



CRICOS Provider Code 00586B

**University of Tasmania  
Board of Graduate Research  
Statement on Supervisory Practice**

### **Supervisory Teams**

All University of Tasmania graduate research candidates are required to have two registered supervisors. There are two key models for graduate research supervision, namely a Primary and an Associate Supervisor; or two Co-supervisors.

However supervisory teams may be variously comprised, with a mix of Primary, Associate and/or Co-supervisors, and may also include Research Advisors and/or Consultants where these are required.

These various roles are understood as follows:

### **Supervision Nomenclature**

**Primary supervisor** [the so-called first named supervisor in Rule 4 is the supervisor who has the greatest contact and interaction with the candidate, most closely guides the candidate's research project, and ordinarily receives credit for the graduation];

**Additional supervisor** [consistent with Rule 5, refers to other supervisors below];

Additional supervisors include:

**Co-supervisor** [Co-supervisors with equal EFTSL credit meet as a team, or a Co-supervisor may support a Primary Supervisor who is not a member of academic staff; only where there is genuine sharing of responsibility can Co-supervision be claimed];

**Associate Supervisor** [is not ordinarily in close contact with the candidate, is not meeting the candidate with the Primary Supervisor, nor closely guiding the candidate's research project, but is providing administrative back up and supervision for the Primary Supervisor during periods of absence on study leave for example];

**Research Advisor** [an expert who occasionally provides advice to the candidate];

**Consultant** [appointed where required, for example to sign for a Head of School].

It is a matter of principle that registered supervisors must be consulted by the HOS about prospective supervision, and may decline to supervise a candidate's project.

### **EFTSL Credit**

Graduation credit automatically follows the EFTSL allocations for team members. It is a matter of principle and in the interests of transparency and accountability that only those most closely in contact with the candidate and most closely guiding the research project will attract the greatest amount of EFTSL credit. Supervisors should not claim credit for candidates they have not been meeting, and supervisors should not claim credit [especially including graduation] for roles they are not performing.

EFTSL credit splits are negotiated but typically include the following:

- 75:25 Primary Supervisor: Associate Supervisor
- 50:50 Genuine Co-supervision [including across Schools]
- 60:40 Co-supervision across Schools [where one School is 'home']
- Other EFTSL splits may also be negotiated.

Neither the Research Advisor nor the Consultant will attract EFTSL.

## **Description of Supervisory roles**

### ***Primary Supervisor***

The Primary Supervisor is responsible for coordinating, communicating and managing the candidature, for guiding, directing and advancing the thesis and for ensuring that the candidate is informed about the quality of the thesis. Primary responsibility for the overall project, research processes and the production of the thesis remains with the Primary Supervisor even where advice is sought from others about the thesis structure and content. The Primary Supervisor must be registered and hold a degree for which the candidate is enrolled or have other multidisciplinary qualifications suitable to the candidate's research project. In some cases, the supervisor may not hold a higher degree but still have an outstanding publication, research and/or academic record, particularly in supervision, which the Board of Graduate Research accepts as equivalent in standing. In rare cases where no supervisor is available for a brief period of time, the Head of School assumes direct responsibility for the supervision until a supervisor can be appointed.

The Primary Supervisor provides appropriate guidance and support about:

- (a) the nature of research and research culture;
- (b) the standard of performance expected;
- (c) the choice of the research topic;
- (d) the planning of the research program;
- (e) the presentation of the research proposal;
- (f) relevant literature and sources;
- (g) relevant research methodologies and research ethics;
- (h) the typical stages and management of the research project;
- (i) annual reviews and the candidate's progress towards completion;
- (j) the final stages of the thesis prior to submission;
- (k) authorship, intellectual property, publishing;
- (l) the final preparation and presentation of the thesis; and
- (m) academic freedom and the code of conduct of supervision.

The responsibilities of the Primary Supervisor include:

- (a) remaining sensitive to the needs of the candidate;
- (b) providing sound advice on all stages of work, presentation etc.;
- (c) ensuring a professional relationship at all times;
- (d) maintaining regular and frequent supervision sessions;
- (e) keeping retrievable records of meetings with candidates;
- (f) ensuring appropriate and productive use of the candidate's time;
- (g) providing detailed, timely feedback on written work;
- (h) seeking opportunities for candidates to meet other researchers; and
- (i) encouraging candidates to take a role in intellectual life.

The Primary Supervisor may attract most of the EFTSL of candidature load and in most cases is an academic member of staff. In some cases, a registered supervisor may be appointed who is not a member of academic staff. If the Primary Supervisor is not a University of Tasmania employee, or a member of academic staff, the EFTSL will be allocated to the school in which the candidature rests.

### ***Co-supervisor***

The Co-supervisor is a registered supervisor who will either meet the candidate with another Co-supervisor as a team, or support a Primary Supervisor who is not a full-time or fractional academic member of staff, and may share credit for graduation. A Co-supervisor appointed where the Primary Supervisor is not a member of staff will oversee and monitor the candidature, act as the liaison with the University, and ensure that the graduate research rules, procedures, codes and policies are followed. Otherwise these responsibilities will remain with the Primary Supervisor, or with the first named Co-supervisor where two Co-supervisors agree to share the work of Primary Supervisor.

Where the Co-supervisor is employed by the University, the EFTSL is recommended and agreed upon by the Head of School or, in the case where the Co-supervisor is located within another school, the relevant Head of that School would agree to the assigned EFTSL. There will be no EFTSL transfer where the University does not employ the Co-supervisor; however, a Head of School may wish to recognise the contribution to supervision in some form (e.g. travel support for project visits).

The tasks of the Co-supervisor are negotiated with the Primary Supervisor and the candidate, and may also include the Primary Supervisor's tasks described above.

### ***Associate Supervisor***

The Associate Supervisor is a registered supervisor who is not ordinarily in close contact with the candidate, nor closely guiding the candidate's research project, but provides back up for the Primary Supervisor and continuity during periods of absence on study leave for example. This is an excellent role for a new, inexperienced member of academic staff to take on, with mentoring by the Primary Supervisor and potentially greater contact with the candidate, however direction and responsibility remain with the Primary Supervisor. Unless s/he is playing a significant, recognised role in the supervisory team, the Associate Supervisor would not attract significant EFTSL either.

The tasks of the Associate Supervisor are negotiated with the Primary Supervisor and candidate, and could include some of the Primary Supervisor's tasks described above.

### ***Research Advisor***

The Research Advisor is not ordinarily a registered supervisor but is appointed as an expert who occasionally provides advice on their field of expertise to the candidate, and who may also undertake other agreed activities as data preparation and advice. A Research Advisor may be located within or external to the University, and does not attract EFTSL; however, the Head of School may wish to recognise her/his contribution in some way. The Research Advisor is not to assume any Primary, Co or Associate Supervisory responsibilities, nor to guide the thesis, but simply to provide accurate and informed advice in relation to her/his area of expertise as requested.

The tasks of the Research Advisor are negotiated with the Primary Supervisor and the candidate, and do not include any of the Primary Supervisor's tasks described above.

### **Consultant**

The Consultant must be an experienced and registered supervisor, and is appointed where required, for example to sign for a Head of School or a Dean, or to provide written endorsement and serve as an independent person. At the request of the candidate or any of the supervisory team, the Consultant may for instance be called upon to meet with the candidate to discuss an issue of potential conflict or to mediate between the candidate and members of the supervisory team. If the Consultant is requested to endorse in writing an action or decision that has been undertaken by the Primary Supervisor, it is the responsibility of the Consultant to be fully informed about the action prior to providing the endorsement. The Consultant may also decide not to endorse an action by the Primary Supervisor. This role does not attract EFTSL.

The tasks of the Consultant are negotiated with the Primary Supervisor and the candidate, and do not include any of the Primary Supervisor's tasks described above.

### **Nomenclature Acronyms**

PS	Primary Supervisor	CS	Co-supervisor
AS	Associate Supervisor	RA	Research Advisor
CN	Consultant		

### **Obligations of Registered Supervisors**

Primary Supervisors, Co-supervisors, Associate Supervisors and Consultants are required to be registered. Rule 5.7.1 requires University of Tasmania registered supervisors to:

- (a) At all relevant times comply with all relevant University policies, rules codes of conduct relating to research and research supervision
- (b) Use all reasonable endeavours to be informed about quality supervision practices and institutional policies by undertaking relevant activities during the period of registration, including but not limited to -
  - facilitating or attending university-based workshops or seminars on supervision;
  - serving as the School Graduate Research Co-ordinator ;
  - reading of web-based supervision materials and undertaking related activities;
  - attending and contributing to an internal school seminar on supervision;
  - presenting at or attending a conference relating to post graduate education and supervision;
  - conducting a research project or submitting material for publication in the area of supervision.
- (c) Inform the Head of School or Graduate Research Coordinator on a regular basis about the progress of each candidate and participate in the annual review.

There is an expectation that all supervisors will maintain ethical practices, including the maintenance of appropriate and supportive interpersonal relationships with each candidate, and will meet regularly with, and actively guide candidates to completion.

Supervisors must also maintain up-to-date knowledge concerning graduate research policies and candidature, and provide accurate information as required during supervision to the Head of School, the Dean and Board of Graduate Research.

The relevant documents for registered supervisors include: University policies concerning intellectual property, the *Code of Conduct in Supervision, Rules and Procedures of Research Higher Degrees* and the *Statement and Guidelines on Research Practice* [<http://www.research.utas.edu.au/gr/policies/index.htm>].

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