

## 6. Responsibilities of Supervisors and of Students

### 6.1 The principal responsibilities of the Supervisors are:

- a) to read and comply with the current versions of the *Research Degree Regulations and the Research Degree Procedures of De Montfort University* and such University documents as are relevant to the work including those dealing with ethics, intellectual property rights and health and safety. They must ensure that the student is aware of regulations which affect his/her conduct and/or work;
- b) to ensure that a student on initial enrolment, i.e. during his/her probationary period is introduced to staff and the local environment; local facilities, both technical and social; other University facilities such as the library, the Student's Union, the Health Centre and refectories and is made aware of safety procedures and fire evacuation routes;
- c) to give assistance to students in defining and planning the research topic and the associated timetable. Be part of the probationary supervisory team which undertakes the Training Needs Analysis with the student within three months of enrolment for full-time probationary students and six months for a part-time probationary student. This will help determine the content of the individual student's training programme;

Supervisors are also expected to reinforce advice and guidance on the nature of research evident in the Researcher Development Programme, including: research design and planning; research methods, literature searches, sources and referencing; the presentation of academic work; ethical and legal matters including plagiarism and intellectual property rights;

- d) to ensure that the student attends and fulfils any requirements in terms of the Generic and Faculty Researcher Development Programme;
- e) to assist students in the preparation of Application to Register for a Research Degree;
- f) to maintain regular contact through formal, scheduled meetings held with students which should be set at the start of each academic year. (See Regulation 6.4 below). The whole supervision team should meet with the student at least once a year;
- g) to attend the University supervisor-training course leading to the Certificate in Research Supervision. Details of this can be gained from the Graduate School Office. It is expected that all research supervisors in the University will have attended the course. No supervision team will be approved unless at least one member has successfully completed the course. Also members should attend the CRS Refresher 'Sharing Good Practice' course when required.

**6.2** The distinct responsibilities of the First Supervisor principally are:

- a) to make certain that all the necessary documentation and procedures concerning the approval of successive stages of the student's progress from registration to the final degree are dealt with. All documentation needs to be accurate and complete. The First Supervisor must confirm that it is and ensure that it is submitted to the Graduate School Office in good time for onward transmission to the Research Degrees Committee Faculty Review Panel;
- b) to liaise with the student to ensure that the Graduate School Office is kept informed of any changes in a student's enrolment or registration details;
- c) to take overall responsibility for providing academic leadership for the student's programme of research work via constructive criticism at the appropriate stages in the work, with an overall objective of attempting to inculcate progressively greater independence in the student as the project progresses. The First Supervisor must ensure that any weaknesses are drawn to the student's attention in a timely manner and that the student is given the opportunity to take remedial action with guidance. See 8.2 below;

Where a student has to make revisions to a transfer report it should be recognised that an intensive period of supervision may be required to ensure prompt submission of the revised document.

- d) prior to admission, to liaise with the Faculty staff member responsible for the commitment of funds to research projects to ensure that appropriate funding is available for the research project;
- e) to aid the Graduate School Office in keeping the external sponsors of a research student, where applicable, informed of the progress made by the student on his/her project on a regular basis;
- f) to take an active role in introducing the student not only to fellow workers and staff in the institution but also to external researchers in the field and to the appropriate academic bodies and societies;
- g) to ensure the continuity of supervision of his/her students. This will include co-ordinating the contributions to the supervision by Second Supervisors and Advisors. To make alternative arrangements if any member of the supervisory team is unavailable for a significant period of time;
- h) to maintain regular and appropriately frequent contact with the student. This should be both by an established schedule of formal meetings and via ad hoc and informal interactions. The scheduled meetings must be largely free of interruptions and of sufficient duration to allow for detailed discussion of the student's work. Their frequency should be tailored to suit the current stage of the research programme but normally be once per month for full-time students

and once every two months for part-time students;

- i) there shall be a formal Annual Review Panel held to monitor the progress of the student on his/her research and to monitor training needs. This will be organised by the First Supervisor (or nominee). Please refer to the 'Guidance Notes for the Annual Review Panel';
- j) to seek independent advice, as appropriate, from the Faculty Head of Research Students or Director of the Graduate School on supervisory issues. This is likely to be especially relevant where the supervisor has concerns about a student's ability or application to the Research programme;
- k) to ensure the student makes notes of scheduled formal meetings via the 'Progress Report' form. This process must be completed via MyDMU. These will contribute to the monitoring and assessing of a student's progress in relation to the agreed schedule of work. It is also to be expected that Second Supervisors would contribute to these scheduled meetings on a regular basis to ensure that Second Supervisors provide support services as appropriate. A meeting of the whole supervision team should take place at least once a year;
- l) to ensure that the student is aware of the need to exercise probity and conduct his/her research according to ethical principles, and of the implications of research misconduct;
- m) to make the student aware of any unsatisfactory work or progress and as appropriate to suggest such action as might be taken on a remedial basis;
- n) to ensure the participation of their students in internal research seminars. This will include the presentation to research colleagues of their current research findings;
- o) to encourage students to submit papers for publication when appropriate parts of the research are completed;
- p) to keep the student informed of the necessary completion dates of various stages of the work particularly, if applicable, the transfer from MPhil to Ph.D, in order to ensure timely completion;
- q) to provide relevant advice for students whose first language is not English. This should include arranging a referral to appropriate support services, so that the student can continue to improve his/her spoken English throughout the programme in order to prepare and defend the thesis effectively in English;
- r) to comment on the material in the final draft of the thesis within two months, unless good reasons are put forward to the Chair of the Research Degrees Committee for a longer period, giving advice on its suitability for submission. Guidance on preparation for the oral examination must be given and the

desirability of a practice examination discussed with the student;

- s) to co-ordinate the examination process (with delegation to the Second supervisor where necessary) as follows:
  - i) to complete the “Approval of Examiners” form three months prior to the submission of the thesis and to submit the form to the Graduate School Office for approval by the relevant Faculty Head of Research Students and the Director of the Graduate School;
  - ii) to inform the examination team of their nomination and subsequent approval;
  - iii) normally, if the student requests, to hold a mock viva. This is to be organised by the supervisor(s);
  - iv) to make the administrative arrangements for the oral examination. This involves consulting the external and internal examiners as appropriate, notifying all concerned of the date, time and place of the oral examination and attending the examination to answer questions unless the student has expressed a wish to the contrary;
  - v) to complete Section B of the “master copy” of the Examiners Report Form and to pass this to the internal examiner immediately before the examination. The report must provide contextual information on the student’s work, e.g. mentioning any technical problems experienced during the research or any personal difficulties faced by the student;
  - vi) following an examination where examiners require minor corrections or major revisions to be made to the thesis, to obtain details of these from the examiners and to pass them on to the student. The typed 'Statement of Thesis Deficiencies' or the 'Statement of Reasons for Failure' should be done as soon as possible after the examination is concluded and **definitely within 20 days of the examination.**
- t) to enable the student to comment on the choice of examiners

### 6.3 The principal responsibilities of the student are:

- a) to study the current versions of the *Research Degree Regulations and the Research Degree Procedures of De Montfort University* and such University documents as are relevant to his/her work including those dealing with ethics, intellectual property rights and health and safety. Students must comply with these documents;
- b) as soon as possible after enrolment to discuss and agree with his/her First and Second Supervisors (who are allocated to the student by the Dean of Faculty or

nominee, subject to approval by the Research Degrees Committee Faculty Review Panel on registration) the following aspects of his/her work:

- i) the general area and specific topic or focus of the proposed work and its aims and objectives;
  - ii) the schedule of work and associated broad timetable, taking into account holidays and any proposed times of absence from the institution. In particular paying attention to the timing of the transfer report in line with Regulation 13;
  - iii) the methodology to be employed for the work recognising the need for this to be kept under review as the project proceeds;
  - iv) the attendance at the Generic and Faculty Researcher Development Programme and completion of the Training Needs Analysis/Statement within three months of enrolment (six months for part-time students);
  - v) the broad programme of attendance required at internal seminars as well as external conferences, which are relevant to the area of work;
  - vi) the constitution of the supervisory team for the research degree programme, identifying the First Supervisor, Second Supervisor(s) and any Advisors;
  - vii) the completion of the form *Application to Register for a Research Degree* within the time stipulated in the regulations.
- c) to inform the University Graduate School Office of any alterations or amendments to the enrolment or registration details in consultation with the First Supervisor;
- d) to ensure that the institution through the University Graduate School Office and First Supervisor is able to make contact with him/her when he /she is not on campus;
- e) to take ultimate responsibility for his/her research activity and candidacy for the degree and to appreciate that this will require a commitment to give sufficient time and effort to the research programme until it is completed. The student must maintain the progress of the work in accordance with the stages agreed with supervisors, including, in particular, the presentation of written material as required in sufficient time to allow for comments and discussion before proceeding to the next stage. This will include providing reports on his/her work as required;

- f) to work to the highest professional and ethical standards, seeking guidance from ethical codes if appropriate via the First Supervisor (Regulation 6.2 (l));
- g) to have regular interactions with the Supervisors (especially with the First Supervisor) throughout the programme of work, having established at the outset a schedule of formal meetings. The frequency of these should be in accord with the stipulated University minimum values (normally once per month for full-time students and once every two months for part-time students). A thorough preparation for these meetings is expected from students. They should heed the advice and any matters which arise from such meetings and accept the importance of being frank and honest about perceived difficulties as and when they occur. One of the objects of such meetings is to prevent more serious problems from arising later in the research programme. Students must therefore take the initiative in raising problems or difficulties, however elementary they seem.

Student and supervisors will also be in contact via ad hoc and informal discussions as the need arises;

- h) maintain detailed, full record of the regular progress meetings via 'Progress Reports'. This process must be completed via MyDMU. Supervisors will require these records as part of their monitoring of the student's progress. The University Graduate School Office, The UK Border Agency and any funding body can require to see such records;
- i) full-time students are expected to undertake a minimum of at least 35 hours of study per week throughout the year. Part-time students are expected to undertake 12 hours. Students are normally not expected to take more than eight weeks leave each year (including statutory holidays and the period when the University is closed over Christmas & New Year). You are expected to schedule leave so that it does not conflict with your research. All leave should be notified to a member of your supervisory team;
- j) if applicable, to complete the form *Application to Transfer from MPhil to PhD*, at the appropriate time and the transfer documentation prepared in accordance with the regulations and in consultation with the First Supervisor;
- k) to decide the time for the submission of the thesis for examination in consultation with the First Supervisor within the time stipulated by the regulations;
- l) to pass to the first supervisor by the end of the examination procedures and before graduation, material such as laboratory notebooks, computer coding and studio maquettes produced as a necessary part of the project, which remain the property of the Institution. If appropriate, the supervisor may authorise, on behalf of the University the production of copies of such material for the student's subsequent use.

#### **6.4** Progress meetings between Research students and supervisors

- a) research students and their supervisors must discuss their work regularly as an essential part of the teaching and learning contract between the student and the University;
- b) research supervisors must be able to show evidence that not only have regular progress meetings taken place, but also that the main points of discussion have identified the present stage of a student's research programme and advice has been given upon how to proceed.

The progress report form identifies the important parameters for such discussion. Such formal discussions should occur normally at intervals no longer than one month for full-time research students and normally no longer than two months for part-time students. It is expected that a full-time student will complete at least 10 records per annum and part-time students shall complete at least 5.

- 6.5** A progress report must be completed by the student and signed off by a member of the Supervisory Team. The Supervisory has an opportunity to amend/update the record. This process must be completed via MyDMU.

The Faculty Head of Research Students will review the progress of the research students and check that regular discussions between supervisors and their students have been taking place.