Example of Evidence & Literature

Applicants might include information about:

How they use the formal milestones or progression monitoring software to support the candidates' progress?

What they do to keep candidates motivated and mitigate against 2nd year dip in enthusiasm.

How they ensure that you are aware of personal and health issues.

Typical Examples

- supporting candidates with personal issues, including those relating to well-being and mental health.
- Being good role models in terms of work-life balance.
- Inducting candidates into disciplinary networks and activities.
- Supporting their development as teachers.
- Informing them about academic careers.
- Supporting them to prepare for non-academic careers.

Supervisors will normally have some pastoral engagement with candidates over the course of their doctoral studies as events in their private lives impinge upon their professional ones (Hopgood et al 2011, McAlpine et al 2012, McAlpine 2013). Minimally, supervisors need to be alert to the prospect of candidates experiencing personal issues and problems, for example by regularly checking with them. When such issues, including those relating to well-being and mental health, are identified, supervisors need be sympathetic, conscious of the limits of direct involvement, and aware of the professional services to whom candidates can be referred for further support.

Evidence here, for example, could consist of a case study of how the applicant has supported a candidate at a time of personal crisis.

Supervisors need to be good role models for candidates in terms of achieving an appropriate work-life balance. The latter can be an issue for candidates and there is some evidence that it is a factor in poor mental health ((see Cohen 2011, Margrove et al 2014, Levecque et al 2017), non- or delayed completion (see Barry et al 2018), and in putting candidates off an academic career (McAlpine 2017).

Applicants may be able to evidence this by describing how they have acted as a role model, for example, by demonstrating your own effective work-life balance to candidates.

As Walker et al (2008) have put the matter, supervisors are ‘stewards of the discipline’ and responsible for inducting candidates into the disciplinary community. This may include encouraging them in joining appropriate networks (see Thein and Beach 2010), attending conferences, giving presentations, and possibly in publishing their work during candidacy (see S 9).

Evidence again might consist of a case study of how the applicant has inducted a candidate or candidates into the community.

Many candidates will engage in teaching during their studies, often on modules led by their supervisors. In such cases, as Muzaka (2009) and Jepsen et al (2012) have pointed out, supervisors have a responsibility to ensure that teaching assistants are adequately prepared and supported to undertake teaching duties and that they are fully informed about assessment methods, topics, and criteria.

Again, applicants might provide a brief case study of how they have supported a doctoral candidate in their teaching.

Often, candidates embark upon the doctorate in the expectation of an academic career, and one obvious source of information is their supervisor. However, studies (see Austin 2002, 2011, Campbell et al 2005, Austin and McDaniels 2006) have found that their supervisors tended to assume that doctoral candidates either arrived with an understanding of academic work or would acquire one by a process of osmosis during their studies. Good practice is then for supervisors to least be prepared to discuss what is involved in an academic career, including research, teaching and supporting learning, academic administration, public service, and entrepreneurial activity.

Following Pitt and Mewburn (2016), one way of evidencing this would be if applicants discuss with candidates the key selection criteria in advertisements for posts in their field.

But if many are called to academic posts, few are chosen, and most doctoral candidates will end up working in other occupations (see Hancock 2014, Hancock et al 2015, McAlpine and Emmioglu 2015, Kweik 2019). While, unless they have worked outside universities, supervisors may be unable to advise candidates seeking non-academic positions, they can support them to acquire the so-called generic or transferable skills deemed necessary to enable them to compete for non-academic careers.

Applicants may evidence this through conducting training needs analyses, identifying gaps in skills, and taking advantage of opportunities to close them.

7 Supporting Progress and Monitoring Progression

The days when, because they involved the creation of new knowledge, doctoral degrees took as long as they took are long gone. Globally, research sponsors have put policies in place designed to ensure that candidates to complete their degrees in three or four years of full-time study (or pro rata for part-time). Such policies have usually entailed financial penalties for departments and/or institutions which have failed to hit targets for completion rates and/or times.

In consequence, over the past three decades or so, one of, if not the, the key roles for supervisors have become ensuring as far as possible that candidates complete on time.

What to look for? Example of Evidence & Literature

Applicants might include information about:

Whether they signpost and encourage candidates to engage with training and support, and careers guidance?

Do they sponsor candidates at conferences by making introductions?

Do they model good practice in terms of public engagement and impact? Do you encourage them to teach/demonstrate and give feedback on this?

Do you encourage them to think early on about their career options and to develop a Personal Development Plan?

Typical Examples

- Supporting and motivating candidates to progress in their studies.
- Using supervisions to monitor progress.
- Participating in formal progression events.

As Taylor et al (2018) have suggested, candidates need to have or acquire the skills of project management, time management, and self-management if they are to stand a chance of completing within three or four years. In many cases, institutions now provide training programmes covering these skills, but you may provide evidence that you encourage your candidates to take advantage of the opportunities.

However, even if they do, this is not a guarantee of success, and supervisors need to be aware of slippages and ready to correct them, for example. through progress reviews in supervisions.

Applicants could evidence this by, for example, regularly reviewing the candidate's achievements against their research plan in supervisions.

Additionally, as a number of studies (see Delamont et al 2004, Cryer 2006, Kiley 2009, Phillips and Pugh 2010) have suggested, supervisors may need to motivate candidates in the middle stages of their studies who are suffering from loss of confidence and/or boredom.

Examples of how applicants go about doing this might include praising them, helping them to map out stepping-stones to completion, re-focusing the research, or as a last resort perhaps advising them to take a break.

Another strategy for supporting progression can be the use of learning agreements with candidates. Such agreements are usually concluded at the start of the candidature and specify, among other things, the various milestones to final completion (see for example Gaffney-Rhys and Jones, 2010, Gilbar et al 2013). These are intended to be ‘live’ documents which afford a basis for the ongoing discussion of progress throughout the candidacy.

Evidence might include the use of learning agreements for this purpose.

Additionally, supervisors will usually monitor progress through checking at supervisory meetings whether targets have been achieved and, if not, by providing advice and support to enable candidates to get back on track.

Evidence of this may be the include records of such meetings.

Supervisors will also be involved in formal progression events. Usually, candidates are initially registered for a lower degree or their doctoral candidature is subject to confirmation, and there is a formal review at between 9 and 15 months to determine whether they should be allowed to proceed to the doctorate/full candidature. Additionally, there will be further reviews of progress at regular intervals in future years of study. Supervisors may have roles in supporting candidates for progression events, writing reports for progression panels (see Mewburn et al 2013, 2014), and in some institutions sitting as members of such panels.

Evidence here might include a case study of how applicants go about preparing candidates for such events and/or writing reports.

8 Supporting Candidates Through Completion and Final Examination

Once candidates have substantially finished their research projects, they have to produce a submission, usually but not always a thesis. This is likely to be the longest and most difficult piece of work that a candidate has ever undertaken, and supervisors have a key role in supporting them to complete their submissions.

Once candidates have a complete draft, the next issue is whether they should submit it for the degree. While of course there are no guarantees, supervisors need to be able to advise candidates as to the likelihood of the thesis passing, for which they need a clear understanding of the criteria for the award.

In order to support the examination process, it is important that supervisors have a knowledge and understanding of how research degrees are examined, including criteria for the appointment of examiners, examination policies and processes, and outcomes.

In most but not all higher education systems, the examination will involve an assessment of the written submission plus an oral examination. Candidates may be unfamiliar with oral examinations and one role of supervisors can be to help prepare them for their viva.

In many countries, supervisors are debarred from examining their own protégés, and while they may sit in they play no role in the examination itself. Where examiners refer submissions, supervisors may have a role afterwards in terms of supporting candidates to revise their work.

What to look for? Example of Evidence & Literature

Applicants might include information about:

What they do to get candidates through the final hurdles— set deadlines, mock viva, social time?

Do they encourage candidates to suggest who their examiner might be?

How do they celebrate success?

Typical Examples

- Working with candidates to finalise their submissions.
- Advising them on whether the thesis is likely to pass on the basis of your experience as an examiner.
- Roles in appointing examiners.
- Understanding of relevant policies and procedures and outcomes.
- Supporting candidates to prepare for the viva.
- Supporting candidates after the viva.

In the final stages, candidates may need support to produce the end product, namely a thesis or argument which is substantiated by evidence (see Taylor et al 2018), appropriately structured (see Neville 2008), written in an appropriate and error-free style (see Carter 2008). Normally this involves supervisors in giving feedback on drafts.

Evidence of this activity by an example of such feedback.

Also, in the UK it is normally the student who decides whether to submit the thesis, but most will ask their supervisors whether it will pass. Supervisors then need to understand the standards for the award.

This may be evidenced by reference to institutional criteria and previous experience as an examiner.

Supervisors are normally asked to nominate appropriate examiners for the submission. In order to do this, as Pearce (2008) has pointed out, they have to be aware of the institution's criteria for the appointment of examiners (which may include requirements such as expertise in the field of study, recent publications, and supervisory and examining experience). They may also have to consider the appropriateness of particular examiners (see Joyner 2003, Kiley and Mullins 2004, Kiley 2009).

Here evidence might consist of a description of how applicants go about nominating examiners including, where appropriate, consulting with candidates.

Supervisors need to understand relevant institutional policies, i.e. who arranges the viva, who chairs it, what (if any) their own role is and the criteria for success and the range of recommendations that can be made (see for example Tinkler and Jackson (2004)).

Evidence applicants could site here could include familiarity to the relevant institutional source that informs their practice for example. an examinations handbook, or examining itself, either as an internal or an external.

Candidates may have gained some experience of oral examination through presentations and feedback from progression panels, but the viva itself may still be seen as a huge hurdle (see

Wellington 2010b, Watts 2011). Supervisors may have a role to play in explaining what to expect and, where appropriate, arranging mock vivas to accustom candidates to the format. This can be particularly important for candidates for whom English is not their first language (see Carter 2011) or who have disabilities (see Chown et al 2015) or who are from non-traditional backgrounds (Harrison et al 2011).

As evidence applicants could provide a case study of preparing a candidate for the viva.

In most cases, supervisors have only one role following the viva – to help the candidate to celebrate. However, where submissions are referred for further work, supervisors may have a role to play in clarifying the examiners' expectations to the candidate and supporting the latter in revising and/or re-writing their thesis.

Again, applicants could provide evidence by a case study.

9 Supporting Candidates to Disseminate Their Research

Giving that completing a doctorate involves making and original contribution to knowledge and understanding, it is vital that the outcomes are made available to the disciplinary and/or professional community for scrutiny and the advancement of research in the subject. One responsibility of supervisors is to support candidates to disseminate their research findings.

What to look for? Example of Evidence & Literature

Applicants might include information about:

How they have supported candidates to attend— conferences, department and faculty activities, professional body/funder events.

**Who gets to hear about what candidates are doing and to what end?
Collaborators/Industry/Charity?**

What community engagement they support candidates in.

Typical Examples

- Setting expectations at the start of the candidacy;
- Modelling the process of publication;
- Encouraging candidates to publish as they go;
- Co-publishing;
- Establishing a post-doctoral publications plan.

In some countries prior publication is a condition of the award of the doctorate but in other cases it is not mandatory or undertaken voluntarily with the result that many theses and dissertations are left, to quote a supervisors cited by Walker et al (2008: 79) ‘...like John Brown [to] lie mouldering in their literary graves’.

Failure to publish often reflects, as Kamler (2008: 284) has put it that ‘...for the most part, doctoral candidates appear to be left to their own devices to sort out how to publish their research...with poor results’. Many are daunted by the mechanics of publication in terms of identifying key journals and preparing appropriate submissions (see Cuthbert and Spark 2008, Lei and Hu 2015) and are discouraged from sending in papers. But even those who negotiate these hurdles often send in papers which are unsuitable for publication (see Paré 2010).

One way of encouraging publication is for supervisors to indicate to candidates in induction meetings right at the start of their studies that they will be expected to produce papers, and this may form part of an induction checklist or learning agreement.

Another is to model the process by, for example, supervisors showing how they themselves went about publishing a key paper, including targeting an outlet, responding to requirements, and where appropriate taking on board the comments of referees prior to final publication.

Here, applicants could provide evidence in the form of a short case study.

Candidates may also be encouraged to publish as they go. i.e. write up their research as journal articles and submit them during candidature. This can have disadvantages (see Paré 2010) but can enable rapid dissemination and provide convincing evidence of publishability to examiners.

Applicants may be able to provide evidence of supporting candidates to publish during their studies.

As several studies (see Kamler 2008, Can and Walker 2011, and Jiang et al 2015) have suggested, perhaps the most effective way of assisting candidates to publish is for supervisors to write a joint paper with them for publication and take them through all of the stages from initial conception through to the appearance of the paper in print or electronic form.

Applicants may be able to provide a case study of a joint paper.

A final possibility, particularly if no publications have resulted during the period of doctoral study, supervisors may support their candidates to devise a publications plan setting out what they intend to publish, which outlets might be appropriate, and a timescale for submission.

Evidence might include an example of a plan the applicant has negotiated with a candidate.

10 Reflecting Upon and Enhancing Practice

NB – if you are reviewing an “Associate Supervisor” application, this section should include a *Supervision Observation Report*.

If supervisors are to improve their practice, they need to evaluate it, reflect upon it, determine their strengths and weaknesses, build upon the former and address the latter.

As with other areas of academic practice, supervisors should undertake appropriate professional development to enhance their practice, which may include workshops and programmes as well as familiarity with the scholarly literature and its implications for practice.

Where supervisors identify good practice, then wherever possible they should disseminate it for the benefit of others.

What to look for? Example of Evidence & Literature

Applicants might include information about:

How they keep up their own professional development as supervisors.

Whether they feedback from line managers/Head of Departments about their performance?

Other professional body recognition they received.

Typical Examples

- Using an appropriate mix of methods for evaluating supervision.
- Undertaking initial and continuing professional development.
- Familiarity with the scholarly literature.
- Where appropriate, contributing to the professional development of other supervisors.

As Taylor et al (2018) have suggested, supervisors can self-evaluate their supervision by, for example, after each supervision spending a few minutes completing a simple pro-forma with 'what went well?', 'what went less well?' and 'what will I do differently next time?' and/or by keeping a reflective diary.

It can be problematic to use individual questionnaires for research students as the latter can be identified and may be unwilling to be critical of their supervisors. But the latter still might devote (say) one supervision a year to a general discussion of how the student feels about the quality of supervision, possibly based upon list of topics such as that developed by Lee and McKenzie (2011).

Peer observation is a familiar part of evaluation in taught programmes, and it is equally applicable in doctoral ones (see for example Goode 2010, Hill 2011).

Applicants evidence here might include self-evaluation pro-formas, summaries of student evaluations, peer reviews, or candidate testaments.

Nearly all institutions now have initial professional development programmes for supervisors, and many have refreshers for established supervisors (see Taylor 2018).

As evidence, applicants might cite examples of workshops that you have attended, what you learned, and how this has influenced your practice.

Also, there is now a substantial scholarly literature on the practice of research supervision.

Applicants could give examples of how studies have influenced your practice. Where appropriate, applicants might present evidence of contributing to the development of others by, for example, mentoring colleagues or facilitating departmental events, institutional workshops or discipline, national or international workshops.

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