

# Writing your application for the UKCGE Research Supervisor Recognition Programme

Stan Taylor



UK Council for  
Graduate Education

# STAN TAYLOR

- **Honorary Professor of the School of Education at Durham University;**
- **Long standing interest in doctoral education;**
- **Number of publications in the field including (with Margaret Kiley and Robin Humphrey) (2018) A Handbook for Doctoral Supervisors (London, Routledge);**
- **Chair of the Research Supervisors' Network, UK Council for Graduate Education;**
- **Author on behalf of the UKCGE of the Good Supervisory Practice Framework.**

# HISTORICALLY...

- **Historically, doctoral supervision was an adjunct of the research function of academics – as Rudd (1985:79-80) put the matter “...if one can do research, then one can presumably supervise it.”**
- **It was underpinned by ‘master-apprentice’ model with doctoral supervisors as experts passively transmitting expertise to novices who observed and hopefully emulated.**

(Manathunga and Goozee 2007: 309)

	Humboldtian	Process	Modern Doctorate
<b>Formalisation</b>			
Student-Supervisor relationships	Master-Apprentice	Commodification	Producer-Consumer
Duration of studies	As long as it takes	McDonaldisation	Four years
Supervisory context	Unregulated	Interpolation	Regulated
Supervision arrangements	Single Supervisor	Collectivisation	Supervisory team
Institutional context	Unstructured	Structuration	Structured
<b>Diversification of candidate population</b>			
Numbers	Few	Massification	Many
National composition	Home	Internationalisation	Multi-national
Academic and social composition	Elite	Diversification	Mixed
Responsibility for wellbeing	Candidate	Obligation	Institution
<b>Diversification of modes of study</b>			
Mode of study	Full-time	Casualisation	Full and part-time
Place of study	On campus	Dislocation	On and off campus
<b>Diversification of purposes of study</b>			
Scope	Single discipline	Cross-fertilisation	Multi-disciplinary
Awards	PhD by research	Proliferation	Multiple types
Occupation	Academic reproduction	Capitalisation	Human capital production for the knowledge economy

**Updated from:  
Taylor, S. (2012)**  
Changes in doctoral education: Implication for supervisors in developing early career researchers.  
*International Journal of Researcher Development*, 3(2)1-22

# SO NOW...

What once seemed a relatively simple role that could be learned experientially... a role that was played out within a 'secret garden' or 'private space' has now become a **highly complex** set of roles which must be **learned quickly** and then played out within a **multi-featured landscape** and moulded by a **variety of influential stakeholders**.

Griffith and Warren (2016: 167)

# RECOGNISED BY SUPERVISORS THEMSELVES WHO AS HALSE AND MALFOY (2010: 80) FOUND

...testified to the changes in their work. They described doctoral supervision between the 1970s and the 1990s as an intellectual and social enterprise, where personal boundaries were sometimes blurred but the roles of supervisors and students were clear: the supervisor provided oversight and guidance; the doctoral student was responsible for producing a seminal thesis that would secure his or her place as an authority within the field... *all* supervisors... conceptualised their **current work** with doctoral students as **significantly different** from their former experiences.

# RECOGNISED BY SUPERVISORS THEMSELVES WHO...

They spoke of **actively fashioning students' development** to address deficits in expertise; deliberately **intervening to ensure timely completion**; purposeful provision of **tutoring or research assistance** to minimise the risk of financial distress and withdrawal; and the deployment of personal networks to **facilitate completion** and **ensure post-graduation employment**.

Halse and Malfoy (2010: 80)

# BUT INCREASING COMPLEXITY OF DOCTORAL SUPERVISION NOT NECESSARILY RECOGNISED BY INSTITUTIONS...

Can be seen as a 'labour of love' and not always recognised as a complex and demanding area of academic practice



# LACK OF SUPPORT AND APPRECIATION CAN BE DISPIRITING...

I'm drowning in doctoral students and their dissertations. I have so many that I have a hard time keeping count, and the university doesn't count them in my workload... So the not being recognized element really hits home.

Private e-mail, 24<sup>th</sup> May 2019

# UKCGE RESPONSES



**2016:** Joined with the Times Higher to create the world's first national award for outstanding research supervision (attracting more applicants than any other THE award).



**2017:** Created the Research Supervisors Network which offers a range of resources and opportunities for professional development.



RESEARCH  
SUPERVISION  
RECOGNITION  
PROGRAMME

UK Council for Graduate Education

# AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE WEBINAR

**The aim is to support you to write your application for recognition; the objectives are to:**

- **Briefly outline the criteria for recognition and the process;**
- **Suggest the sort of evidence which might be included in your application;**
- **Consider some points to bear in mind in completing your application.**

# THE CRITERIA FOR RECOGNITION

- **These are set out in the UKCGE Good Supervisory Practice Framework;**
- **The Framework was designed, piloted, and approved by the sector;**
- **It sets out good practice in the 10 domains of:**

# GOOD SUPERVISORY PRACTICE DOMAINS

- 1. Recruitment and selection**
- 2. Supervisory relationships with students**
- 3. Supervisory relationships with co- supervisors**
- 4. Supporting the research project**
- 5. Encouraging writing and giving feedback**
- 6. Keeping the research on track and monitoring progress**
- 7. Personal and professional support for the candidate**
- 8. Completion and examination**
- 9. Dissemination**
- 10. Reflective practice**

# PROCESS FOR APPLICATION

- **You need to write a reflective account of your practice normally addressing each of the 10 headings and giving at least two examples (maximum of 5000 words);**
- **For purposes of authentication, you will need two references, one from a colleague who knows about your practice and one from a former candidate;**
- **The account and references should be submitted electronically to the UKCGE, along with the £75 fee (which may be payable by your institution);**

# PROCESS FOR APPLICATION (CONT.)

- **Reflective accounts will be read by two reviewers from other institutions who are familiar both with research supervision and with the Framework;**
- **They will judge whether criteria have been met or whether further work is needed and recommend acceptance or referral;**
- **In cases of disagreement, the application will be sent to a third reviewer whose decision is final;**
- **All applicants will receive constructive feedback;**



# PROCESS FOR APPLICATION (CONT.)

- **If the recommendation is referral, you will be invited to re-submit once without further charge;**
- **If the recommendation is acceptance, you will become a UKCGE-Recognised Research Supervisor.**

# COMPLETING YOUR APPLICATION - INTRODUCTION

- **Your educational background;**
- **Your institutional affiliation and discipline;**
- **The number of research students you have supervised and in what capacities (principal or second supervisor);**
- **The number who have completed, how long they took, and how far they were successful;**
- **Any other relevant information, e.g. if your candidates were international and/or part-time;**
- **Where appropriate, your experience as an examiner of research degrees.**

# COMPLETING YOUR APPLICATION – SECTIONS ON DOMAINS

1. **Recruitment and selection**
2. **Supervisory relationships with students**
3. **Supervisory relationships with co- supervisors**
4. **Supporting the research project**
5. **Encouraging writing and giving feedback**
6. **Keeping the research on track and monitoring progress**
7. **Personal and professional support for the candidate**
8. **Completion and examination**
9. **Dissemination**
10. **Reflective practice**

# RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

- Recruitment activities, including reaching out to diverse candidate populations;
- Selection from supporting the development of applications through to final feedback.

## 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.

# RELATIONSHIPS WITH CANDIDATES

- Aware of the increased diversity of the candidate population and the implications for forming effective relationships;
- Discussing and negotiating expectations;
- Aligning supervisory styles and candidate needs;
- Monitoring the effectiveness of the relationship over the course of the candidacy;
- Understanding of issues which can emerge in relationships and strategies and support for dealing with them.

## 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.

# RELATIONSHIPS WITH CO-SUPERVISORS

- Awareness of advantages of team supervision;
- Awareness of issues that can arise in team supervision;
- Knowledge and understanding of strategies to maximise the benefits and minimise the issues.

## 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.

# SUPPORTING CANDIDATES' RESEARCH PROJECTS

- Inducting candidates into research;
- Advising them about the research project and how to go about undertaking it;
- Advising on the skills needed to successfully complete the project;
- Advising on issues arising in the course of the research.

## 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.

# ENCOURAGING CANDIDATES TO WRITE AND GIVING APPROPRIATE FEEDBACK

- Supporting candidates to write throughout their studies;
- Supporting the development of academic writing;
- Giving effective feedback.

## Typical Examples

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



# SUPPORTING CANDIDATES' PERSONAL, PROFESSIONAL AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

- Supporting candidates to cope with personal issues;
- Supporting their professional development;
- Supporting their career development.

## 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.

# SUPPORTING PROGRESS AND MONITORING PROGRESSION

- Recognising the need for candidates to complete within 3-4 years;
- Supporting timely completion

## Typical Examples

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

# SUPPORTING CANDIDATES THROUGH COMPLETION AND FINAL EXAMINATION

- Supporting completion of the thesis;
- Advising on submission;
- Advising on examiners and examination;
- Supporting candidates in examination.

## 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.

# SUPPORTING CANDIDATES TO DISSEMINATE THEIR RESEARCH

- Outcomes of doctoral research are often left ‘... like John Brown to lie mouldering in their literary graves’ (Walker et al 2008: 79)
- Vital that they are made available to the disciplinary and/or professional community.

## 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.

# REFLECTING UPON AND ENHANCING PRACTICE

- Evaluate practice to build on strengths and address weaknesses;
- Undertake appropriate professional development;
- Disseminate good practice.

## 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.

# POINTS TO BEAR IN MIND

- **You should include evidence relating to all of the domains or, if not, offer an explanation (e.g. in some institutions supervisors are not involved in selection);**
- **Your examples should be modern and drawn from your recent practice – while it is acceptable to cite examples from the past if they are crucial to your development as a supervisor, if all are ancient history, reviewers may ask for current examples to justify your claim;**

# POINTS TO BEAR IN MIND (cont.)

- **Your application must be personal and relate to you and your practice, and only to what goes on in the institution is so far as necessary to understand the context;**
- **Your application should be reflective rather than descriptive and, as well as narrative, outline ‘why did I do it?’, ‘how did I do it?’, ‘how did I evaluate it?’, ‘did it work?’ and ‘what did I change then or would change in future?’**

# POINTS TO BEAR IN MIND (CONT.)

- **You must show engagement with research, scholarship and/or professional practice, for example through citing relevant publications and/or presentations, the incorporation of research, scholarship and/or professional practice into your supervision, or links with professional bodies/wider communities;**
- **You must demonstrate a real and practical commitment to reflection on your supervision and the development of yourself and/or others as supervisors.**



# IN SUMMARY, YOUR APPLICATION NEEDS TO:

- **I**nclude all of the domains or if not offer an explanation;
- **M**odern in terms of up to date evidence;
- **P**ersonal to you and your supervisory practice;
- **R**eflective rather than descriptive
- **E**xample-based rather than formal role-based;
- **S**cholarly in showing how your practice is underpinned by scholarship and research in supervision;
- **S**ystematic in showing that you habitually seek to develop your expertise in supervision rather than leave it to chance.

**To find out more about applying, go to:**

<https://supervision.ukcge.ac.uk/about-rsrp/how-to-apply-for-recognition/>

# THANK YOU

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