Supervisor Quick Guide

Contents

Roles and Responsibilities and coordinating the supervisory relationship

Introduction

1. Doctoral students are aligned with one of the five Doctoral Coordinators and on of the four Unit of Assessment Themes;

   o Business and Law
   o Environment and Engineering
   o Social Policy
   o Human Function and Health
   o Media, Culture and the Arts
   o Each area is supported by a Doctoral Coordinator and has a Doctoral Review Panel.

2. The Doctoral Coordinator is the Chair of the Doctoral Review Panel and on behalf of the University arranges key processes in recruitment and monitoring of the doctoral student experience.

3. Solent University cannot guarantee students will be able to work with any particular supervisor, or that they will have the same supervisor throughout their period of study at the University.

4. The quality of the University's research degree provision rests on the integration of student focused services and the core relationships and activities which form the doctoral student experience (also known as Postgraduate Researchers or PGR). The respective responsibilities of the key relationships in the research degree process are set out in these guidance notes.

   o Doctoral Coordinator
   o Supervisory Team
   o Director of Studies
   o Doctoral Student
   o Graduate School Administration
   o Doctoral Review Panel

1.1 The Doctoral Coordinator

The Doctoral Coordinator supports the following processes within each Faculty:

1. Admissions:
   a. Undertakes initial review of applications and project proposals, arranges applicant interviews with academic staff, reviews preliminary supervisory arrangements and, when successful, authorises the offers to applicants.

2. Supervisory arrangements:
   a. Coordinates supervision team composition (including any external supervision arrangements, or proposed amendments to supervision teams) to meet the regulatory requirements of the University.
   b. Ensures that supervisors have training and support required to undertake effective supervision.
   c. Seeks out suitable solutions and / or replacements when a member of a supervisory team leaves or where a supervisory relationship has irretrievably broken down
   d. Monitoring and progression
   e. Coordinates the Transfer milestone
   f. Chairs the Annual Monitoring review and reports to RDC

3. The Doctoral Coordinator is responsible for overseeing the key milestones for doctoral students within their area.

   a. **Annual monitoring**: chairs the Doctoral Review Panel meeting(s) and manages oversight of the Annual Monitoring process. They record agreed outcomes of the Annual Monitoring Doctoral Review Panels, initiate appropriate action to resolve issues arising from the reviews, and report on these to Graduate School Officer.
   b. **Transfer to PhD**: arranges the Transfer viva at the request of the Director of Studies, including the appointment of the Transfer Panel and independent chair.
   c. **Final Examination**: offers support and guidance as required to supervisory teams during the process of identifying suitable examiners and independent chairs.

4. The Doctoral Coordinator is expected to make a contribution to sustaining the research environment and culture at the University. They will:

   a. Contribute to the research supervisor training and leadership events,
   b. Ensure awareness across the University of doctoral student training and Events, external speakers and research seminars
   c. Support and enhance the research environment for doctoral students
   d. Ensure that communication and interaction with students is conducted in a professional manner and in the spirit of mutual respect.

5. The Doctoral Coordinators are also members of the University' Research Degrees Committee (RDC) and report to the committee on the Doctoral student activities and development. They act as Chair of the relevant Faculty Doctoral Review Panel, coordinate the activities of the panel and report on the findings of the panel to the RDC, including feedback from the student body, analysis of progression and attainment rates and analysis of external examiner reports.

1.2 The Supervisory Team

1. The supervision team is composed of one primary supervisor, the Director of Studies (DoS) and one or two co-supervisors. One or more advisors may be appointed to support the student on aspects of their work during their registration. Advisors have no formal supervisory role. All supervisors should be familiar with the University's regulations for research degrees (see also the University's Regulations for Postgraduate Research Students).

2. Supervisors will:
   a. Provide regular constructive guidance and criticism to the doctoral student on their research, methodology and written work both in meetings and through written feedback. At minimum full-time doctoral students should meet with a member of their supervisory team at least every 6 weeks (9 meetings per year) and part-time doctoral students at least every 8 weeks (7 meetings per year).
   b. Provide guidance on relevant literature and exemplars of good research practice in the relevant field.
   c. Advise the doctoral student on health and safety, risk assessment, and research integrity including consideration of ethical aspects of the research and the University's research ethics policy and processes.
   d. Encourage the doctoral student to engage with current developments and debates within their own and wider disciplinary contexts through publication, external and internal events such as discipline specific conferences, symposia, seminars and workshops, and participate fully in the research culture of Solent's Faculties and Schools and the Solent research and doctoral student communities.
   e. Contribute to doctoral students' record of all formal supervisory meetings: the actions arising from each meeting must be agreed by the supervisor and student following each meeting.
   f. Ensure that communication and interaction with their students are conducted in a professional manner and in the spirit of mutual respect.
   g. Undertake to attend the mandatory biennial Supervisor Training Sessions and regularly engage with further Supervisor Training delivered at the University and to update themselves annually of any amendments to the regulatory framework published at the start of each academic year either via the relevant supervisor training session or by downloading the latest iteration of the regulatory statements.

h. Support the doctoral student to prepare for key monitoring milestones and the final viva including reading and commenting on completed drafts prior to their submission, provided that they are made available by the doctoral student in reasonable time for feedback.

1.3 The Director of Studies

In addition to the expectations placed on supervisors listed above, the Director of Studies (DoS) is also responsible for:

1. Ensuring the doctoral student is aware of the facilities and resources available to them within the Schools and across the University.

2. Engaging with the PG Certificate in Research Methods, which will entail:
    a. Providing their doctoral student with support and guidance around the completion of the core assessment tasks embedded within the 2 modules
    b. Attendance at collaborative workshops where their doctoral student is required to provide a presentation on their work (1 per module)
    c. Marking of the core assessment tasks embedded within the 2 modules (1 x presentation and 1 x written piece of work per module)

3. Ensuring the doctoral student is familiar with the University's policies and procedures and relevant legislation including, but not limited to, health and safety, research integrity and ethics, data protection, student academic misconduct, research misconduct and intellectual property rights.

4. Tracking the institutional deadlines applicable to each of their doctoral students and ensuing they are prepared to meet the requirements of each deadline and monitoring point, including Annual Monitoring, Transfer and Viva. (Guidance note #2).

5. Ensuring the doctoral student submits drafts through Turnitin and reviewing the similarity reports prior to Transfer and Viva.

6. Ensuring the doctoral student undertakes a training and skills assessment on commencing their studies and that the student engages with internal and external training where appropriate to their programme of work.

7. Ensuring doctoral students are aware of their responsibility to maintain records of the frequency and content of supervisory meetings and that the maintenance of the supervisory meeting record is current.

8. Discussing with the doctoral student on a timely basis any issues of inadequate progress, barriers to accessing resources or to progressing with

their research, or failure to engage with the Supervision Team or University services including the Graduate School.

9. Prior to the completion of the thesis, discussing with the doctoral student and supervisory team options for internal and external examiners, and forwarding the nominations to the Doctoral Coordinator no less than six months prior to submission of the completed thesis.

10. Ensuring the doctoral student is familiar with the conduct, regulations and expectations of the final viva examination.

1.4 The Doctoral Student

1. As for the supervisory team and DoS, the doctoral student is also subject to obligations and responsibilities in their relationship with the University and their supervisory team.

2. All new students who register for a research degree are required to complete the Postgraduate Certificate in Research Methods during their first year of registration. This runs concurrently with their first year of doctoral study and is complementary to it. Continuation on the research degree programme will be subject to successful completion on the PG. Cert. in Research Methods.

3. In addition to completing the PG Cert in Research Methods the Doctoral student will:
    a. Attend the induction event, held at each intake point. Attendance is mandatory for all new doctoral students (please refer to Guidance note # 4 for exceptions applicable to Distance learners). Students who elect to register late must attend the next scheduled induction event. Students who elect to register after the intake date for their entry point should be aware that their maximum registration period will be calculated from the University's intake date and not from their personal start date.
        o   Once registered, all formal communication from the University to the student will be via the university email account provided to them. If they intend to use any other personal email address, they are responsible for ensuring all emails are reliably forwarded from their university student email account to their preferred personal email account and for notifying the Graduate School of any changes to their full contact details.
    b. Be responsible for re-registering at the start of each academic year and for paying their fees on time. Failure to register or to pay fees may result in removal of access to facilities and resources including the library and student email accounts. Students who have not completed registration cannot be examined or progress their studies.
    c. Become familiar with all applicable regulations, policies and processes and working with their supervisory team to ensure they comply with the University's regulatory requirements, ethical and health and safety considerations, progression timeframes and monitoring milestones.

d. Establish, in discussion with their supervisory team, a regular schedule of meetings whether in person or virtual, and advise their DoS in good time of any planned absences which will take them away from the University or out of contact for an extended period of time. When a student is ill and unable to study they must inform their supervisory team as soon as is practicable.

e. Maintain with their supervisory team a complete record of all supervisory meetings, including dates, times, agenda/points of discussion and agreed actions, which must be submitted annually to the Annual Monitoring Review by the student. A template 'Doctoral Student Supervision Record' form (RD2SSM) is available to download from the University's Research Degrees website.

f. Ensure that they are meeting their registration mode obligations for average weekly engagement with their doctoral studies:
   o Full-time 35 hours *
   o Part-time 17.5 hours ‡

g. Regularly review their development needs with their DoS, respond to supervisory guidance and advice and pro-actively seek supervisory comment to support their development towards independence in the research process.

h. Frequently submit their work for supervisory review and, especially at key monitoring stages ensure, on the advice of their supervisory team, that work is submitted in reasonable time for supervisory feedback to be received and acted upon. Also that they prepare in good time to meet all the reporting requirements of each monitoring milestone.
   o Annual monitoring progress report (see Guidance note #7)
   o Transfer (to PhD) (see Guidance note #8)
   o Viva (see Guidance note #10): Recognize the supervisor's role is to offer constructive advice on academic content and general presentation of work. It is the student's responsibility to proof-read their own work, the supervisors are not expected to provide detailed correction of written English.

4. Respect the contribution and intellectual property rights of their supervisors and other collaborative relationships in external outputs.

5. Recognise the supervisor's role is to offer constructive advice on academic content and general presentation of work. It is the student's responsibility to proof-read their own work, the supervisors are not expected to provide detailed correction of written English.

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* A full-time student may undertake a small amount of paid work compatible with the student's full-time studies, with the expectation that the total demand on the student's time is no more than 6 hours per week (see also the University's Regulations for Postgraduate Research Students).

‡ Students registered as part-time are responsible for managing the demands of the doctoral programme alongside any employment or other commitment, such that they are able to devote an average of 17.5 hours per week to their studies. Members of the University staff who wish to register for a research degree in the part-time mode may wish to discuss how they will devote an average of 17.5 hours per week to the research with their line manager, Dean of School or Director of Service

6. Actively engage, guided by their supervisory team, with current developments and debates within their own and wider disciplinary contexts through publication, external and internal events such as discipline specific conferences, symposia, seminars and workshops, and participate fully in the research culture of Solent's Faculties, Schools and the Solent doctoral student community.

7. Ensure that communication and interaction with their supervisory team is conducted in a professional manner and in the spirit of mutual respect.

8. Pro-actively address issues or problems that arise which may affect the progress of their research with their DoS in the first instance, and make formal application for approval of periods of suspension or extension as appropriate. Doctoral Students who do not wish to share sensitive information with their DoS can also seek confidential support from the University's Support Services through the Student Hub. Doctoral students may also raise general issues pertaining to resources or facilities affecting the progress of doctoral students to the Doctoral Coordinator, or through their doctoral student representative for consideration by the Research Degrees Committee.

9. Decide when to submit their thesis for examination, taking into account the opinion of their supervisory team. The opinion of the supervisors at this stage is advisory and doctoral students should note that their agreement to submission cannot be taken as a guarantee of success.

10. Submit their thesis for examination within the expected period of registration (3 years for full-time, 6 years for part-time), and meeting all submission requirements laid out in the regulations and guidance documents. Doctoral students submitting practice based projects must submit any relevant documentation and arrange to exhibit or perform their work at the convenience of the examiners.

11. Inform their supervisors or other individuals with whom their work is being discussed of any conflict of interest, for example in relation to joint publications, so this may be taken into account when examiners are recommended for appointment.

1.5 Graduate School Administration

1. The Graduate School is based in the Research, Office and liaises with Doctoral Coordinators, Supervisory Teams, Doctoral Students and the University's Professional Services, including Student Registry, the Income office and the Student Experience team, to provide procedural support at all stages of the doctoral student journey.

2. The Graduate School Administration will:
   a. Provide advice on the University regulations for doctoral research students

b. Process doctoral student applications, facilitate admissions and registration in liaison with the Faculty or School Doctoral Coordinators, University Admissions team and Student Registry.

c. Process forms relating to:
   o Instruction to Offer (RD1ITO) (see Guidance note #4)
   o Supervision team approval (RD1S) (see Guidance note #4)
   o Change of registration mode (RD4MS) (see Guidance note #5)
   o Change of supervisory teams (RD4S) (see Guidance note #5)
   o Transfer registration to writing up status (RD2WU) (see Guidance note #5 & #9)
   o Suspend studies (RD4SU) (see Guidance note #5)
   o Exceptionally extend studies beyond the maximum registration period (RD4E), (see Guidance note #5) or
   o Withdraw a student from their registration (RD4WD) (see Guidance note #5)
   o Request for training & development allowance (RD3TD (see Guidance note #6)

d. Process the forms and procedural elements of the doctoral student milestones
   o Annual Monitoring (RD2AMIR & RD2AMPR) (see Guidance note #7)
   o Transfer (RD2T) (see Guidance note #8)
   o Viva (RD5E, RD5DEC, RD5M/RD5P, RD5I, RD5DEX/RD5R-DEX, RD5DEX-P) (see Guidance note #10)

e. Maintain up-to-date student records and produce statistical and monitoring data to inform Doctoral Review Panels and the Research Degrees Committee in liaison with the Doctoral Coordinators.

f. Support the Doctoral Coordinators to make arrangements for Annual Monitoring reviews, Transfer and Viva information.

g. Coordinate the Doctoral Student induction events, and support dissemination of information about training and development opportunities to doctoral students.

h. Ensure that communication and interaction with students, supervisory teams and doctoral coordinators is conducted in a professional manner and in the spirit of mutual respect.

1.6 Doctoral Review Panel

1. The five Doctoral Review Panels are comprised of subject experts and senior academics with supervisory experience. Doctoral Review panels are chaired by the Faculty or School Doctoral Coordinators. Formal panel meetings are held in June, with Annual Monitoring outcomes for Doctoral students decided in the latter.

2. Further meetings as a group or in sub-groups, either in person or virtually, will be arranged to consider student applications and outcomes of monitoring exercises. Members may be asked to contribute, where appropriate to panels for Transfer or Viva examinations in the role of internal examiner or independent chair where they have relevant experience and have undertaken the appropriate training. The Doctoral Coordinator may elect to co-opt other academics with relevant experience to contribute to the panels and student reviews as appropriate.

3. The Doctoral Review Panels will meet, either in personal or virtually, in good time prior to the Research Degrees Committee (RDC) to consider, at appropriate points in the annual cycle, student data, student feedback, analysis of progression and attainment rates and external examiner reports to identify issues relating to doctoral student provision and experience for reporting to the RDC.

1.7. Establishing the Supervisory Relationship

1. It is recommended that doctoral students meet with their supervisory team as early as possible after induction to establish a mutual set of expectations. Discussion of roles and responsibilities should be recorded in an agreed set of expectations in the doctoral student meeting record that can be referred to and reviewed over the period of registration. (A template 'Doctoral Student Supervision Record' can be accessed on the Graduate School SOL Page)

2. Items to consider may include:
   a. **Definition of roles within the team**: Who is responsible for what and when?
   b. **Student meeting record**: Establish that the student will maintain and update the student meeting record, obtain sign off by all those party to the meeting, and circulate to the whole team.
   c. **Principles for supervisory meetings should include:**
      o **Frequency of meetings**: Has a meeting schedule been agreed that is achievable by both student and supervisors, and does it meet the minimum frequency requirements of the University regulations?
      o **Time of meetings**: Doctoral studies are an independent programme of study and it is expected that a doctoral student will proactively request supervisory meetings and engage with their supervisory team's requests for meetings. Arrange meetings at mutually convenient times and with consideration for sufficient time for the provision of supervisory feedback on students' previously submitted work
   d. **Setting the tone**: Has a mutual expectation been established for supervisory meetings to be conducted in a spirit of supportive and constructive criticism by supervisors and measured and reflective response by students.
   e. **Remaining in contact**: How will you stay in touch between meetings?
   f. **Losing contact**: It is the responsibility of a student to ensure that they make every and ongoing efforts to maintain contact with their supervisors.

   Students who remain out of contact with the University for more than 60 days may be subject to withdrawal of their registration under the regulations for postgraduate students.

1.8. Composition of supervisory teams

1. The regulations governing the constitution and approval of supervisory teams are laid out in the University's Regulations for Postgraduate Research Students (see also Guidance note #2: The Supervisory Team).

2. Supervisory teams should comprise of two to three supervisors, one of whom will be the designated DoS. Supervisors will hold a PhD or be an experienced and active researcher with a track record of public output and/or previous doctoral completions. The supervisory team will include broad disciplinary experience and relevant, recent subject specific expertise.

3. Supervisory teams should have experience of at least one successful supervision to coompletion at the UK doctoral level or equivalent international qualification. Staff new to supervision are required to undertake the University's PhD supervision training prior to, or within 6 months of, starting to supervise and thereafter biennially. All supervisors are required to be active in terms of their continuing professional development and to regularly refresh their supervisory and regulatory training.

4. Normally all supervisors will be members of the University's staff. Exceptionally, where there is a strong rationale for doing so, appointment of an external supervisor may be made, for instance where a supervisor leaves the University at a point where the student is near to completion and/or it would disadvantage the student, a supervisor may be asked to continue as an external supervisor.

5. In addition to the supervisory team, an advisor or advisors may be proposed to contribute some specialised knowledge or a link with an external organisation, either for a part or the whole of the student's registration as deemed appropriate.

6. Approval of a supervision team is granted by the Chair/Deputy Chair of RDC.

2. Research degree admissions

The admissions process

The timeline for accepting and processing of PhD applications is outlined in the table below. For further information relating to the admissions process please refer to Guidance Note #4 in the Doctoral Student Handbook and Guidance Notes (link to document).

PhD Application Process / Pipeline / Deadlines				
Application Deadline	Team Responsible	Actions	Deadline	Outcome
October Start Second Friday of May	Central Admissions	Ensure all relevant paperwork has been completed and forward to the Graduate School Office To be completed within 5 working days		All relevant documentation received by Graduate School Office Note: All incomplete applications will automatically be shifted to the following entry point – administered by Central Admissions
	Graduate School Office	Applications to be distributed to relevant Faculties To be completed within 5 working days		All relevant documentation received by respective Faculty
	Faculty	Send applications out for review from scrutiny panel members or other academic staff member/s with relevant expertise To be completed within 20 working days		1. Application Declined: Graduate School Office informed of decision with feedback stating why the application was rejected 2. Application Accepted: Progress applicant to interview
	Graduate School Office	Notify Central Admissions of the application being rejected with all related feedback provided by the respective Faculty		Central Admissions informed of application review outcome and feedback about application being rejected

		To be completed within 5 working days		
	Central Admissions	Notify applicant of outcome		Central Admissions issue a letter to notify the Applicant of the outcome
	Faculty	Interview to be arranged and conducted To be completed within 15 working days		Graduate School Office informed of the post Interview outcome: 1. Applicant declined With feedback stating why the application was rejected. 2. Applicant accepted
	Graduate School Office	Processing of Applicant interview outcome To be completed within 5 working days		Central Admissions informed of outcome.

3. Registration periods and outcomes

The registration periods during which a doctoral student will normally submit their thesis for final examination are as follows:

MPhil	Minimum	Standard
Full-time	18 months	24 months
Part-time	36 months	48 months
MPhil/PhD	**Minimum**	**Standard**
Full-time	24 months	36 months
Part-time	48 months	72 months
PhD by prior publication (University staff only)	**Minimum**	**Standard**
Part-time	6 months	12 months

For further information relating to enrolment, registration and induction please refer to the Guidance Note #5 in the Doctoral Student Handbook and Guidance Notes (link to document).

4. Monitoring and Key Milestones

Annual Monitoring

1. The submission of Annual Monitoring progress reviews. This involves:
    a. This progress review covers the previous 12 month period.
    b. The doctoral student is required to complete the online annual monitoring form (accessible on the Graduate School SOL page) – Parts A and B.
    c. Once the doctoral student has completed their sections of the report, it is then sent to the Director of Studies (DoS) to complete Part C.
    d. Once all sections of the report have been completed and signed by both the doctoral student and DoS, the report must be submitted to the Graduate School for dissemination to the respective Faculty or School Doctoral Coordinators.
    e. Annual monitoring reports are reviewed by the respective Faculty or School Doctoral Panel. Outcomes of this review and all agreed actions are then communicated to the doctoral student and DoS by the Graduate School
2. For more information relating to Annual Monitoring please refer to Guidance Note….. in the Doctoral Student Handbook and Guidance Notes

Transfer and Final VIVA

1. The submission of a thesis for examination is at the sole discretion of the student, subject to satisfying the conditions of eligibility required by the regulations for postgraduate research students.

2. While a student would be unwise to submit the thesis for examination against the advice of their supervisors, it is their right to do so. Equally, students should not assume that a supervisor's agreement to the submission of a thesis guarantees the award of the degree.

3. A student must ensure that the thesis is submitted to Doctoral Student Administration before the expiry of their registration period. Students with exceptional circumstances must complete an application to extend this period prior to the expiry of their registration period (see Guidance note #5).

For more information relating to thesis submission and examination please refer to Guidance Note #10 in the Doctoral Student Handbook and Guidance Notes (link to document).

5. Guidance Notes:

Reference Guidance Notes:

1. Forms directory
2. Institutional Arrangements & Key Principles – (Guidance Note #1)
3. Roles and Responsibilities and coordinating the supervisory relationship - (Guidance Note #2)
4. Good Research Practice - (Guidance Note #3)
5. Admissions - (Guidance Note #4)
6. Registration and Changes to Circumstances - (Guidance Note #5)
7. Tuition Fees, Student Funding and Training and Development Support - (Guidance Note #6)
8. Annual Monitoring - (Guidance Note #7)
9. Transfer - (Guidance Note #8)
10. Writing Up - (Guidance Note #9)
11. Theses Submission & Examination (Viva) - (Guidance Note #10)
12. Misconduct, appeals and Complaints - (Guidance Note #11)
13. Tier 4 Visa - (Guidance Note #12)
14. PhD by Prior Publication - (Guidance Note #13)
15. Bursary Awards - (Guidance Note #14)
16. Related documents, useful websites & further reading
17. Useful contacts