

University of Otago: Student-Supervisor Agreement

(available on the web at <https://www.otago.ac.nz/graduate-research/policies/index.html> (under the heading "Supervision"))

The purpose of this template is to provide a framework within which candidates and supervisors can discuss their mutual expectations of the supervisory relationship and agree how they will work together over the course of the supervision. It also provides a record of that agreement, for the candidate, the supervisor(s) and the Postgraduate Coordinator and/or Head of Department. The agreement represents statements of intent only, rather than being legally binding, and the implied obligations are only what a candidate and supervisor(s) could reasonably be expected to meet under normal circumstances.

Note that this agreement uses a basic template:

Department's may wish to modify sections or add additional sections to suit their particular context.

It is important to clarify responsibilities and expectations at the start of the supervisory relationship; it is also important to recognise that the relationship will change over time; perhaps to the extent it may be necessary to re-negotiate the supervision arrangements. Occasionally either party to the relationship may need to use the problem solving mechanisms available in the Department/School or Centre, or in the wider University: an awareness of these safety nets is important in supporting a successful supervisory relationship.

Part A: Candidate, supervisor and thesis details

- 1. Candidate's name:** _____ **Student ID number:** _____

- 2. Primary supervisor's name:** _____

- 3. Other supervisors, advisors, the Departmental Advisory Committee, DAC (if there is one) and their respective roles** (add more lines to the table as needed).

Name	Capacity of contribution (e.g., co-supervisor, advisor, DAC member)	Role (e.g., advice on topic, method or overall progress etc.)

If any external supervisor is part of the team, has an MOU been completed and sent to HR? The guidelines and forms are available at: <https://www.otago.ac.nz/graduate-research/policies/index.html>

Yes No N/A

4. **Commencement Date:**

5. **Working title of research:**

6. **International candidates**, are familiar with the support and services provided by the International Office and are aware of the student visa conditions relevant to their own enrolment. See <https://www.otago.ac.nz/international/current-students/>

7. **Distance candidates**, have discussed a distance learning plan. The key points from this discussion are:

To comply with student visa regulations, a distance option is not available to onshore international students.

8. **Scholarship**, candidates are aware of the restrictions on hours of employment (up to 10 hours of employment per week, per annum)

9. **Academic integrity**, candidates have discussed and aware of the University of Otago's Academic integrity policy (<https://www.otago.ac.nz/study/academicintegrity/>; <http://www.otago.ac.nz/administration/policies/otago116838.html>), student misconduct procedures (<http://www.otago.ac.nz/administration/policies/otago116850.html>) and guidelines for working with generative tools (AI) (<https://www.otago.ac.nz/otago0244238.pdf>).

Part B: Supervision expectations

The candidate and at least the primary supervisor should independently complete the attached “Supervision expectations” sheet, and then compare and discuss their expectations. Please note below any outcomes from this discussion:

Part C: Terms of supervision agreement

We agree that the following conditions govern the relationship as primary supervisor/supervisors (amend as appropriate) and candidate in relation to the thesis research which is the subject of this application. Please check the boxes as each item is discussed:

10. Regular supervision meetings, to take stock of progress, will occur at intervals of:

A normal expectation is that these meetings occur weekly or fortnightly with the primary supervisor, although this may vary during candidature. The primary supervisor and candidate should maintain their own written records of these meetings. Also discuss how often the candidate will meet with the co-supervisors and/or the DAC.

11. Formal progress report meetings for PhD candidates occur at 6 month intervals until the candidate is confirmed and then every 12 months. Candidates are expected to prepare and circulate a self-review report in advance of these meetings. The report should be sent to the supervisors and Chair, and members of the departmental advisory committee (if applicable). Candidates are encouraged to meet with the Chair prior to the meeting if there are any concerns they wish to raise. Note that the Chair should not be on the supervision panel (including DAC).

12. The candidate will endeavour to work independently and meet deadlines for work in progress.

- 13. The primary supervisor undertakes** to provide expert opinion on progress, and to indicate what needs to be done if progress is inadequate. The timing and nature of feedback provided by the supervisors should be discussed. Note it is expected that feedback on written work should occur at least within three weeks. Key points from this discussion are:
- 14. The primary supervisor and candidate will make themselves familiar with the regulations** concerning the degree for which the candidate is enrolled, including deadlines (see details at: <http://www.otago.ac.nz/courses/qualifications/phd.html>).
- 15. The workload expectations for completing this thesis have been clarified.** It is helpful for the candidate to have clarity over expected hours per week. Consider fulltime and part-time status. Are there expected hours for lab work? Also discuss holidays (students should take 4-5 weeks a year).
- 16. Funding for this project has been considered.** Give relevant details here:

17. The following aspects have been discussed:

- Ethics approval
<https://www.otago.ac.nz/council/committees/committees/HumanEthicsCommittees.html>
- Māori consultation <http://www.otago.ac.nz/research/maoriconsultation/>
- Intellectual property <https://www.otago.ac.nz/graduate-research/prospective-students/otago662235.html>
- Training requirements (software; equipment related, research skills, writing, etc.)
- Other (specify):

Elaborate on any processes to be followed:

- 18. In order to be confirmed as a PhD candidate**, you are expected to meet the following targets [insert here]:

A normal expectation for confirmation (which may occur at 6 months or a year; any longer requires approval) is the production of a written research proposal, with substantive consideration of the literature and research methodology/methods, *and* the presentation of this proposal in a seminar to the department. The candidate should also undertake a skills needs analysis, and attend appropriate workshops run by HEDC/Student Learning and/or the Graduate Research School. Depending on the discipline and research, other possible targets could include demonstration of mastery of experimental and laboratory techniques, and/or satisfactory completion of required coursework. ***It is important that any targets set include a substantive piece of writing that demonstrates the capacity for critical thinking.*** The requirements for confirmation must be clearly stated above!

- 19.** The primary supervisor will provide the candidate with **information about relevant departmental/school handbooks, guides, websites about postgraduate studies, resources** etc., and the candidate undertakes to read the information provided in such documents or on the website.
- 20. Responsibility for the correct format and technical writing** aspects of the thesis rests with the candidate.
- 21.** The candidate will fulfil **departmental/school obligations to contribute to annual departmental/school conferences or research seminars**. Provide any relevant details here:
- 22.** In the event of the **primary supervisor being on prolonged or permanent absence**, the department/ school will take all reasonable steps to ensure continuity of supervision, having consulted the candidate with regard to the arrangements made.
- 23.** The **candidate has the right to request alternative supervision** if they believe the project is being inadequately supervised. Any request should be made to the Postgraduate Coordinator or HoD, or if the HoD is the supervisor concerned, to the Associate Dean responsible for postgraduate matters and all reasonable steps will be taken to find alternative supervision. Note that it is not always possible to provide alternative supervision such as in circumstances where particular expertise is required, or where the research is part of a larger project.

- 24.** If **the candidate’s work** is deemed by the primary supervisor to be **unsatisfactory**, the primary supervisor must inform the candidate in writing. If progress continues to be unsatisfactory, the HoD, in consultation with the appropriate department / school parties may recommend to the Graduate Research Committee that the candidate be withdrawn from the research programme.
- 25.** The candidate and primary supervisor should reach agreement about **authorship of any published results** of the research work. Matters to be considered include whether the supervisors are to be co-authors, and under what circumstances (such as failure of the candidate to publish work) the supervisors may publish any of the work, with the candidate as co-author (see tools such as the Vancouver protocol https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vancouver_system; <https://www.icmje.org/recommendations/browse/roles-and-responsibilities/defining-the-role-of-authors-and-contributors.html>). See also the guidelines regarding the format of the thesis – especially the inclusion of published papers (<https://www.otago.ac.nz/graduate-research/current-phd-students-digital-handbook/thesis-format>). Provide details of your discussion here:

This agreement should be reviewed regularly as part of the formal progress reporting process.

Candidate:		
Primary Supervisor:		
Co-supervisors:		
HoD:		Date:

This agreement (or a customised departmental one) must be signed above by the primary supervisor, the candidate, and the HoD. The candidate and the primary supervisor should be provided with copies.

Note that the form must be uploaded into the student’s eVision record before sending the first completed progress report to Student Administration – Research (phd@otago.ac.nz) for approval and processing.

SUPERVISION EXPECTATIONS

Read each pair of statements below and then estimate your position on each. For example with statement 2 if you believe very strongly that it is the supervisor's responsibility to select a good topic then circle '1'. If you think that both the supervisor and candidate should equally be involved then circle '3' and if you think it is definitely the candidate's responsibility to select a topic then circle '5'. If either candidate or supervisor cannot decide on a single number, then a consecutive range of two or more numbers can be circled.

START UP

1	Supervisors should only accept candidates when they have specific knowledge of the candidate's chosen topic	1 2 3 4 5	Supervisors should feel free to accept candidates, even if they do not have specific knowledge of the candidate's topic
2	It is the supervisor's responsibility to develop a research topic	1 2 3 4 5	The candidate is responsible for developing their own topic
3	The supervisor decides which theoretical framework or methodology is most appropriate	1 2 3 4 5	Candidates should decide which theoretical framework or methodology they wish to use
4	The supervisor should develop an appropriate program and timetable of research and study for the candidate	1 2 3 4 5	The supervisor should leave developing the program of study to the candidate
5	The university or supervisor, as representative of the university is responsible for ensuring that the candidate is introduced to relevant services and facilities of the department and University	1 2 3 4 5	It is the candidate's responsibility to ensure that they have located and accessed all relevant services and facilities for research

MID-CANDIDATURE

6	The supervisor should insist on regular meetings with the candidate	1 2 3 4 5	The candidate should decide when they want to meet with the supervisor
7	The supervisor should check regularly that the candidate is working consistently and on task	1 2 3 4 5	The candidate should work independently and not have to account for how and where time is spent
8	It is down to the supervisor to ensure that the candidate's thesis research is disseminated in journals and conferences	1 2 3 4 5	The candidate is responsible for ensuring the dissemination of their research in journals and conferences
9	The supervisor is always the lead journal article author and presents any conference papers relating to the thesis, regardless of who actually wrote the material	1 2 3 4 5	Any journal article or conference paper is from the candidate's own thesis research, therefore the candidate should be the lead author or presenter
10	The supervisor is responsible for arranging ethical approval and / or Māori consultation to support the thesis	1 2 3 4 5	It is the responsibility of the candidate to arrange ethical approval and / or Māori consultation to support the thesis
11	Acquiring resources to support the thesis, such as scholarships, equipment or funding for conferences, is the responsibility of the supervisor	1 2 3 4 5	The candidate is responsible for acquiring any resources to support the thesis, including scholarships, equipment and conference funding
12	The supervisor should enrol the candidate on courses that develop the candidate's ability to enhance their thesis (e.g. academic writing, presentation)	1 2 3 4 5	It is the responsibility of the candidate to enrol on courses that develops their ability to enhance their thesis (e.g. academic writing, presentation)
13	A supportive relationship between supervisor and candidate is important for successful candidature	1 2 3 4 5	A supportive relationship is inadvisable, as it may obstruct objectivity for both candidate and supervisor during candidature

THE FINAL STAGE

14	The supervisor should insist on seeing all drafts of work to ensure that the candidate is on the right track	1 2 3 4 5	Candidates should submit good drafts of work only when they want constructive criticism from the supervisor
15	The supervisor is responsible for decisions regarding the standard of the thesis and when it is ready for submission	1 2 3 4 5	The candidate is responsible for decisions concerning the standard of the thesis and when it is ready for submission
16	The supervisor should have total control in arranging the examination.	1 2 3 4 5	The candidate should have a role in arranging the examination, within University guidelines