

## Policy on Research Degree Supervision

It covers the principles of Supervision, roles within supervisory teams, eligibility to supervise, the continuing professional development of supervisors, managing unexpected changes to supervisory arrangements and how potential conflicts of interest can be managed.

Supervisors are advised to access the online Research Supervision guide for further information and support pertaining to their role.

### Principles of Supervision

**Principle 1:** The role of supervisors and their relationships with students are of critical importance to the provision of a high quality educational experience at the College.

**Principle 2:** As a minimum, all research students must be allocated a main Supervisor, they may also have access to co-supervisors from interdisciplinary field of research.

**Principle 3:** Where a research student has more than one supervisor, one of the supervisors will always be designated the main supervisor.

**Principle 4:** All research students will have access to departmental postgraduate teachers, members of academic staff who will be responsible for the welfare and pastoral support of research students with major role in supporting the day-to-day activities of research students in the Department.

**Principle 5:** A student, who is shared between two departments, more than one Faculty or is registered to a project which crosses departments and/or Faculties, can only be registered to one main academic department in College. This will normally be the department of the main supervisor.

**Principle 6:** All students should have adequate and regular access to their supervisors who should be appropriately qualified (in terms of prior experience and/or training in supervising postgraduate research students) to undertake research degree supervision.

**Principle 7:** The Institutes / Departments conducting research should provide guidance in terms of the minimum expectations that students and supervisors can expect from each other and how the student supervisor partnership should be managed.

**Principle 8:** Supervisors should set aside normally a minimum period of time per week for consultation with students. This may take the form of individual meetings, lecture classes, tutorials, group meetings or lab meetings, email or Skype.

### Roles within Supervisory Teams

**1. Main Research Degree Supervisor:** The key roles of the main research degree supervisor are to assist and support a student throughout their academic studies and, where there is more than one supervisor associated with a research project and a particular student, to ensure regular communication between the supervisory team occurs in order to provide clarity of direction for the student.

**2. Co-Supervisor:** The key roles of the co-supervisor(s) will vary according to the research project. In many cases the co-supervisor will play a major role in directing the research (for example when the project is the result of collaboration between the supervisors). In other cases the role will be more supportive. However, the co-supervisor does have a responsibility for the student's progress, and will be expected to take an active role in the supervision process. It is important that all supervisors are aware that they have a responsibility for the student, and there is no scope for nominal supervision.

**3.** The main differences between a co-supervisor and a main supervisor are that the main supervisor will take responsibility for ensuring that there is regular communication between the supervisory team associated with a particular student, providing clarity of direction for the student, and for

ensuring that the student understands the role of each supervisor within the supervisory team. This is particularly important where co-supervisors are from different departments, Faculties or in the case of collaborative research programs at a partner institute.

**4.** There are key roles and responsibilities which all co-supervisors must undertake, regardless of supervisory split, but there are also some roles which can be negotiated between the main supervisor and co-supervisor(s) depending on the nature of the project. Prior to a student enrolling at College, the main supervisor should lead discussions to agree supervisory arrangements and that the main supervisor communicates this to the student.

**5. Number of Students per Supervisor:** A Professor as Research Supervisor/Co-supervisor, at any given point of time, shall guide not more than eight PhD scholars.

An Associate Professor as Research Supervisor shall guide up to a maximum of six PhD scholars.

Assistant Professor as Research Supervisor shall guide up to a maximum of four PhD scholars.

Ultimately this will be a matter for individual departments to decide upon, based on their context, research structures and existing departmental supervision arrangements for postgraduate research students.

**6. Eligibility to Supervise:** Any regular Professor of the University/approved research centre with at least five research publications in refereed journals, approved by the UGC/ University and any regular Associate /Assistant Professor of the University/approved research centre with a PhD degree and at least two research publications in refereed journals, approved by the UGC/ University, may be recognized as Research Supervisor.

Scientists in the regular service in research laboratories of Central/State Government, located in the geographical jurisdiction of University, may also be approved as Research Supervisor /Co-supervisor and the Scientist in Grade-D, Scientist Grade-E and Scientist Grade-F & G are equated with Assistant Professor, Associate Professor and Professor respectively, exclusively for the purpose of research supervision.

Possession of a doctorate / PhD is not normally a prerequisite for the role of supervisor and it is not a general policy.

Emeritus and Re-employed Professors can continue to act as supervisors, subject to the agreement of the concerned Head of Department, Head of the Institute providing that:

- a) They are still active in the field & they will be available for the duration of the research program.
- b) That students have regular and adequate access to them.
- c) That a co-supervisor is appointed from the regular academic staff. It would be expected that in most cases such persons would be supervising those students whom they had accepted before their retirement. They would be unlikely to be appointed as supervisors of newly admitted students
- d) Such agreement would require approval & administrative clearance from Vice chancellor through O/o Dean, Academics & must fulfil all other requirements for PhD supervision. In such case, co-supervision with a member of permanent academic staff would normally be required.

**7. Collaborative Provision:** Co-supervision with staff of other Universities is permitted where there is a formal link with the university in question, either through a joint PhD program or other collaborative research program that has received approval of Academic & Executive Council. In such cases and in line with the university's principles of research supervision, one of the supervisors, either from the affiliated institute or from the partner university, must be designated as main supervisor in accordance with the requirements of the particular collaborative program.

Subject to the appointment of a main supervisor who is a academic staff of affiliated institute under university, students will also be allocated a local co-supervisor who will be formally appointed as part of the student's application under the collaborative scheme.

Proposals of collaboration if considered appropriate that academics from another institution contributes to a collaborative research project, this should be done on formal arrangement and approval must be sought for a formal collaborative research program through the appropriate Authorities of the University.

**Policy on the ethical conduct of research:** Misconduct or poor practice in research should be challenged. Queries from students or researchers regarding research ethics and integrity should initially be raised and discussed within the department or faculty as appropriate.

### **Definition of Misconduct in Research**

Misconduct in Research for the purpose of this Code of Practice and Procedure means, but is not limited to, the doing, planning or attempting of any of the following while proposing, carrying out or reporting the results of research:

- \*falsification or fabrication of data, including the intentionally misleading or deliberately false reporting of research information;
- \*misrepresentation of data, including the invention of data and the omission from analysis and publication of inconvenient data;
- \*failure to follow good practice for the proper preservation, management and sharing of primary data, artefacts and material;
- \*unacknowledged appropriation of the work of others, including plagiarism, the abuse of confidentiality with respect to unpublished materials, or misappropriation of results, physical materials or other resources;
- \*misrepresentation of involvement in a research project; for example, the failure to include legitimate author(s) on outputs, or granting authorship where none is warranted;
- \*failure to declare conflicts of interest;
- \*failure to follow accepted procedures, legal or ethical requirements, or to exercise due care in carrying out responsibilities for avoiding unreasonable harm or risk to humans, other vertebrates, cephalopods or the environment;
- \*failure to follow existing guidance on good practice in research, including proper handling of privileged or private information collected on individuals during the research.

Misconduct in Research can include acts of omission as well as acts of commission. It excludes genuine errors that are not due to negligence, differences in interpretation or judgement in evaluating research methods or results, or misconduct unrelated to research processes. It does not include poor research.

Misconduct in Research for the purpose of this Code of Practice and Procedure is not intended to capture concerns about students' examined work. Examined Work includes the submission and assessment of a thesis, dissertation, essay or other coursework which is not undertaken in formal examination conditions but is a requirement for, counts towards or constitutes the work for a degree or other academic award.

### **Procedure in the event of suspected Misconduct in Research**

Allegations of potential Misconduct in Research should be made in writing, accompanied by supporting evidence, and addressed in confidence to the Registrar.

The Registrar may, at his or her discretion, consider anonymous allegations and assess the seriousness of the issues, their credibility, and the feasibility of confirming the allegation with credible sources. Registrar may elect, at his or her discretion, to investigate anonymous allegations in accordance with this Procedure.

Where allegations concern **an intentional and/or reckless departure from accepted procedures** in the conduct of research that may not fall directly within the terms detailed above, a judgment should be made as to whether the matter should be investigated under this Procedure.

Following receipt of an allegation, the Dean, Academics will conduct a preliminary review in order to determine whether further investigation is required. This review will be conducted in a timely manner

and the Dean may seek advice from senior academic members of the University. In the event that the allegations relate to the conduct of a student, the Dean may consult with and refer these allegations for further investigation to competent authorities.

Failure to comply with this code of practice & procedure may give rise to an allegation of misconduct in research, which may be a ground for disciplinary action and dismissal, in accordance with the university's standard procedures.

### **Code of Conduct, Academic Integrity, Conflict of interest & Complaints:**

**Code of conduct:** Scholars must abide by the ethical code of conduct in all research related activities as stipulated by regulatory authorities.

**Academic Integrity:** It is the obligation of scholars to fully understand best practices / standard setting guidelines of academic integrity & responsibilities to avoid breaches in guidelines. If in doubt please seek assistance from Supervisors or Institutional Research Advisory Committee regarding publication ethics, authorship, publication misconduct & scientific misconduct (falsification, fabrication, plagiarism) etc.

**Conflict of interest:** The university expects all academic Faculty members including staff & students and those who are conducting research under university, to observe the highest standards of ethics & integrity in the conduct of their research.

University must aim to protect the reputation of the academic(s), research students & ensure compliance with ethical norms. Governance of university must be conducted with close regard to the risks involved in non-disclosure of ethical / personal bias, actual or perceived conflict of interests.

Sources of advice and support for University community include fellow students and colleagues, supervisors / mentors / senior tutors, directors / heads of department, Research Ethics committees / Research Advisory committees/ Research regulatory bodies.

#### In pursuance of such high standards they must:

- a)** Be honest in proposing, conducting & reporting research to best code of practice to support research integrity.
- b)** Effectively & transparently manage any conflicts of interest, whether actual or potential, reporting these to the appropriate authority as necessary.
- c)** Recognize their accountability to the university & their peers for the conduct of their research.
- d)** Comply with ethical & legal obligations as required by statutory authorities, including seeking ethical review and approval for research as appropriate.
- e)** Seek to ensure safety, dignity, wellbeing & rights of those associated with the research.
- f)** Willing to take professional responsibility of scholarly & practical contributions to research output maintaining due regard to disciplinary norms.
- g)** Misrepresentation of involvement in a research project or granting authorship where none is warranted.

If a perceived or actual conflict of interest is suspected by students / supervisors / committee members, standing practice will be to notify or declare a conflict of interest disclosure, if necessary. All interests so disclosed will be kept as file records for procedural matters, if necessary.

**Complaints:** If scholars have any complaints which have not been resolved by Institute or Faculty, they may direct such complaints through Supervisor / Research Advisory Committee to the university for guidance.

This code of practice and procedure will operate in conjunction with other University procedures involving human participants, personal data & conflict of interest management, policy on the management of research data and records, Plagiarism Policy etc.