

GRADUATION THESIS RESEARCH PROJECT SUPERVISION GUIDELINES

SKILLS, ROLES, TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE GRADUATION THESIS SUPERVISOR

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Graduation Thesis Supervision is supporting the Student's personal and academic progression through their own learning journey.

As the Graduation Thesis Supervisor, the Faculty Member's role is to guide the Student through the requirements of their Graduation Thesis Research Project, set out expectations, provide evaluations and assessments of their work, and generally assist them students in meeting and completing the various milestones in a timely manner.

The Graduation Thesis Supervision is a Supervisor - Student relationship based on systematic scientific research methodology and mutual respect.

The Graduation Thesis Supervision is a systematic process that guides the student to the best methods in his educational progress as well as building the Student's self-confidence.

The success of the Graduation Thesis Supervision Process relies heavily on numerous elements such as:

- The qualified Supervisor
- The committed Student
- The Academic Supervising Process Guidelines

Graduation Thesis Research Project requires independent learning, as well as constant collaboration between the Student and the Supervisor.

- **The Golden Rule of Graduation Thesis Supervision**

- It is important for the Student to develop a sense of ownership and responsibility for her/his Graduation Thesis Research Project.
- The Supervisor should empower the Student to make decisions and not take decisions for the Student.
- In Supervisor - Student relationship, responsibility is two-way.

The Student will have expectations in terms of support and advice from the Supervisor.

The Supervisor will have expectations regarding independent research by the Student, regularity of work and reporting.

- **The Graduation Thesis Supervisor Roles**

- Mentor
- Coach
- Academic Tutor
- Facilitator
- Advisor
- Guide
- Teacher
- Consultant
- Manager

The Supervisor is expected to be trustworthy, culturally sensitive, open, approachable, patient, understanding, flexible, tolerant and unbiased.

- **Supervisor Features**

- Possessing interpersonal and communication skills
- Having comprehensive knowledge of its field
- Having comprehensive knowledge of scientific research methods and techniques
- Having comprehensive knowledge of all the University's policies and procedures in relation to the Graduation Thesis
- Providing guidance and support about the research process
- Keeping the Student's morale high
- Giving productive feedback to the Student on time
- Not limiting the Student in his/her comments and opinions
- Encouraging academic studies of the Student

- **Elements of Effective Supervision**

- Making sure that the student is excited by her / his Graduation Thesis Research Project
- Sincere concern for the Student's success
- Inspiring, motivating, and supportive attitude
- Carefully assessing the needs of the Student

- Establishing agreed expectations, roles, and responsibilities
- Providing academic support
- Providing emotional support
- Encouragement
- Promoting personal and academic development
- Initiating regular contact
- Being available at appropriate times for consultation
- Giving guidance and advice, mentoring and coaching
- Assisting the Student in conceptualizing the Graduation Thesis Research Project
- Advising the Student on the establishment of a realistic timetable for the completion of the various parts of the thesis.
- Guiding the Student in support of the highest standards of scientific research and professional development
- Monitoring the progress of the Graduation Thesis Research Project
- Providing verbal and/or written feedback to the Student according to a set timetable
- **Supervisory Relationship With The Student**
 - Respect, trust, and fairness are essential elements of the Student - Supervisor relationship.
 - The relationship between the Supervisor and the Students, how friendly it may become, should always be academic and Professional.

- It is the responsibility of the Supervisor to establish and maintain a professional and supportive relationship with the Student.
- The Student - Supervisor relationship should remain intact until the Student has successfully submitted and defended her / his Graduation Thesis.
- The Supervisor should make it clear to the Student that their Graduation Thesis Research Project is the Student's own responsibility and that it is the Examiners, who are independent of the Supervisors, who will ultimately determine the scientific value of the Thesis.
- The Supervisor should advise Students on issues relating to academic integrity and scientific research ethics, providing guidance on the University's Policies and Procedures on such matters, and take steps to assist students to avoid plagiarism and dishonest use of data.
- It is the responsibility of the Supervisor to ensure that the Student is made clearly aware of the consequences of not making satisfactory progress with their Graduation Thesis Research Project.
- The Supervisor's role involves guiding the Student towards independence, thus the Supervisor should maintain a balance in feedback between giving too much or too little direction.
- The Supervisor Helps the Student Develop Competencies In:
 - . The theoretical and methodological background of their Graduation Thesis Research Project
 - . Elaborating research questions and formulating hypotheses
 - . Collecting and critically analysing data
 - . Academic writing and presenting
 - . Time management
- Conflicts may emerge between the Supervisor and the Student. Involving the higher levels of authority in a conflict can result in exaggeration of the original problem. This makes it harder to resolve and causes more damage to the participants. Conflicts should be resolved at the lowest level of administration.

All parties should follow procedures that are in compliance with the established policies and procedures of the University.

- **Building a Fruitful and Reliable Student - Supervisor Relationship**

- Assure a relationship that is built on mutual trust
- Demonstrate commitment to the Graduation Thesis Research Project
- Encourage the Student to work independently
- Be available for regular communication by various means such as by phone, e-mail or in person and demonstrate flexibility with agreed meeting times if required
- Exchange mutual expectations regarding the supervision process
- Provide positive feedback and constructive criticism
- Appreciate the effort of the Student

- **Responsibility Framework of The Supervisor**

The Supervisor's responsibilities include being available to support the Student at every stage of the Graduation Project Research Project, from formulation of the research project through to establishing research methodologies and discussing results, to presentation and possible publication of dissertations and research.

- Being sufficiently familiar with the particular scientific field of the Graduation Thesis Research Project research to provide guidance and/or have a willingness to gain that familiarity before agreeing to act as a Supervisor.
- Attending the Supervisor training and other Supervisor development events to help undertake the role of the Supervisor effectively.
- Demonstrating a good role model to the Student and leading by example.

- Clarifying roles and responsibilities in the supervisory relationship and discussing expectations of the supervisory relationship.
- Deciding the frequency of regular Student - Supervisor meetings to discuss progress, identify and address problems, and to go through the future work.
- Starting supervisory meetings by praising the Student for work that has been completed. Following this, providing well directed feedback so that the Student will know what to do next. Finally, asking the Student to list down all that has to be done before the next meeting.

During each supervisory meeting, feedback should be given, future actions agreed and the date of the next meeting fixed.

- Keeping the records of Student - Supervisor meetings:
 - . The date and purpose of the meeting
 - . Any problems identified
 - . Action points
- Assisting the Student with the selection and planning of a suitable and manageable research topic.
- Guiding and advising the Student on the selection and development of a research topic that is challenging, at the appropriate level for the degree sought, can be completed within the expected time frame of the project and is appropriately resourced.
- Helping the Student to carry out a training and learning need analysis, and ensuring she/he participates in appropriate training events (e.g. scientific research methodology, scientific literature search techniques and critical evaluation of the literature, statistical tests, academic writing).
- Ensuring that the Student gains the necessary theoretical foundations and acquires the scientific research management skills required to conduct the Graduation Thesis Research Project in a manner consistent with the highest standard of ethical and scientific practice.

- Making sure that the Student has a basic understanding of research ethics and a knowledge of possible ethical issues related to her/his research.
- Ensuring that the Student have the knowledge and background literature, and the methodological and technical skills necessary for the research.
- Providing advice to the Student on aspects of scientific research design, Graduation Thesis Research Project Proposal writing, proposal presentation, modifications of design as needed, manuscript preparation and related presentations, Graduation Thesis writing and oral defense.
- Communicating the expected quality standards for the Graduation Thesis throughout the project process.
- Planning and organizing the supervising process.
- Defining objectives, milestones, deliverables, timetables, and feasible deadlines.
- Establishing with the Student a realistic timetable for the completion of the Graduation Thesis Research Project, including a number of milestones and deliverables to measure progress along the way.
- Providing guidance in all phases that the Student passes through towards the achievement of the Graduate Degree, the approximate amount of time each phase should take, and the criteria for its successful completion.
- Ensuring that the resources required for the Graduation Thesis Research Project are available.
- Providing timely access to scientific research materials including equipment and technical expertise.
- Helping the Student to formulate a micro planning for each month and a macro planning for the entire project with clear timelines, milestones, and deliverables.

- Reminding the Student of the necessary completion dates of successive stages of the Graduation Thesis Research Project so that the Graduation Thesis may be submitted within the scheduled time.
- Being accessible outside regular appointment times when the Student needs assistance.
- Guiding the writing of the Graduation Thesis Research Project Proposal.
- Identifying feasible alternatives to the Graduation Thesis Research Project in case the original proposed project is unrealistic.
- Approving the written scientific research protocol.
- Providing consultation for methodological and statistical issues to ensure scientific research design, sample size, sampling method, data analyses and tests of significance are appropriate and linked clearly to the aims of the Graduation Thesis Research Project.
- Assisting the Student on scientific matters pertaining to the research design, literature search and critique evaluation, data analysis, and scientific writing and presentation.
- Establishing a timely feedback process.

In providing feedback, the Supervisor should acknowledge strong points, identify the problem areas and make suggestions for improvement.

- Formulating the framework detailing the procedures of the “Academic Progression Review Process” to monitor, assess, and support the Student in maximising their chance of successfully completing the Graduation Thesis Research Project on time.
- Evaluating the progress of the Graduation Thesis Research Project.
- Preparing regular Progress Reports.
- Detecting delays early on, evaluating the reasons for delays and reviewing the plan to guarantee the completion of the Graduation Thesis on time.

- Adjusting and revising the planning when needed.
- Assuring the scientific, methodological, and content quality of the Graduation Thesis Research Project phases.
- Being open, honest, and fair with the Student when academic performance is not meeting expectations.
- In case the academic progress of the Student is unsatisfactory, arranging a meeting with the Student to:
 - . inform the Student that their progress is unsatisfactory
 - . explain clearly why their progress is unsatisfactory and what they must do to address the situation
 - . explore with the Student the reasons (root causes) of unsatisfactory progress and suggest strategies for overcoming any problems or difficulties identified by the Student
 - . Set clear tasks for the Student to be completed by specified deadlines to allow her/him to demonstrate that satisfactory progress can be made
- Coaching the Student throughout the scientific writing process and procedure of the Graduation Thesis (thesis template and writing rules).
- Advising the Student on the appropriate format to present the body of research, including illustrations, appendices, graphs, etc.
- Reviewing the draft and proofreading the final draft Graduation Thesis prior to submission, with appropriate feedback given within agreed timescales.
- Reading the Student's draft Graduation Thesis carefully and critically, giving constructive suggestions on how and where the thesis could be improved.
- Making sure that errors of spelling and language have been corrected, the table of content and numbering order are correct, the referencing

complies with guidelines and the necessary appendices have been attached.

- Mentoring the Student to scientifically and psychologically prepare herself / himself for the thesis defence by discussing the format of the defence, the types of questions that could be asked, and expectations that members of the Examining Committee might have.
- Guiding the Student in the revision of the Graduation Thesis if such revisions are recommended by the Examining Committee.
- Encouraging and assisting the Student to disseminate the research findings through appropriate channels (conference, meetings, journals, etc.)
- Guiding the Student for the generation of publications from the research and assist the Student in the steps for publication.
- Ensuring that the supervision records are written, agreed and filed.
- Making arrangements for continuity of supervision during periods of extended leave or absence (greater than 4 weeks).
- Avoiding personal or business relationships that may constitute a conflict of interest.

- **Continuity of Supervision**

Policies and practices should cover situations in which a supervisory relationship cannot be continued, so that the Student can continue in the program.

These should cover situations beyond the control of the Student (e.g. temporary or permanent absence of supervisor), situations that may arise from conflict of interest, and situations that result from personal relations between the Supervisor and the Student.