

Prior to enrolment, all Postgraduate Researchers are appointed a supervisory team. This will have a minimum of two supervisors. They will have expertise in the relevant subject or discipline area of research and knowledge of those methodologies and skills required for the research.

## What are the responsibilities of the supervisory team?

The responsibilities of the supervisory team are as follows:

- to undertake regular supervisory development to enhance supervisory skills and knowledge and maintain sufficient knowledge of the research area and research skills
  - to be accountable for reporting on progression of their PGRs to the Faculty Research Degrees Committee (FRDC) and to raise any issues
  - to understand the regulatory framework underpinning postgraduate research at BU and to ensure their PGRs adheres to all including and should refer in particular to those outlined in Section 3.2
  - to guide the PGR in planning a research project, provide clear guidance on the key monitoring milestones and provide constructive and timely response to written work and approve record of supervisory meetings
  - to maintain regular contact with their PGR
  - to provide pastoral support as appropriate, discuss with the PGR problems or difficulties affecting their research and signpost them to relevant support services if necessary
  - to support their PGR on identifying appropriate research, professional and personal development needs and mechanisms for developing these
  - to guide the PGR in obtaining relevant ethical approval, including review of all relevant documentation to be submitted for review. Should a PGR be invited to attend a Research Ethics Panel, a member of the supervisory team must accompany the PGR to the Panel meeting
  - to submit the thesis in time and in accordance with BU guidelines for the submission of theses, and to respond appropriately and in a timely manner to any recommendations of the examining team
- to ensure the timely preparation and arrangement of the viva voce examination, including nomination of appropriate examiners
  - to prepare the PGR for the viva voce examination and advise on the outcome and timely response to any recommendations of the examining team
  - for PGRs with disabilities, to lead discussions with the PGRs to consider reasonable adjustments to the research training throughout the research degree journey so that appropriate support can be mutually agreed (see Appendix 3).

## What role does the first supervisor have?

Although the supervisors will work as a team the first supervisor should normally:

- be the PGR's primary point of contact
- have both the relevant experience and qualification
- have primary responsibility for the PGR's progress, including monitoring attendance in accordance with any visa related requirements (see Appendix 2)
- have primary responsibility for PGR's progression, including the direction of the research programme and all administrative matters related to the enrolment
- be the key supervisor who attends formal supervisory meetings and who reads and comments on the final draft version of the PGR's thesis.

However, there are cases where there is a more equal distribution of responsibilities.

## How will the supervisory team help me to maintain progress?

PGRs must be able to discuss criticisms openly and directly with their supervisory team. To enable PGRs to maintain reasonable progress throughout their research programme, the supervisory team will:

- agree clear objectives with the PGRs and the timeline for progression after each meeting
- return submitted written work with feedback (provided the work is legible and delivered on time) for discussion at the next meeting
- provide constructive comments on both technical details and writing style for written work, including the formal draft of the thesis
- ensure the PGR is made aware, in writing, of inadequate progress or low standards of work
- recommend to the FRDC when procedures for lack of progress of study should be initiated
- report in writing to the FRDC on the PGR's progress as required by the Faculty within the Re- Enrolment Review. It is essential the PGR is involved in this process and supervisory team will be expected to review and comment on all such progress reports.

## What pastoral care should Supervisors provide?

There is increasing focus on PGR mental health and wellbeing across the sector. Most Universities expect supervisors, and Research administrators, to provide a degree of pastoral care. But what constitutes pastoral care?

Pastoral care may include:

- Making sure the PGR keeps reasonable hours
- Setting reasonable expectations
- Encouraging PGR to take breaks and holidays
- Being aware of possible cultural differences or feelings of displacement
- Taking account of important events happening in the PGR's personal life
- Reassuring the PGR they can let you know if there are any exceptional circumstances affecting them
- Being proactive when you can see that things are not going well
- Considering whether the PGR needs to interrupt their research for a period

Also, pastoral support may include:

- Writing references or letters or recommendations
- Seeking support or information from 3rd parties on the PGR's behalf
- Providing support when the PGR is experiencing difficulties within the thesis process

## Where can I find more information about student wellbeing?

BU provide The Student Wellbeing service which is run in partnership with Dorset HealthCare University NHS Foundation Trust. It's confidential, completely free and open to all BU students. They have a range of support options to meet student needs and the team is on hand to advise on the best way forward.

They are open from Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm.

**Telephone:** 01202 965020 or

**Email:** [studentwellbeing@bournemouth.ac.uk](mailto:studentwellbeing@bournemouth.ac.uk).

## Further Information

Further information can be obtained in the *Code of Practice for Research Degrees*.

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