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Postgraduate Supervision Booklet: A step-by-step Guide

Version 1.0: last revised 7 July 2020

All the materials in this booklet are drawn from the School of Public Health and Family Medicine Supervision Workshops, supported by the UCT Research Office and the School of Public Health and Family Medicine Postgraduate teaching committee. The slides and content have been included with permission. We acknowledge the following people for their contributions to this booklet: Maylene Shung King, Jill Olivier, Dheshnie Keswell, Liza Smith, Susan Cleary, Adri Winkler, Tammy Phillips, Carmen de Koker.

This document does not replace formal university communication or policies.
It aims to be a practical guide to postgraduate supervisors in the School and will be updated periodically. Feedback and suggestions can be directed to Carmen De Koker (Carmen.Dekoker@uct.ac.za) and Tammy Phillips (Tammy.Phillips@uct.ac.za)

Contents

1. Introduction and Purpose

Supervision is an essential part of academia. It concerns the integral relationship between students and their supervisors, usually with the end-point of producing a thesis, in a variety of formats, that will enable the student to fulfil all the requirements of their chosen degree. Most staff, whether in a full-time or part-time, research or lecturing position, will find themselves having to supervise students in this capacity, either by choice or by the expected duties outlined by their posts. Ideally it should be a pursuit that everyone looks forward to and that brings great fulfilment. Whilst there are very many students who require support and mentoring during their student journey, this booklet focuses on thesis supervision for the programmes that require this.

Despite the importance of supervision, aspirant and inexperienced supervisors are seldom orientated to the journey of supervision. This booklet aims to provide some guidance to those who are unfamiliar with the requirements of supervision in the SPHFM and even for those who are, it may help to refresh or confirm, the different aspects of the supervisory journey.

Supervision has multiple dimensions to it. There are the cognitive elements, where supervisors and students need to work together to conceptualise and analyse the content and methodology of the chosen topic. Then there are the administrative requirements of the various processes, invariably punctuated by numerous forms that must be filled in and submitted by the given deadlines. Then there are a variety of people in the system that supervisor and student need to build relationships with, as they navigate the requirements of the particular degree-programme. Most importantly, there is the strongly relational aspect where supervisor and student and programme administrators start on a journey together, that may take a year or two in the case of the Masters in Public Health, or four or more years in the case of the doctoral and MMed programmes. Building and nurturing these relationships is a core part of what supervision is all about and is simultaneously the most interesting and the most challenging requirement that supervisors, students and administrators) have to contend with.

Supervision in the School

In the SPHFM the majority of supervisory responsibility occurs at a postgraduate level. The School has approximately 600 postgraduate students every year. A large number of students are in Postgraduate Diploma programmes, where formal thesis supervision is not required. The programmes where a formal thesis component is required include: The Masters of Public Health (by far the largest number of students who require thesis supervision); a variety of Masters in Medicine (MMed) programmes; MPhil programmes and a growing doctoral programme, where the supervision journey can take anything from

3 to 5 years or longer. Getting students to graduate from these programmes, long after the course work is done, is dependent on the successful throughput of the thesis component.

Depending on the programme, students may be physically present in the School throughout their thesis journey or may be in another part of South Africa or another country, requiring supervision to occur via the variety of electronic technologies that are available.

Supervision requirements in the SPHFM therefore varies across programmes and supervisors often have to straddle the different requirements as they supervise students across multiple programmes.

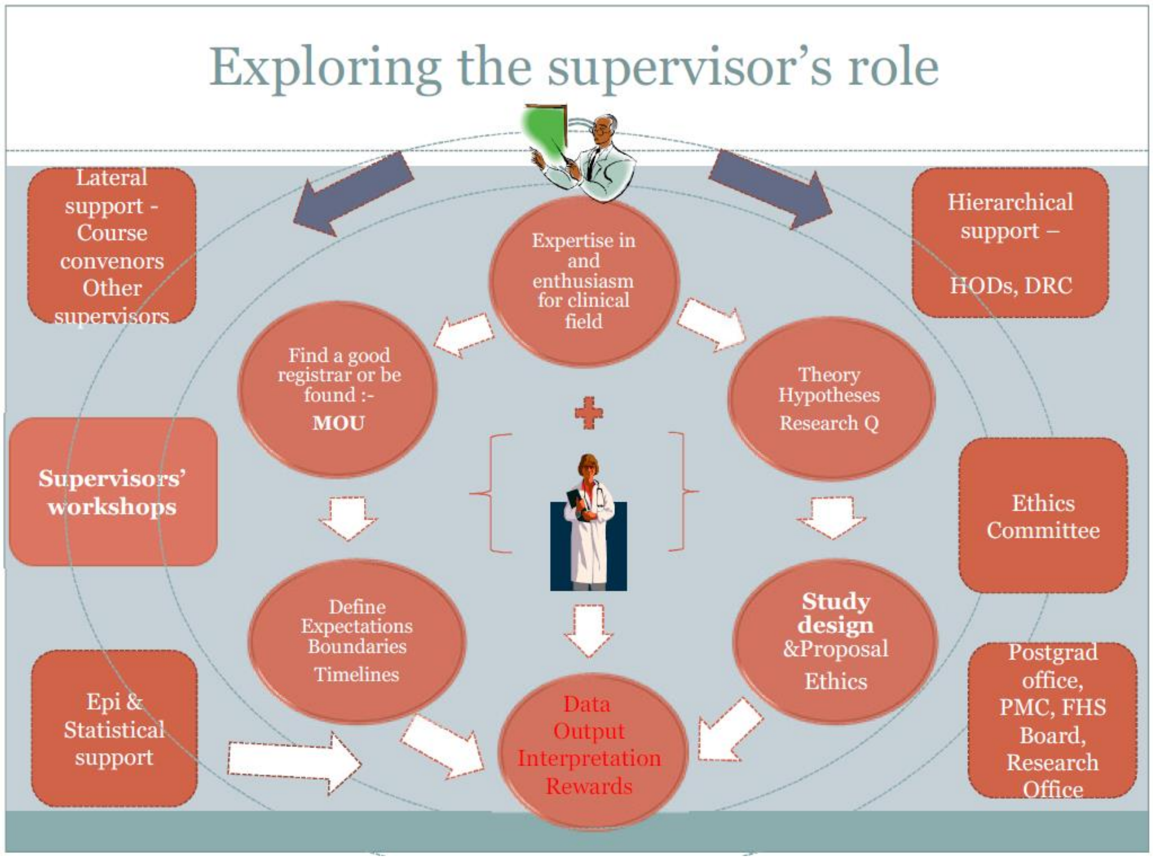
This booklet attempts to provide the basic requirements for a supervisor as they start out on their journey, but some aspects can only be learnt from the mentoring of experienced supervisors and administrators, and through 'learning by doing'. As there are slightly different administrative requirements for each programme, this version of the booklet mainly focuses on the MPH programme, as the programme with the largest numbers of student who require supervision. With time, other programmes will be added. Having said this, there are many generic aspects to supervision in the booklet that will be of value across programmes. The booklet is also not cast in stone and the content will be upgraded, changed and strengthened over time. Providing feedback on how to strengthen the booklet will help to keep it a 'living resource, responsive to the needs of those who use it'.

2. Becoming a Supervisor

The first step in this journey concerns our transitioning from a researcher/lecturer to becoming a supervisor. For some it may be your very first encounter with having to supervise a student towards completing their thesis, whilst for others it may mean transitioning form supervising at a Masters level to a PhD level.

The next set of slides highlight a few key issues to consider when 'becoming a supervisor' for the first time.

The slide below highlights the man dimensions of a supervisor's role.



Benefits to you for becoming a supervisor

- Increases your capacity as a researcher, leader and supervisor
- A great addition to your CV – supervision of a successful candidate is a credit to you
- Potential for publication
- Can pass on a hands-on aspect of your work to a student, freeing up some of your time
- Improves your ability to become a Principle Investigator
- Be a research role-model

Roles and responsibilities of different team members

The roles and responsibilities of the different members of the supervisory team are outlined next. In some instances, you may be the only supervisor, whilst in others you may be the primary supervisor working with one or more co-supervisors; or you may be one of the co-supervisors, led by another primary supervisor.

It is ideal to first be a co-supervisor and work with an experienced primary supervisor, who can mentor you, for your first students. Then, with the support of your mentoring supervisor, you transition to primary supervisor. It can also work, if you have an experienced supervisor on deck, to play a primary supervisory role from the outset.

The summary table below gives you an idea of what the respective roles and responsibilities are for the supervisors and the student.

Roles & Responsibilities

SUPERVISOR	CO-SUPERVISOR	STUDENT
Guide student through Research project	Works with supervisor to meet research needs	Commit to research
Assist in meeting timelines	May be more hands-on	Develop a research plan
Ensure project funding and infrastructure	Feedback on project results and writing	Adhere to timelines and deadlines
Develop research skills	Assist with administrative tasks	Provide results for feedback
Constructive feedback		Develop research skills
Promote development		Research outputs
Assist with administrative tasks		

Responsibilities of the supervisor

- **To guide and inspire** her or his students to reach their full scholarly potential
- To ensure that each student is in **compliance with the rules and regulations** of the University
- To promote conditions conducive to a student's research and intellectual growth
- To provide appropriate guidance on the progress of the research and the standards expected.

- To guide the student in **the selection and planning** of an original research
- Establishing a **realistic timetable** with the student
- **Being accessible** to give advice and provide feedback.
- Making arrangements to **ensure continuity of supervision during leave** or an extended period of absence.
- **Encouraging participation** in departmental seminars and colloquia.
- Encouraging and assisting students to attend and present work at local, national or international conferences
- **To publish their work** in appropriate journals
- Ensuring that the research environment is safe, equitable and free from harassment and discrimination.

These aspects form the core of the supervisor's commitment in the MOU with the student.

Supervisor versus UCT responsibilities

Next, it is important to familiarise yourself with what the student needs guidance on and where to find the help that the student may need. Remember that postgraduate students come from a wide variety of professional backgrounds and experiences, so some may need little additional skills development, whilst others may need significant support with writing, how to use university resources such as the library, finding literature and so forth.

The first step is to assess where the student is at and get a sense of the extent of support that they will need.

Does the prospective student know the basics?

- Academic writing/argumentation?
- Basic (re)searching?
- Referencing? Plagiarism?
- Software skills: e.g. Reference manager?

The next step is familiarising yourself as supervisor as to whether, when and where to refer the student to for additional support.

- It is important to know when to insist on additional support. This must be formally written into the MOU
- There are many avenues of support in the individual MPH Tracks, within the SPHFM, in the Faculty of Health Sciences and UCT generally

One example is the writing centre, both within the Faculty and in the broader university. They offer a range of seminars and one-on-one support to students.

> **TIP**: Familiarise yourself as much as possible with the resources that are available. It saves a lot of time for you as supervisor and some of these resources are also helpful to us as supervisors.

The box below outlines some of the useful websites that you can access. Note that these resources change periodically, and it is up to you as supervisor to make sure that you access the most updated version. It's a bit of a pain, but crucial, otherwise it prolongs the process if wrong/outdated forms are filled in.

HALF OF A SUCCESSFUL DEGREE IS "NAVIGATION"

KNOWING WHERE TO STEER YOUR STUDENTS

- **Thesis Forms:** http://www.publichealth.uct.ac.za/processes-and-forms-students-includes-links-required-forms
- **More Forms:** http://www.publichealth.uct.ac.za/phfm_postgraduate-teaching
- **Research ethics issues:** http://www.health.uct.ac.za/fhs/research/humanethics/forms
- **UCT PostGrad Funding Office:** (PGFO): https://www.uct.ac.za/apply/funding/postgraduate/applications/ UCT PGFO
- **Notice Board:** http://www.uct.ac.za/apply/funding/postgraduate/notice/
- **UCT PG Office HUB:** http://www.uct.ac.za/students/postgraduates/administration/
- **UCT PG Teaching info:** http://www.publichealth.uct.ac.za/phfm_postgraduate-teaching
- **UCT Directory:** http://whitepages.uct.ac.za/Name.aspx
- **UCT Forms generally:** http://www.forms.uct.ac.za/
- **UCT Directory:** http://whitepages.uct.ac.za/Name.aspx

- **CURRENT VERSIONS OF MOST FORMS NEED TO BE DOWNLOADED FROM THE 'HEALTH SCI PG' VULA SITE (managed by Adri)**

A model for success

Here is a "model" of how to navigate the supervision process, that may facilitate a good supervisory relationship with the students.

Skill 1: Attention

- Developing the ability to offer 'generative' attention
- Listening in a way that enables a creative spark & is respectful of the person speaking
- Listening without: Interruption
- Multitasking
- Thinking of how to respond or fix
- In short: listening in a way that allows the thinker to think for themselves!

Skill 2: Equality

- A sense of equality and respect is always present in groups that think and work well together
- Even in hierarchical relationships, we can treat each other as thinking equals
  - ➔ Everyone has the potential to have great ideas
  - ➔ Everyone benefits from having an opportunity to express their views
- Important given potential power dynamics in supervisory relationships (*implications for mentorship)

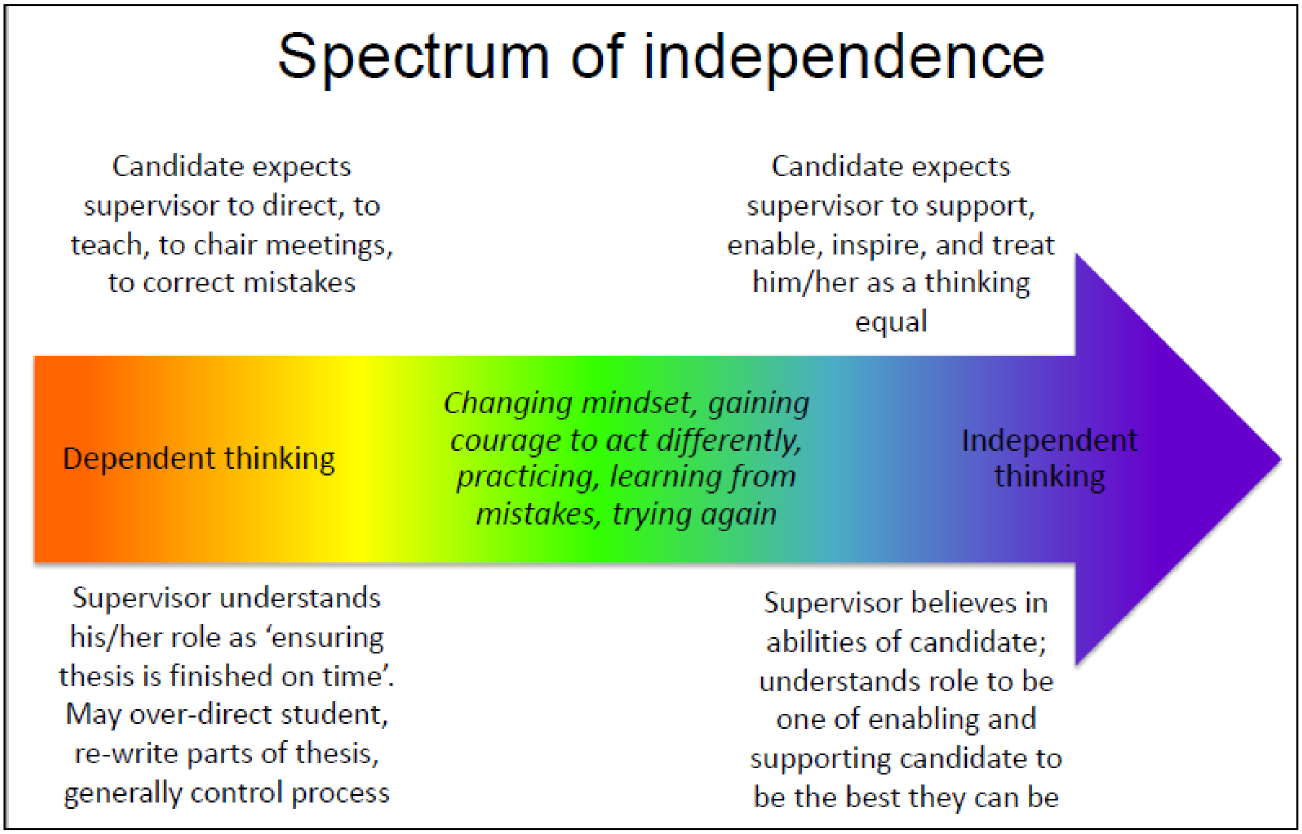
Skill 3: Balancing direction

- "M displays the right balance of direction in a project and letting someone discover and develop insights for themselves"
- "Supervisors who micromanage their students or have very specific ideas of how the science in a lab should be done can stifle the student"
- "His advice was almost always given in the form of suggestions…with hindsight I recognize this as a deliberate strategy designed to encourage independence of thought…M made me feel like his collaborator"

Skill 4: Encouragement

- In reading drafts, we may focus on what's wrong or missing (e.g. critiquing –even if constructively)
- Miss opportunities to celebrate the good parts
- Encouragement makes it safer to think independently

- “The first time a person comes up with a novel idea or experiment on their own. This should be an occasion for public recognition…as it is a milestone of great significance for most young scientists”



There is an important balance to strike between being over-prescriptive and almost ‘write’ the student’s thesis for them and encouraging independent thinking and working. It is ultimately up to us as supervisors to assess the capacity of the student and try and shift them as far as possible towards the blue side of the arrow, so that they emerge from UCT with good critical – and independent thinking skills.

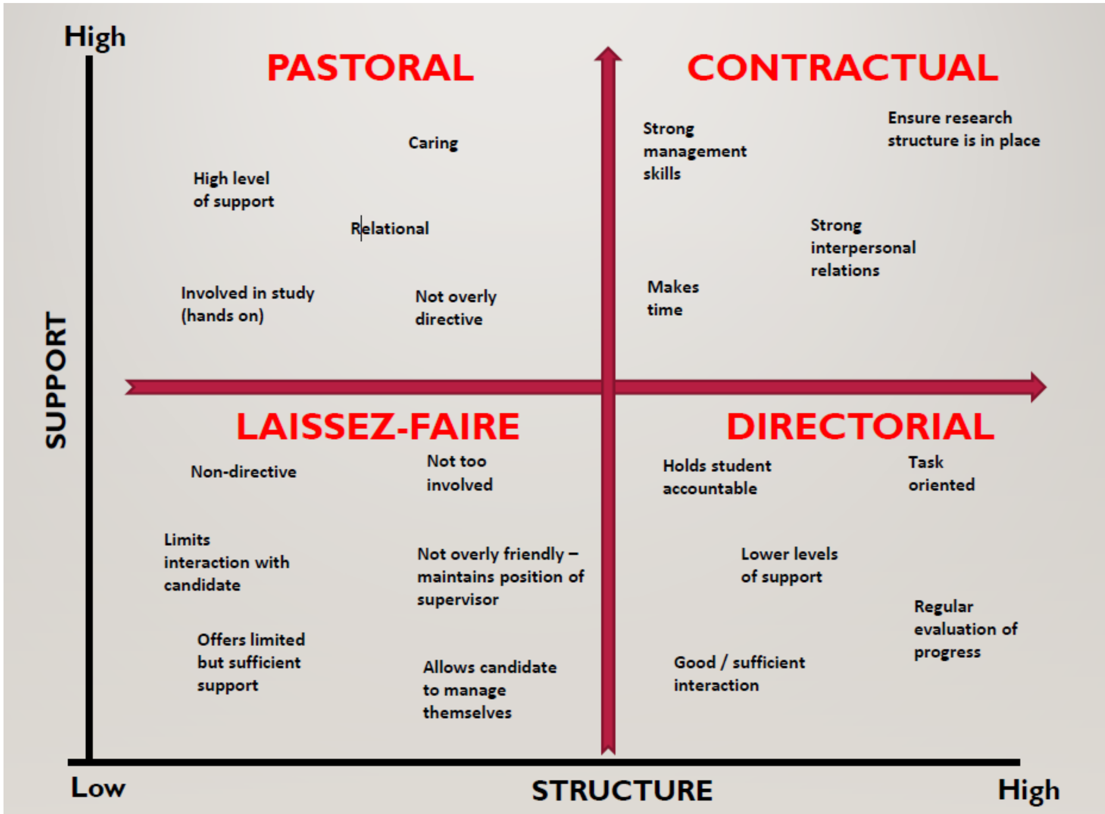
Through supervision you will:

- Provide superb attention
- Increasingly enable self-directed learning
- Provide ample encouragement and appreciation [e.g. constructive feedback]

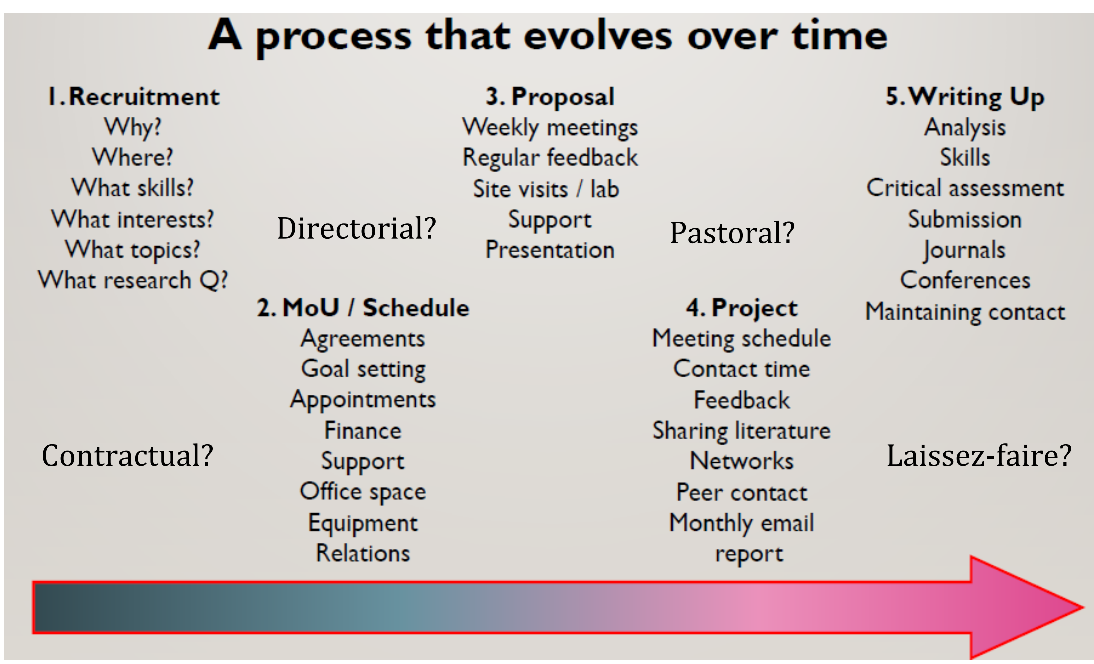
Supervisory styles

All supervisors have slightly different styles of supervising. One approach to thinking of this is summarised in the following slide. The supervision style often changes over the course of the supervision journey with a student in line with spectrum of independence.

The style may be more directed and contractual at the start of the process and move towards a more pastoral or laissez-fair approach towards the end of the journey. Alternatively, supervision styles may lie somewhere in between these approaches.



Reference: Gatfield, T. (2005), Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management Vol. 27, No. 3, November 2005, pp. 311–325



3. Step one: Identifying students

- This is a different process for the different tracks in the MPH
- Students may approach you if they are interested in your work or you may actively seek a student
- To start with, students should make an appointment to see potential supervisors.
    - Meeting a potential supervisor is an essential step in determining whether a faculty member would be a good fit for a student's area of interests and for learning about that faculty member's approach to work and study in general.
    - Such a meeting should provide an opportunity to find out significant information about a professor and her or his style.
    - Student and potential supervisor should understand that these initial conversations are not binding and may want to be clear about communicating whether or not the supervisor will take the student/whether the student has decided to join this supervisor.
- You may want to request a 1-2 page expression of interest outlining ideas, timelines, plans
- You will want to have a sense of:
    - The nature and scope of the project you have on offer
    - The student's methodological skills, conceptual and writing skills
    - The student's commitment to the project, reliability
    - Both your own, the project and the student's timelines
    - Availability of funding, bursary, etc
    - Any outside/personal factors that may have an impact
- If seeking a student for a project, useful to make an 'advert' (send to MPH administrator for MPH list, or to track specific lists)

EG - ADVERT

The roles of Health Committees in addressing the Social Determinants of Health in the Health System

Health Committees are structures established by the National Health Act to act as the voice of communities in relation to the Health System. However, the roles and functions of HCs are left to provinces to legislate. Their role as governance bodies or in addressing determinants of health that lie outside the health services is therefore poorly defined. A three year intervention has been developed in three Western Cape communities to build community activist skills to address social determinants in health through the Learning Network for Health and Human Rights. The project is Community Systems Strengthening (CSS) intervention funded by the European Union. This project requires a student to conduct qualitative evaluation of the success of the intervention through qualitative interviews with HC members, local community care workers and health professionals and managers working in local facilities in the three communities. The IDIs will explore experiences, perceptions, skills and attitudes regarding HC roles amongst these groups. Particular attention will be paid to perceptions of role encroachments by participants with different positions.

Contact: Leslie London at leslie.london@uct.ac.za

A bursary to cover the costs of the students' dissertation fees is available, payable in two instalments – the first on finalisation and acceptance of the proposal and the second on submission of the thesis. The student will work within a broader team. (TIMING AND CONDITIONS)

Exercises to do prior to starting supervision, taken from Good Practice in the Supervision and Mentoring of Postgraduate Students (Chiappetta-Swanson & Watt, McMaster University Centre for Leadership in Learning, 2011 p43)

Ten Questions to Ask BEFORE You Take on Graduate Student Supervision

1. In which areas do I have confidence to supervise?
2. Does my own research programme need postgraduates? For how many students are there topics of enough scope? How much time do I have available to supervise students?
3. What is my philosophy concerning higher degree studies? Do I feel responsible for all aspects of the students work and do I need to keep direction or control? Or do I feel that students should plan on their own and only come to me for advice?
4. What is the student's past record? Does it show signs of undue dependency? Or, is there an indication of an ability to work independently?
5. Does the student have the prerequisite knowledge to work in one of my areas of interest?
6. Does the student have theoretical and philosophical assumptions similar to my own? If not, will I be able to be "objective" in advising the student?
7. Does the student have appropriate research skills? If not, am I able to provide those skills?
8. Do I have the necessary knowledge to supervise the student in the area chosen?
9. Are my own research skills broad and up-to-date enough to supervise effectively?
10. Are adequate resources available?

If your answers to questions 1 to 10 have left you unsure of whether you should take on a candidate, discuss the implication with your head of Department/school and with the prospective postgraduate.

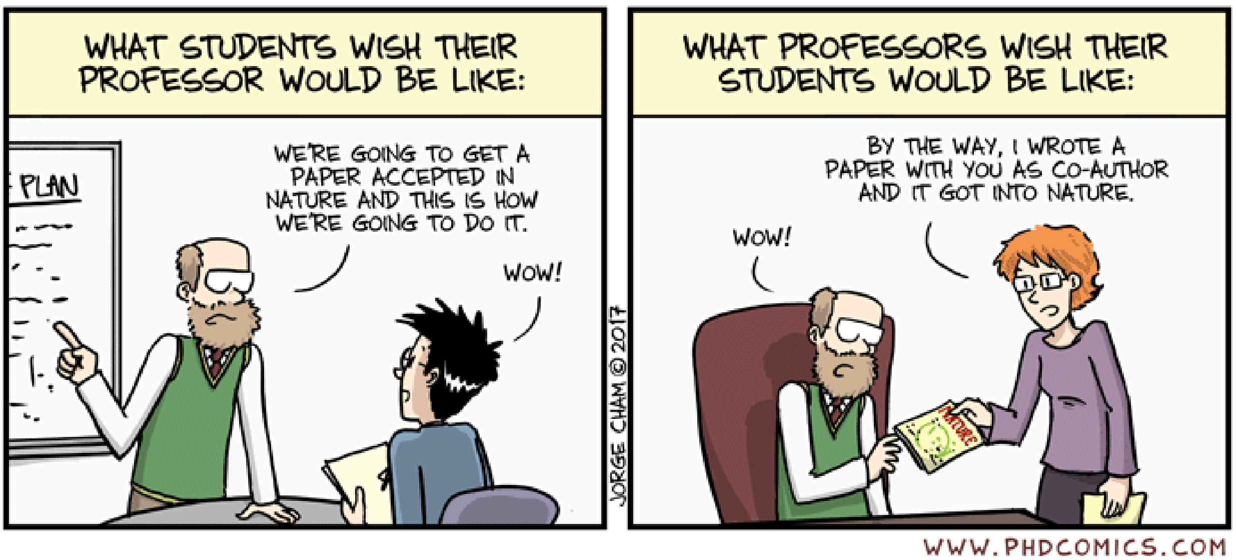
Adapted from: Nightingale, P. Advising PhD Candidates.
Milperra, NSW: HERDSA, 2005, pp. 6-7.

Forming a relationship

It is important to form a good working relationship early on. **Communication is key!** Remember you are developing a relationship with a potential colleague/collaborator.

At the start: Define roles and expectations
Discuss any obstacles, both professional and personal

During the journey: Hold up to agreed expectations
Address problems when they arise
Respect each other and each of your roles and responsibilities



Funding

- It's important to talk about funding at the outset.
- Does the student have funding? Are you offering funding?
- What are the opportunities for student funding?
    - PG Funding Office – has a list of scholarships and fellowships, travel bursaries (internal and external sources of funding) http://www.uct.ac.za/apply/funding/postgraduate/notice/
- Links to timelines – Master's students must be registered for the dissertation component for a minimum of one year. Failure to submit by the deadline (usually February) will mean re-registering for an additional year.
    - Particularly challenging for international students who pay additional fees

Registration

- Students must register at the PG office for their dissertation or by completing the ACA09 form and adding the dissertation if already registered for courses (http://www.forms.uct.ac.za/studentforms.htm)
- Get the student to think carefully about their timeline before registering to avoid re-registration where possible

Strictly speaking, you are not allowed to supervise a student who is not yet registered for their thesis. However, having discussions with prospective students and working out with them when best they should register, is part of the initial relationship-building phase.

Supervisor appointment

You and your co-supervisors must be appointed and approved by the HOD and the postgrad Deputy Dean on the ACA47b (abridged MOU). The student cannot register for the dissertation component without an appointed supervisor and the abridged MOU.

4. Role of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

An MOU is a ‘contract’ between the student and supervisor clearly detailing the responsibilities and realistic expectations of both parties.

The MOU is the first and most important form to be filled in after the supervisor nomination has been approved by your Head of Division or the School HOD. The MOU lays the foundation for the agreements between student and supervisor (s). Whilst many find it to be cumbersome and somewhat of an irritation, it plays a very important part in deciding on the nature of the relationship, the expectations, boundaries and practicalities of the relationship. This must be worked through as early as possible in the supervision journey and as per requirement, must be completed within 6 months of registration.

The MOU is FORM ACA47a and b. Check the School website to make sure that you have the correct and latest version at all times.

- MOU = Form ACA47b (abridged for first time dissertation registration) and ACA47a (full MOU required within 6 months of registration)
- The MOU applies only to masters and doctoral students who are registered for the dissertation component of their programmes.
- This is a very important document and it is imperative that the student and supervisor give it due attention.
- In this document you will be stipulating terms of your studentship.
    - Make sure that you cover everything, i.e. timelines, the scope of research, funding issues, frequency of meetings, attendance at conferences, and leave during the year, amongst others.
- Students who are doing a master’s programme by coursework and dissertation must submit the MOU within six months of first registration for the dissertation component of their programmes.
- Once completed and signed by all relevant parties, the MOU must be submitted to the Postgraduate Office for safe keeping. (You do not have to obtain the Dean’s signature; the Postgrad Admin will do this on your behalf).
- Ensure that you use the updated version of this document, as available on Vula/ the School website.

Timelines must be included in the MOU and reviewed regularly

INCLUDE TIMELINES:

1) Literature review completed by:

2) Courses student needs to attend:

3) Skills required:
   -

4) Equipment required:
   -

5) Data collection completed by:
   -

6) Data analyses completed by:
   -

7) Write-up completed by:
   -

8) Graduation expected in (e.g., Jan 2016 registration equates to June 2017 submission and December 2017 graduation):

Agree on handling admin

- How will you work with the administration aspect of the relationship?
  - Google drive, dropbox?
- Forms
  - The student must always check that they are using the most recent version of a form (and supervisor should be aware of this too!)
  - What will your process for signatures be?
- Although the administrative side should be the student's responsibility this may need to be developed

Examples of detail needed in the MoU:

Not sufficient detail	Sufficient detail
• The student will have access to all available laboratories and equipment.	• The supervisor will ensure that the student has access, either within UCT or via collaboration with other institutions, to all laboratories, equipment, and consumables required to successfully complete their research project.
• The student will be expected to present at seminars and conferences	• The student will be required to present either their data or a research paper for discussion at group meetings twice in the year. He/she will also be required to present their research proposal and their final findings to the department. • The student may attend one local and one international conference during their postgraduate degree provided that adequate funding has been secured.
• The student and supervisor will meet regularly to discuss the project.	• The student and supervisor will initially meet every week to briefly discuss the progress of the project and any issues that may arise. The frequency and duration of the meeting may change over the lifecycle of the degree but will be agreed upon by both parties. If the supervisor is away for an extended period of time appropriate arrangements will be made for skype meetings and/or continued meetings with the co-supervisor.
• Authorship of articles will be decided at the time of writing the manuscript.	• The student will be the first author on all publications arising from the project provided that the student has been involved in analysing and interpreting the data and compiling the manuscript. The supervisor will be the last author provide that he/she gives significant input into interpreting the data and editing the manuscript.

Another exercise from Good Practice in the Supervision and Mentoring of Postgraduate Students (Chiappetta-Swanson & Watt, McMaster University Centre for Leadership in Learning, 2011 p50-51)

Exploring the Expectations of Supervisor and Graduate Student

Read each of the statements below and then estimate your position in each. For example with statement 1, if you believe very strongly that it is the supervisor's responsibility to select a good topic you should put a ring round '1'. If you think that both the supervisor and researcher should equally be involved you put a ring round '3' and if you think it is definitely the student's responsibility to select a topic, put a ring round '5'.

You might find it useful to use this as a stimulus for discussion during one of the initial supervision meetings. If both the supervisor and graduate student complete their own form it can serve as a catalyst for negotiation. This form may also be useful for renegotiating the relationship throughout the supervision.

1. It is the supervisor's responsibility to select a research topic.	1 2 3 4 5	The graduate student is responsible for selecting their own topic.
2. It is the supervisor who decides which theoretical framework or methodology is most appropriate.	1 2 3 4 5	The graduate student should decide which theoretical framework or methodology they wish to use.
3. The supervisor should develop an appropriate programme and timetable of research and study for the graduate student.	1 2 3 4 5	The supervisor should leave the development of the programme of study to the graduate student.
4. The supervisor is responsible for ensuring that the graduate student is introduced to the appropriate services and facilities of the department and university.	1 2 3 4 5	It is the graduate student's responsibility to ensure that they have located and accessed all the relevant services and facilities for research.
5. A warm, supportive relationship between supervisor and graduate student is important for successful candidature.	1 2 3 4 5	A personal, supportive relationship is inadvisable because it may obstruct objectivity for both graduate student and supervisor during the candidature.
6. The supervisor should insist on regular meetings with the graduate student.	1 2 3 4 5	The graduate student should decide when they want to meet with the supervisor.

7. The supervisor should check regularly that the graduate student is working consistently and on task.	1 2 3 4 5	The graduate student should work independently and not have to account for how and where time is spent.
8. The supervisor is responsible for providing emotional support and encouragement to the graduate student.	1 2 3 4 5	Personal counselling and support are not the responsibility of the supervisor - graduate students should look elsewhere.
9. The supervisor should insist on seeing all drafts of work to ensure that the graduate student is on the right track.	1 2 3 4 5	The graduate student should submit drafts of work only when they want criticism from the supervisor.
10. The supervisor should assist in the writing of the thesis if necessary.	1 2 3 4 5	The writing of the thesis should only ever be the graduate student's own work.
11. The supervisor is responsible for decisions regarding the standard of the thesis.	1 2 3 4 5	The graduate student is responsible for decisions concerning the standard of the thesis.

Adapted from: Vitae. Careers Research and Advisory Centre (CRAC) Limited. 2011. www.vitae.ac.uk.

5. Timing and managing student expectations

Timing is everything

- Early in the process, aside from the information in the MOU, you need to develop a proper timeline with your student, taking the various deadlines and administrative requirements into consideration.
- The best way to develop the timeline is to work backwards and start with the date that the student wishes to graduate (be realistic for where the student is at).
- Then map out the detailed plan, and a backup plan (life happens!)
- Graduation, registration, fees – all have timing involved
- Useful questions to clarify
    - When do you want to graduate?
        - Thesis must be submitted approximately 6 months before graduation
        - Intention to submit must be submitted 6 weeks before that deadline so thesis must be ready at least 7-8 months prior to the graduation date
    - Have you actually registered for the thesis?
        - (i.e. within that year – so Jan registration for earliest Dec graduation)
    - What other responsibilities do you have?
- Make sure they are aware of the parts of the thesis against this timing (You could get the student to draw up a calendar towards the end)
- All students underestimate how long it will take (especially fieldwork theses with ethics and permissions)
- Agree on timing and rhythm of the supervisor/student relationship (also see MOU)
- Must take this seriously and have a proper engagement with the student about it!
- How often will you meet?
- Do they need to submit something in writing before you meet? (how far in advance)
- Do they realise that you need more time to look at longer pieces?
- Have they factored YOU and your commitments into their timing?
- Are they aware of what happens if they don't meet a deadline?
    - e.g. that they might get shuffled to the end of a queue

> Return to this timing regularly!
> (every time you meet)

Manage the scope

- Manage the student expectations
- Frame the scope of the project within degree requirements, your project needs and the capacity/capability of the student. Do not try and get a student with limited capacity and time to do a PhD level literature review for a mini-Masters thesis!

6. Developing the research proposal and literature review

Brief structure of MPH thesis

- Coursework and mini-dissertation Master's
    - 10 courses and 33% dissertation
    - Mini-dissertation: 60 credits usually 25 000 words/ 60 pages but can be longer
    - Health Economics track: 8 courses and 50% dissertation
- Primary supervisor needs to be in School of Public Health & Family Medicine

For the Health Systems, Environmental Health, Social & Behavioural Sciences, Epidemiology & Biostatistics, Community Eye Health and General tracks, the dissertation must be structured in three parts.

- A: Protocol (including a literature review)
    - This should include the study protocol, literature review and relevant references, and any other required documents (for instance approval letters, data capture forms, informed consent documents)
    - The literature review component needs to include important literature in the field but does not have to be comprehensive or a systematic review.
    - Can be field-work, secondary data analysis or systematic review
    - Must follow the ethics and DOH process for field-work theses
    - The length must be appropriate to the study – a typical protocol without references and appendices may range from 10 to 25 pages, approximately
- B: Journal ready manuscript
    - The manuscript must meet all the requirements set out in the Instructions for Authors of a named journal, including word count and referencing style (The journal must allow at least 3 000 words).
    - Supervisors must assist candidates to identify an appropriate journal.
    - Does not need to be published but meant to be "publication ready"
- C: Appendices (These will vary but typically include the following)
    - Acknowledgements. In a multi-author project, the candidate is expected to be first author.
    - Questionnaire/data capture instrument(s) (if not appended in Part A).
    - Ethics consent form(s) (if not appended in Part A).
    - Additional tables or figures which could not be included in the article for reasons of space limitations.
    - Any technical appendices needed.
    - The instructions for authors for the target journal.

For the Health Economics track, the dissertation must be structured in five parts.

- A: Protocol
    - This should include the study protocol, relevant references but not a full literature review, and any other required documents (for instance approval letters, data capture forms, informed consent documents)
    - The literature review component needs to include important literature in the field but does not have to be comprehensive or a systematic review.
    - Can be field-work, secondary data analysis or systematic review
    - Must follow the ethics and DOH process for field-work theses
    - The length must be appropriate to the study – a typical protocol without references and appendices may range from 10 to 25 pages, approximately
- B: Structured literature review
    - Appropriate to the subject matter and methods of the dissertation.
    - This will not ordinarily be of the detail or standard required for a "Cochrane type" systematic review but will have a structured format.
    - It needs to include important literature in the field but does not have to be comprehensive. The review should not exceed 10 000 words.
- C: Journal ready manuscript
    - The manuscript must meet all the requirements set out in the Instructions for Authors of a named journal, including word count and referencing style (The journal must allow at least 3 000 words).
    - Supervisors must assist candidates to identify an appropriate journal.
    - Does not need to be published but meant to be "publication ready"
- D: Appendices ((These will vary but typically include the following)
    - Acknowledgements. In a multi-author project, the candidate is expected to be first author.
    - Questionnaire/data capture instrument(s) (if not appended in Part A).
    - Ethics consent form(s) (if not appended in Part A).
    - Additional tables or figures which could not be included in the article for reasons of space limitations.
    - Any technical appendices needed.
    - The instructions for authors for the target journal.
- E: Policy brief
    - An editorial/opinion piece/policy brief of up to 3 000 words.

Deciding on a topic

- Students may come in with their own topic but usually are guided by the supervisor
- Supervisor must guide the scope of the topic
- Be aware of issues with
  - Changing projects
  - Data availability
- Ideas for managing scope:
  - Topic (deep not wide)
  - Geography (this is a mini-thesis, so usually limited to a small geographic area if a primary research study)
  - Sampling / study population (think about the size of the study in relation to the topic and the methodology)
- It could be a small piece within a bigger project

- Types of projects:
  - Primary data collection
  - Secondary analyses of existing data
  - Systematic review

  Both primary and secondary data protocols must be approved by the UCT Human Research Ethics Committee. Systematic review protocols do not require HREC approval but still need to complete an FHS013 (new protocol application form) that gets reviewed by the Departmental Research Committee (See Section 7).

Protocol

What to include	
○ **Background and Significance** ○ **Literature review** ○ **Study aims and objectives** ○ **Scientific Design** ○ **Study Population** ○ **Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria** ○ **Recruitment and Enrolment** ○ **Research Procedures** ○ **Drug, Device and Biologics Considerations** ○ **Risks and Benefits** ○ **Informed Consent and Assent**	○ **Privacy and Confidentiality** ○ **Storage of Biological Specimens** ○ **Data Analysis and Monitoring** ○ **Resources** ○ **Reimbursement** ○ **Insurance** ○ **What Happens at the End of the Study?** ○ **Stakeholder Participation** ○ **Conflicts of Interest** ○ **Authorship** ○ **Ethical and Regulatory Compliance**

- A protocol is the formal design or detailed plan of a study. It explains what will be done, when, where, how, and why.
- There is guidance in the MPH handbook
    - **Form FHS015hlp contains all relevant information. Available at http://forms.uct.ac.za/**
- Other parts are described in more details in section 9

7. Submission to Department Research Committee (DRC) and Ethics Committee

NOTE: this must happen before any study procedures take place

Process and forms

All forms for HREC are available on the HREC website and linked to the postgraduate Vula site and only registered students have access.

The supervisor should be listed as the PI on the ethics application.

HREC Application Dates are published on the HREC website (http://www.health.uct.ac.za/fhs/research/humanethics/forms) and the internal School dates are published on the School website (http://www.publichealth.uct.ac.za/processes-and-forms-students-includes-links-required-forms). These are dates for full committee review meetings. If the proposal qualifies for expedited review (criteria on the HREC website but include secondary data analyses) then you can submit any time.

Should you have difficulty accessing the site, please contact adri.winckler@uct.ac.za

Ethics forms:

- Guidelines for submitting research proposals
- FHS013 (plus cover letter and study synopsis of one page-FHS014)

Faculty forms needed at the same time:

- **Memorandum of understanding**
    - **ACA47b – abridged MOU** required at the time of registration for the dissertation component
    - **Note the ACA47a (full MOU)** is not needed to register but must be submitted within 6 months of registration. The student must email this form, together with the proposal summary to the postgrad office (vuyi.mgoqi@uct.ac.za)

General Admin Forms (from PG Admin Booklet)

- Change of curriculum
- G1 – Application for Leave of Absence
- G2 – Application for External Academic credit/exemption
- G3 – Cancellation of registration / discontinuation of studies
- G4 – Corrections of changes to course results

Process for SOPH&FM and HREC approval

The internal processes are published an updated on the SoPH&FM website
http://www.publichealth.uct.ac.za/degree-purposes

Step 1: for first time dissertation registrations

1. **Download the Abridged MOU** (ACA47b)
2. Complete the Abridged MOU (ACA47b). You do not need to have the summary of your proposal at this stage
3. Submit the completed and signed Abridged MOU (ACA47b) to the PG Office via email **vuyi.mgoqi@uct.ac.za**

Step 2: Develop full proposal and full MoU

1. Download the Full Memorandum of Understanding **(ACA47a)**
2. **Complete the Full Memorandum of Understanding (ACA47a) and submit to the PG Office via email** vuyi.mgoqi@uct.ac.za **within 6 months of registration. If you envisage any challenge, discuss this with your supervisor/programme convenor**
3. **Once you have completed your research proposal, you are ready to apply to obtain ethics clearance**

Step 3: Obtain ethics approval

1. Download the required ethics forms (http://www.forms.uct.ac.za/forms.htm)
    - FHS013 - New protocol application form
    - FHS014 - Pointers for preparing a synopsis
    - FHS015 - Guide to preparing a research proposal/protocol
2. In conjunction with your supervisor, you must complete and sign the FHS013 form and provide supporting documents
    - Note the supervisor must sign as PI
3. Submit the completed FHS013 form with the synopsis of your research, research protocol, motivation for expedited review (where applicable), cover letter and any other supporting documents to the Departmental Research Committee Administrator, Falmouth Building, Level 3, SoPHFM Research Ethics Document Submission Box

4. Following departmental approval, you will receive an email with the instruction to collect your documents i.e. duly signed FHS013, Synopsis and Protocol, from Falmouth Building, Level 3, SoPHFM Research Ethics Collections Box
5. After collecting your documents, submit the required copies of your duly signed FHS013, synopsis and protocol to: Faculty of Health Sciences Human Research Ethics Committee G50, Old Main Building, Groote Schuur Hospital. E-mail: hrec-enquiries@uct.ac.za; phone: 021 406 6492; 021 404 7682; 021 406 6626
6. You will receive email communication from the HREC regarding the status of your ethics application. On successful approval, your HREC number will be communicated to you and your supervisor

Step 4: Continue your research

1. Proceed with your study—begin to collect data or to analyse your secondary data and complete your write up

8. The Faculty postgraduate office and requirements

The Faculty post-graduate administrative office oversees all postgraduate matters, including making sure that the PG activities in the faculty comply with the policies of the University and the Department of Higher Education and Science and Technology.

Masters and PhD degrees are located at levels 9 and 10 respectively in the National Qualification Framework. It requires that the programmes meet the requirements of 180 and 300 credits respectively, meaning that the equivalent of 1800 and 3000 hours of work/study is involved in acquiring the degree.

An MPH thesis accounts for 33.3% of the credit requirements, so 60 credits in total and should require roughly 600 hours of work to complete (an equivalent of working 8 hours a day for 3 and a half to four months). These hours include the formal contact with supervisors, fieldwork, analysis and write up, etc.

Fees and registration

One of the important functions is the registration of students. Supervisors must make sure that their student is registered for their thesis, before they start supervising. This is very important. This conversation with a new student is very important, as you may have to advise the student on the timing of their registration for their thesis.

It is also the moment where you may have to discuss the fee-requirements for the student and direct students for financial assistance/ or look within your own project and resources for small bursaries for students.

Adri Winckler's office does have small bursaries for SADC students. Will give up to 70% of international fees, based on student's financial status.

Grace period of 6 weeks is given for registering without fees having been paid, where student brings evidence that money will become available within that time period.

MOUs and progress reports

In the Faculty a student will be registered with an 'abridged' MOU (ACA47b) and not yet a full MOU. Comes with the registration form. Also incorporate the supervisor nomination form-from next year onwards).

The full MOU will become a PDF-writable form and this will all be filled in electronically. The student must email this form, together with the proposal summary to the postgrad office (vuyi.mgoqi@uct.ac.za) so it can be loaded onto People Soft.

The student is then loaded onto the supervisors People Soft dashboard.

The same will apply with the progress report, which will also be a PDF-fillable form.
The paperless system which is being developed requires that each supervisor must have a profile on the People Soft system, in order to link student to supervisor. It requires the filling in of ACA06.

The study approval process in the PG office

<u>You need to submit the full MoU (ACA47a) within 6 months of registration</u> preferably. When an Intention to Submit form is submitted, a check is done if these forms are filled in. The study proposal is only completed when it is approved and in the post-grad office. It is published in the Dean's circular, after it is approved by the Faculty Board.

Study proposals must now be uploaded by the Dept designated administrator onto a VULA site created for each Department by the Faculty PG Office. Links to be sent out in due course.

9. Supervision during the research process, development of thesis and write-up

Part A: Research Protocol

This section (Described in Section 6)

Literature review

All tracks except the Health Economics track.

- Included in Part A (protocol)
- The literature review component needs to include important literature in the field but does not have to be comprehensive or a systematic review.

In the Health Economics track

- Structured literature review is required as Part B

- This will not ordinarily be of the detail or standard required for a "Cochrane type" systematic review but will have a structured format.

- It needs to include important literature in the field but does not have to be comprehensive.

- For the Health Economics stream, the structured literature review should be up to 10 000 words.

Part B: Journal manuscript

- This will be Part C for the Health Economics track

- A manuscript of an article for a named peer reviewed journal approved for subsidy purposes.

- The manuscript must meet all the requirements set out in the Instructions for Authors of that journal, including word count and referencing style. (The journal must allow *at least 3 000 words*).

- The Instructions to Authors must be appended. Supervisors will assist candidates to identify an appropriate journal.

- For the Health Economics track the article must be up to 8 000 words

- The article does *not* have to be submitted to the journal in order to meet academic requirements

Part C: Appendices

- This will be Part D for the Health Economics track
- These will vary with the study but should typically include:

a. Acknowledgements, including a description of the role played by each person who would be expected to be an author on a published article arising from the dissertation. In a thesis derived from work started by others, e.g. analysis of data from another project, the candidate's contribution must have been made after his/her registration and therefore under supervision. In a multi-author project, the candidate would be expected to be first author

b. Questionnaire/data capture instrument(s) (if not appended to protocol in Part A)

c. Ethics consent form(s) (if not appended to protocol in Part A)

d. *Selected* tables or figures, with brief explanatory text, that would be useful for the examiner to see as part of the analyses but which could not be included in the article for reasons of space. They should not simply be a collection of analysis printouts but should be readable as an addendum with reference to the article.

e. Any technical appendices needed – for example, laboratory techniques, statistical formulae.

Part E: Policy brief (for Health Economics track)

- An editorial/opinion piece/policy brief of up to 3 000 words

10. Preparing for thesis submission and examination

Discuss expectations with the student

- What grade are they aiming for and where do they think they are?
- What is your expectation as a supervisor?
- Remind students that the examination process is a bit arbitrary and they should be prepared for some variation in results from examiners (it happens often!)
- Make them aware that they will receive corrections that need to be implemented following examination (very similar to responding to comments following peer review of a journal article)

Intention to submit

- The timing is really important – **six weeks prior to submission**
  - Most challenges: come from ignoring this 6-week period (i.e. supervisor hasn't actually seen the full thesis)
  - General rule is that students should only be doing editing/formatting in the six weeks between intention to submit and submission
- The student submits the intention to submit (signed by supervisor) on Peoplesoft
- Faculty checks that all forms, fees, etc are in order
  - usually missing forms happen here
- Student can't change the title and abstract after this
  - OK, they can, but this requires additional forms
- Challenge: forms have disappeared, or new version arrived since then
  - Scan everything that is submitted after they have been signed

Giving notice of intention to submit thesis/dissertation for examination:

- Log in to the PeopleSoft Student Administration Self Service
- Click on 'Self-service'
- Navigate to 'Research Activities'
- Go to 'Service Requests'
- Select 'Create New Request'
- Select the request category of 'Thesis/ Dissertation related requests'
- Select request type 'Intention to submit' -either PhD or Masters, and faculty
- Upload 'Intention to submit' form and Abstract as separate PDF documents
- View what you have uploaded and confirm that all is in order (In the Comments section, you may add additional notes, but this may be left blank)
- Click 'Submit'.

Once your form has been submitted and processed, you will receive an acknowledgement of receipt via e-mail.

Examiner nomination

- The intention to submit will prompt the examiner nomination process
- You will get sent the NOM01 - Nomination of External Examiners & Supervisor's Report
- Finding the right examiners
    - You will need to nominate three
        - one SA, one international, one backup
    - You email them and get their agreement first
    - YOU need to explain that this is a mini-thesis
        - Manage the examiner expectations
        - They only get $100 – and it will take time
    - Challenge: examiners with unrealistic expectations or competing interests
- The supervisor submits their examiner nominations directly to the HOD for approval and then to the postgrad office
- Examiner nominations are strictly confidential!
- Supervisors report:
    - Can only be submitted once you have reviewed and approved the turnitin report for the dissertation
        - The student must submit the dissertation through turnitin on VULA and send you the report
        - tip: remove the Journal style guide before submitting to Turnitin!
- The supervisors report is an opportunity to report on the dissertation experience
    - This is where you can highlight any issues that may have come up that could impact on the work including personal challenges experienced by the students, circumstances around changing projects, data availability, etc
    - Challenge: supervisors ignore the 'comment' section in the Supervisor Report – **this is NB**

Submitting

- The student will submit their final thesis on Peoplesoft
- When they say "the title of the thesis must only be "thesis" – they really mean it
- Submission support is available
    - Tip: Make sure the student has actually read the submission guidelines sent to them by Faculty – most haven't
- Challenges:
    - managing student expectations for you to do line-editing/language editing
    - manage expectations of how much time you need to review
    - avoid managing a line-up of 5 students all sending you a final version on the Sunday night before submission

Submitting your thesis/dissertation for examination:

- Log in to the PeopleSoft Student Administration Self Service
- Click on 'Self-service'
- Navigate to 'Research Activities'
- Go to 'Service Requests'
- Select 'Create New Request'
- Select the request category of 'Thesis/ Dissertation related requests'
- Select request type 'Upload Thesis/ Dissertation for Examination'
- Select request subtype -either PhD or Masters, and faculty
- Upload your dissertation/thesis for examination (include the cover page and summary of the Turnitin Originality Report)
- View what you have uploaded and confirm that the correct file will be submitted
- Type the following confirmation statement in the comment box: "I confirm that the uploaded document is the thesis/dissertation to be examined."

Once your dissertation/ thesis has been submitted and processed, you will receive an acknowledgement of receipt and will be asked to confirm the word count of your dissertation/thesis. You will additionally be required to sign the Declaration of Free Licence.

Responding to corrections

- Students are often surprised to be asked to do corrections
- They often read the examiner reports as critique rather than constructive criticism
- Make sure they know about this early on (before they get the examiner report from Faculty!)
- This is a good opportunity for them to get used to article review
- Explain the tables and templates
    - many students have never had to do a journal review and will not be familiar with this process

Final submission

- Once the supervisor has signed off the final corrections
    - the student must submit the final version of the thesis on Peoplesoft
    - The supervisor submits the signed off corrections to the postgrad office

Submitting library copy of thesis/dissertation once result finalised in order to graduate:

- Log in to the PeopleSoft Student Administration Self Service
- Click on 'Self-service'
- Navigate to the 'Research Activities' section
- Go to 'Service Requests'
- Select 'Create New Request'
- Select the request category of 'Thesis/ Dissertation related requests'
- Choose request type 'Library Copy –upload final Thesis/Dissertation for Library'
- Choose the request subtype -PhD or masters, and faculty
- Upload final corrected copy of thesis/dissertation for library
- View what you have uploaded to confirm that the correct file will be submitted.

Once your dissertation/ thesis has been submitted and processed, you will receive an acknowledgement of receipt and will be asked to:

- Confirm that the loaded thesis/dissertation is the corrected version
- Verify or complete the prepopulated metadata template (this is the data the library uses for publication of your dissertation/ thesis)
- Confirm the Declaration of Free Licence.

11. Publishing the thesis

- Candidates are not required to publish their research for purposes of the qualification, but it is good practice to encourage students to publish if appropriate
- Know your responsibility
    - Agree on authorship and who will be the submitting/correspond author
    - Agree on whether you may submit if the student doesn't
    - Agree on parameters of your support (student will no longer be registered)
    - Try to include all of this in the MoU at the start of the thesis process
- Finding a journal (early in the process – when they are doing Part A!)
    - Keep a list of suitable journals that you use/read
    - Make sure students know about lists (e.g. DHED lists etc)
- Tips
    - It is quite common to use one journal for the thesis, and then actually submit somewhere else
    - not all student theses need to be published in high-level journals
    - Make sure you know the publication costs – students don't think about this
    - If you are going to apply for UCT Open Access fund – then YOU need to be the corresponding author, not the student
- Handling student's first experience of reviewer critique
    - Nominate examiners as peer-reviewers if possible

12. Graduation

- Graduation takes place twice a year for masters and three times for PhD student
  - April (Master's and PhD)
  - July (PhD only)
  - December (Master's and PhD)
- Deadlines for submission are roughly six months prior to the graduation date

13. Overview and important deadlines for MPH supervision

The next section provides an overview of the entire supervision process for MPH students, all the steps required, and important dates to consider from the beginning. Sometimes you may find that you start in slightly different places in a particular supervision journey, and that some steps inadvertently come earlier in the process, but in the end, you must make sure that you have covered every important step.

Steps in the supervision journey

(note the exact order and some steps will vary based on the nature of the project)

- Selecting a supervisor/supervisor selecting student
- Topic approval
- Planning the research
- Supervision forms
- Negotiating ownership of the data
- Complete Part A (protocol)
- Funding application
- UCT ethics application submission
- Negotiating with the host
- UCT ethics application approved
- Local site clearance application (DoH)
- Complete most of Part B (lit review)
- Fieldwork
- Recruitment
- Primary data collection/document collection/interviews
- Data analysis
- Member checking
- Choose a journal
- Completing Part C (journal manuscript)
- Write up of thesis
- Intention to submit

- Submission
- Present findings to host organisation
- Communication of findings
- Response to examiners comments
- Submit corrections
- Graduation
- Complete journal article and submit for publication
- Annual report to ethics
- Annual report from student and supervisor
- Destroy primary docs (recordings, documents, etc)

Important deadlines for MPH students

Example of MPH deadlines for 2018

- 15 Jan to 23 Feb 2018: **Registration** open (Faculty office)
- 15-19 Jan 2018: Intent to Submit deadline for 19 Feb submission
- 07-09 Feb: Orientation for new MPH students
- 09 Feb: fee deadline (10% incurred after this)
- 19 Feb 2018: 12pm noon, submission deadline (for those not wanting to re-register for 2018)
- 09 Apr: 12noon, thesis submission deadline for 75% adjustment/rebate
- MID-APRIL: GRADUATION 2018
- Late April - early-MAY: Intent to submit for JUNE submission
- EARLY-JUNE: SUBMISSION DEADLINE FOR MID-DECEMBER GRADUATION
- 23 Jul: 12noon, thesis submission deadline for 50% adjustment/rebate
- 23 July: Intent to submit for 01 Sept submission
- 01 SEPT 12noon: SUBMISSION DEADLINE FOR MID-APRIL 2019 GRADUATION
- 17 Sept: 12noon, thesis submission deadline for 25% adjustment/rebate (DOES NOT APPLY TO THE INTERNATIONAL STUDENT FEE)
- MID-DEC: GRADUATION 2018

* Dates change annually but this provides an idea of what to expect

14. Common challenges

- When life gets in the way (student's and yours)
    - Keep channels of communication open from the start of your supervision journey. Include in your MOU how you will navigate unexpected events.
- Emotional and psychological issues
    - You may need to support your student to connect to appropriate services and support.
    - If necessary, consult confidentially with the track or programme convenor
    - Be aware of the Student Wellness Services at UCT and in the Faculty

  http://www.dsa.uct.ac.za/student-wellness/counseling-services/overview
- Students disappear (AWOL)
    - Consult with your track or programme convenor
- 5th year plus (registration and letters)
    - Ongoing registration will require motivation and approval from the programme committee
- When the project grows into a PhD
    - Consult the postgraduate office and programme convenor
- Plagiarism
    - All students must include signed plagiarism statements in their work and will have been made aware of the consequences of plagiarism during orientation
    - If you suspect plagiarism you must raise it with the student and report to the track or programme convenor
- Co-supervision clashes of opinion/personality
    - Set clear roles and lines of communication at the start and revisit these regularly as the project progresses

Tip: There is nothing wrong with pulling in a mediator-colleague or consulting with a more experienced supervisor! Do this at an early stage before something becomes a major problem.

15. Additional resources

School of Public Health and Family Medicine website: http://www.publichealth.uct.ac.za/processes-and-forms-students-includes-links-required-forms

HREC website: http://www.health.uct.ac.za/fhs/research/humanethics/forms

Chiappetta-Swanson, C., & Watt, S. (2011). Good Practice in the Supervision & Mentoring of Postgraduate Students—It Takes an Academy to Raise a Scholar. Hamilton: McMaster University. http://docplayer.net/17981364-It-takes-an-academy-to-raise-a-scholar.html

Canadian Association for Graduate Studies, guiding principles: https://cags.ca/documents/publications/working/Guiding%20Principles%20for%20Graduate%20Student%20Supervision%20in%20Canada%20-%20rvsn7.pdf