6 SUPERVISORS AND PROJECTS

6.1 Supervision

Procedures in place for the supervision of research degree students:

- clearly define the composition of a supervisory team, the required qualification(s), experience and training, in addition to the roles and responsibilities of each member

- ensure that students receive effective supervision of their research and have a principal supervisor who is normally a member of staff and takes full responsibility for the overall management of the student and an appropriate level of responsibility for supervision

The supervision of each research student is the collective responsibility of the supervisor(s), the department/school/other appropriate research unit and the provider. Criteria and protocols for arrangements relating to co-supervision, external mentoring supervision and advisory roles are formally established.

6.2 Supervisors

Procedures in place for the appointment/establishment of supervisors:

- recognise that being a supervisor is a professional role that requires both being an active researcher in the relevant area, as well as particular skills and capacities regarding supervision

- include clearly defined formal responsibilities, criteria on the eligibility of persons having specific roles in a supervisory team, and mechanisms to ensure supervisors are making themselves aware of these

Qualified research-active staff are provided with supports and structured training as research degree supervisors and, in the case of inexperienced supervisors, obliged to avail of these at the early stages of supervising. Supports and training include provider regulations governing the normal contact with students and the operation of research programmes, assessment, examinations and expectations regarding quality assurance.

Procedures allow for continuity of adequate supervision in cases such as those related to supervisors being removed from the role, being absent for significant periods or leaving the provider's employment.

Supervisors that are external to the provider have access to information and training relating to their role, responsibilities and the institutional requirements for the research degree programme.

Procedures are in place to record all ongoing staff roles as supervisors, or as members of a supervisory team.

Procedures in place recognise research supervision and membership of supervisory teams as contributions to staff workloads and have in place agreed, context- and discipline-appropriate, flexible standards and criteria as to the relative weights of the various roles.

6.3   Supervisor opportunity to raise and address issues

Procedures are in place to facilitate supervisors and other supervisory structures to:

- identify and source necessary extra support for students where required

- identify and address inappropriate or insufficient student work practice, style of research or deficiencies in writing which may require redress or a formal warning

- implement alternative courses of action which may be necessary for students, for example, to exit the programme, or transfer to another programme

- raise any issues relating to the supervision of students, on or off the campus

6.4   Research projects

Procedures are in place to establish oversight mechanisms so that the research projects agreed with students are realistic and appropriate with respect to:

- the level of the degree programme

- the experience and competences of the principal (and other) supervisor[s]

- the qualifications and capabilities of the research student

- facilities, resources and training available within the provider and, if any, in (the) cooperating external organisation(s)

- measures planned to deal with any limitations with respect to facilities, resources and training otherwise available

- compliance with the ethical and safety requirements of the provider

Procedures refer to scientific rigour and how it is adhered to. Scientific rigour will ensure robust and unbiased experimental design, methodology, analysis, interpretation and reporting of results. This includes full transparency in reporting experimental details so that others may reproduce and extend the findings.

6.5 Physical facilities for research

Procedures for physical facilities for research programmes refer to specifications for the programme's resource requirements (required as part of the research programme and intrinsic to it) for each research student. Such requirements are identified at an early stage. Students have access to these resources and property including intellectual property, premises, IT resources, technical and administration support, materials, consumables and both specific and basic equipment and accommodation conducive to research (including write-up of thesis).

If aspects of the programme are supported or provided at more than one location, each location independently meets the location-specific resource requirements, and procedures are in place for use of external off-site resources in the context of partner collaborations.