

Supervisor Guidance Advice Sheet

Before they arrive

1. Engage with a new supervisee when they apply and before an offer has been made. Once they have been accepted, make contact either by phone or email, or in person if they are already in Manchester. Be ready to give them academic advice or preliminary reading but do not get involved in advice on legal issues such as immigration.
2. Consider whether special preparations are required before the student arrives (e.g., equipment or book purchases, participant recruitment, resources, etc.)

Getting started

3. As soon as possible after a supervisee arrives in Manchester, meet up and see that everything is in place for them to pursue their research. Ensure they know about and attend induction events, and if necessary health and safety and research ethics training.
4. Be clear with supervisees what they can expect from you and what in turn you expect from them. In particular be clear how often you expect to meet and what form meetings will take. If you are part of a supervisory team, be clear what the relative duties and responsibilities of the co-supervisors are. Be clear about data ownership and archiving.
5. Make sure you are familiar with the contents of any handbooks and other materials they will be receiving, and with the latest version of the University's Code of Practice on PhD supervision.
6. Ensure that your supervisees know about eProg, how it works and who must do what.
7. Discuss the role of skills training within the PhD and ensure they complete the skills audit.
8. Discuss whether attendance at any taught modules or other programmes would be advisable.
9. Discuss the most appropriate thesis format, and explain requirements of the chosen format. Discuss co-authorship arrangements for papers emerging from the research.
10. Be prepared to advise supervisees about opportunities to attend conferences, workshops, etc relevant to their research topic. Discuss ways in which such attendance can be funded.

The middle period

11. Ensure that progress is steady and there are not significant periods of drift or unauthorised absence. This may require active follow-up, for example if meetings are cancelled.
12. Check that requirements of external funding bodies are being met. Overseas funders may require specific reporting.
13. Give prompt and detailed feedback on any written work submitted to you.
14. Ensure supervisees understand the procedures for progression and have completed all the necessary preparatory work.

The viva and beyond

15. Prepare supervisees for what to expect in the viva, ideally by setting up a mock viva.
16. Be available after the viva to give the advice on the examiners' recommendations and to provide support in making any revisions or corrections required by the examiners.

17. Discuss plans for publications arising from the completed PhD and be prepared to advise on suitable outlets.

18. Keep records of significant achievements of your supervisees, major publications, prizes won, etc and career destination. Submit publications and other outputs to eScholar. They are valuable in demonstrating excellence and may help in promotion statements or funding applications.

Legalities

19. Keep records of meetings with supervisees and archive all emails. Remember that emails and other written messages cannot be kept private and confidential in the event of an appeal. Always use appropriate language whether in correspondence with the student or with a third party.

20. Take complaints and appeals seriously. If you are having difficulties with a supervisee, discuss these with a colleague. Use informal means, including contact with Advisors, in order to resolve issues wherever possible. Know when it is appropriate to call in counselling or other support.

Graduate Education Group 16/3/11