
Research and Postgraduate Postgraduate Research Supervision Policy

Policy Number: 1.6.2.41
Responsible Officer: Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research and International
Policy Editor/Contact: Research Student Coordinator, Research Office
Approving Authority: Senate
Date approved: 14 September 2016
Review date: September 2018

1. Purpose

This document specifies the criteria for the appointment of supervisors for postgraduate research candidates and the roles and responsibilities of supervisors.

2. Objective

To assist postgraduate research supervisors in fulfilling their responsibilities and clearly define the TOR for research supervision.

The policy applies to all University appointed supervisors of postgraduate research [Master's and PhD] candidates, Heads of Schools, Associate Deans [Research] or equivalent, Research Student Coordinators, and Faculty Research Committees or equivalent.

3. Policy

3.a. All postgraduate research students, upon admission into their programme, must be assigned by the relevant Faculty Research Committee (FRC) or equivalent a supervisory team of at least two supervisors; one of whom will be the Principal Supervisor and the other will be a Co-supervisor who need not be affiliated with the University.

3.b. The University has 3 main categories of supervisors. They are principal supervisor, co-supervisor, and panel supervisor(s).

3.c. Principal Supervisor

The Principal Supervisor will take responsibility towards the postgraduate research candidature progression and will be the administrative contact for the FRC or equivalent, and the University Research Office. Every postgraduate research student must be assigned a Principal Supervisor regardless of the supervision arrangement.

3.d. Co-supervisor

The Co-supervisor, who need not be affiliated with the University, shall have expertise that is relevant to the candidate's research. In the case where the Co-supervisor is not affiliated with the University, they shall have accepted the University's terms and conditions for supervision.

3.e. Panel Supervision

A Supervisory Panel is comprised of three or more supervisors. Panels may include a member of the industry, or an external person. The roles of each member in the panel must be agreed by the candidate, the members, and the FRC or equivalent.

3.f. **Supervisor Eligibility**

i) **Principal Supervisor**

A person is eligible to be appointed as the Principal Supervisor of a postgraduate research student at the University provided that all the following criteria are met:

- a) They are a full-time employee of the University and not in the final six months of their contract with the University;
- b) They are able to fulfil the roles and responsibilities outlined in Section 3.g. ;
- c) They are an active researcher in the same or cognate discipline as the candidates research project;
- d) They hold a doctorate degree;
- e) For PhD supervision, demonstrated research output and successful supervision at least at the Masters level is also required.

ii) **Co-supervisor**

A person with a doctorate degree is eligible to be appointed as a Co-supervisor.

3.g. **Roles and Responsibilities**

The role of the Principal Supervisor:

- a) is to advise and assist the candidate to complete an original and feasible research programme;
- b) monitor the quality of the research being conducted;
- c) support the candidate in timely completion of the research;
- d) ensure the provision of sufficient funds should the project exceed the FRC normal allocation for the proposed degree
- e) encourage and facilitate high quality research publications resulting from the thesis.

The Principal Supervisor is responsible for:

- a) ensuring regular contact and communication are maintained with the candidate via a mutually agreed, documented mechanism that is reviewed bi-annually by the candidate and supervisor(s);
- b) providing formal advice on progress of the candidature to the Head of School and the FRC or equivalent via the semester progress report;
- c) ensuring that the candidate is provided with appropriate resources and support for the research program;
- d) ensuring that the FRC or equivalent is aware of the supervisor's absence from the University where that absence is for more than 4 weeks [**this includes periods of approved leave such as sabbatical leave or time overseas**] so that alternative supervision arrangements can be put in place by the FRC;
- e) providing advice to the Head of School on the appointment of thesis examiners after the student has provided intention to submit the thesis for examination; and
- f) ensuring that the thesis is in the correct format for examination

The Co-supervisor will:

- a) ensure regular contact and communication are maintained with the candidate via a mutually agreed, documented mechanism that is reviewed bi-annually by the candidate and supervisor;
- b) act in place of the Principal supervisor when absent from the University [only if they are a staff member of the University and if the absence is greater than 4 weeks then only with the approval of the Faculty]; and
- c) provide feedback to the candidate at semester review.

4. Acknowledgement

We acknowledge the following universities who have provided input or example into this document:

- Australian National University
- Deakin University
- Griffith University
- Monash University
- University of Melbourne
- University of New South Wales
- University of Western Australia

5. Related documents

This document should be read in conjunction with the Postgraduate Research Candidature and Supervision Procedure.

Terms and Conditions for Supervision



DETAILS OF POSITION

Department:	
Period of external supervision commences on:	
Period of external supervision finishes on:	

DETAILS OF EXTERNAL SUPERVISOR

Name:	
Address:	
Employer:	
Work Tel:	
Work Fax:	
Email:	

DETAILS OF THE CANDIDATE

Name:	
Student ID:	
University Dept	
University Tel:	
Email:	
Primary Supervisor:	
Other Supervisors:	
Research Topic:	

PAYMENT DETAILS

Delete this section before printing, if there is no payment involved

Agrees to pay the external supervisor named above the amount of \$_____ for his/her services as an external supervisor. This amount shall be payable upon the completion of the supervision responsibilities and will be processed upon the receipt of the supervisors certificate confirming the thesis is ready for examination.

Bank Authority: I hereby authorise Payroll Services to pay all wages due to me into my bank account:

[Insert bank details as required by Finance Office]

TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THE APPOINTMENT

As the secondary supervisor:

- I agree to assist in the supervision of the research work of the above named candidate.
- I confirm that I am appropriately qualified and experienced to supervise the particular research work of the candidate.
- I confirm that I shall confer with the primary supervisor named above on a regular basis on dates to be agreed and shall promptly consult at other times on any matters coming to my attention which I believe are likely to significantly affect the quality, direction or progress of the candidate's work.
- I have read The University of the South Pacific's *Postgraduate Research Supervision Policy* and the *Postgraduate Research Candidature and Supervision Procedure* (available on the web at <http://www.policies.usp.ac.fj/index.php?category=131>) and I agree that I shall abide by all policies and regulations of the University which are related to the Postgraduate Research programme, including the University's policies on ethical behaviour and intellectual property rights.
- I agree to supervise the candidate for the duration of his/her candidacy. If I am unable to continue with supervision of the candidate, I undertake to promptly advise the primary supervisor accordingly.
- I agree to maintain a comprehensive file of relevant documents, emails, correspondence, etc relating to my supervision of the candidate.
- *[if applicable. If not applicable, delete clause before printing]* I have entered into a separate agreement with the University on the intellectual property rights relating to the research.
- *[if applicable. If not applicable, delete clause before printing]* I confirm that my employer is aware of and has agreed to (a) my supervision of the candidate and (b) the terms of this agreement. Where supervision will occur in paid work-time I have obtained my employer's consent.

The University:

- Agrees to, through the Primary/University supervisor, keep the external supervisor appropriately informed about matters pertaining to the research programme and the candidate.
- USP will provide logistical, administrative and managerial support where necessary to assist the Consultant to perform the services outlined.

TERMINATION

- If in the reasonable opinion of USP, the performance of the Secondary Supervisor is unsatisfactory, USP may give the Secondary Supervisor notice of its dissatisfaction and grounds for its dissatisfaction. If the Secondary Supervisor fails to address the grounds for dissatisfaction as notified by USP, to the reasonable satisfaction of USP, USP may terminate this Agreement by giving written notice to the Secondary Supervisor.
- If in the reasonable opinion of USP, the Secondary Supervisor is guilty of any dishonesty, serious misconduct or serious neglect of duty, or conflict of interest in or in connection with any of the Secondary Supervisor's obligations under this Agreement, USP may terminate this Agreement by giving written notice to the Secondary Supervisor.
- If USP fails to meet any of its obligations under this Agreement the Secondary Supervisor after reasonable notice to remedy the failure, and if USP continues to fail to meet its obligations, the Consultant may terminate this Agreement by giving written notice to the University.

AUTHORISATION AND SIGNATURES

Signed by External Supervisor:

External Supervisor's Signature Date

Signed by employer of External Supervisor (if applicable):

External Supervisor's Employer's Signature Date

Name (please print) Designation

Signed on behalf of the University: Date

Name (please print) Designation*

*normally the Head of Department

IMPORTANT NOTES:

- When completed and appropriately authorised, three additional copies should be made of this Agreement.
- The **original** should be recorded by the appropriate Faculty office
- One copy must be sent to the External Supervisor
- One copy must be sent to the External Supervisor's employer (if applicable)
- One copy must be retained in the Department together with the original CV

Adapted from the University of Otago