

Sample Checklist for Primary Supervisors of Doctoral Candidates

Candidate's name: Department:

Primary Supervisor's name:

Recruiting Checklist (date: ____/____/20____)

- The candidate's academic ability has been checked (e.g. we strongly recommend that supervisors read the candidate's dissertation/thesis and/or papers as appropriate).
- If the candidate is relying on scholarship funding in order to do their PhD at Otago, obtain their academic transcripts for their postgraduate study and send these through for a Grade Point Average (GPA) conversion to scholarship.gpa@otago.ac.nz. One of the Student Administration (Scholarships) Administrators should be able to determine whether it is worth pursuing an application.
- The candidate has written a research proposal that demonstrates some knowledge of the topic area and an ability to critically engage with the literature. Be sure to run the proposal through Turnitin to check for any possible plagiarism.
- The candidate meets English language requirements for admission to the University (e.g. Internet-based TOEFL 90 with writing at least 21; IELTS 6.5 with no individual band below 6). If applying for an English language waiver, objective evidence needs to be supplied attesting to competence in verbal and written communication in English. Such evidence could include face-to-face or video communication (such as Zoom) as well as completion of a writing task within a short time frame such as a journal critique, experience in an English-speaking environment, and references attesting to ability in English language.
- Academic references have been obtained for the candidate (two are recommended (or required if going for a scholarship) for international students and the referees should comment on the ability of the candidate to conduct research as well as the quality of any publications, the role of the candidate in the publications and their standing in class – this information is helpful for the Scholarship Selection Panel).
- There has been an interview with the candidate – either face to face or online (e.g. by Teams/Zoom).
- There has been a discussion about scholarship funding and the process for applying. This should also include a frank discussion emphasising that if the candidate is not successful in gaining a scholarship, their future chances of securing such funding after they arrive are unlikely even if they make excellent progress and achieve journal publications. If the candidate is an international student bringing a family to NZ, it should be pointed out that the scholarship will not be sufficient to support a family.

Note that for scholarship applications the information used by the Scholarships Selection Panel includes:

- The most recent academic qualification and GPA. International conversions of grades to GPA: relevant papers and credit weightings. Consideration is given to the range of grades given at the institution, and an explanation of their distribution, such as how many students get an A, whether an A is given for 71% or 91% mark, and comment on when an A+ is possible.
- If the applicant has other qualifications, university courses or two degrees, an explanation of these, and their relevancy to the proposed doctoral programme and scholarship application.
- Rank in class.
- Rank in supervisor's/examiner's experience.
- Rank of institution.
- Publications – explanation of discipline norms and expectations, and for each publication: author order explanation, impact factor of journal, rank of journal within discipline.
- Thesis: quality, size, depth compared with University of Otago thesis, type of research, grade of research. If no grade, what grade would it get if marked at University of Otago? An independent – to the supervisory team – assessment of the thesis carries more weight than one by a supervisor.
- Two academic referees are required for international applicants. The referees should comment on the ability of the candidate to conduct research and rank in class.

Induction Checklist (date: ____/____/20____)

- The candidate is aware of the PhD information on the PhD website <https://www.otago.ac.nz/graduate-research/study/phddoctoral>.
- The PhD regulations have been discussed with the candidate.
- A Student-Supervisor Agreement <https://www.otago.ac.nz/graduate-research/policies> has been completed and milestones for confirmation have been discussed. 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 Student Learning/HEDC 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.***
- A file has been created for the candidate (for filing of relevant documentation related to the candidate's thesis and to the supervisor-candidate relationship).
- The candidate has attended/is booked to attend a PhD induction course (these are held regularly by the Graduate Research School) and is aware of other learning and pastoral support at the University (e.g. Library, International Office, Career Development Centre etc).

- The candidate has been welcomed into the department (e.g. by a morning tea to meet other postgraduates) or a welcome has been arranged.
- The candidate has been inducted into the department (e.g. knows what resources are available to them, how to use photocopier, protocols over tearoom etc).
- The candidate knows their Subject Librarian (see <http://otago.libguides.com/liaison>).
- If Māori, the candidate knows about the Māori Postgraduate Support Adviser located in the Graduate Research School and the programme of hui and events they run.
- If Pacific Island, the candidate knows about the Pacific Postgraduate Support Adviser located in the Graduate Research School and the programme of hui and events they run.

In-candidature Checklist (review as necessary)

- The University's expectations regarding the responsibilities of supervisors and candidates have been met. These include:
 - Regular meetings (at least fortnightly or weekly)
 - Provision of timely and constructive feedback (normally within 3 weeks)
 - Formal progress meetings every 6 months until Confirmation and then annually
- The professional development needs of the candidate in terms of academic skills for their doctoral study and possible future career pathways have been discussed (a skills template and guide is available on the GRS_PhD Support Blackboard website).
- The candidate knows how to include publications in a thesis (see <https://www.otago.ac.nz/administration/policies/policy-collection/guidelines-for-the-inclusion-of-material-from-a-research-candidates-publications-in-their-thesis>).
- Ongoing funding for doctoral study has been discussed and the candidate knows that scholarships do not get extended except in catastrophic circumstances (and some departments offer departmental awards for the last 3-6 months).
- Any changes in enrolment/supervision details (e.g. change of topic, supervisors, full-time to part-time study, off-campus study, additional papers) must be applied for using the 'request for change of research details (CoRD) form available at https://www.otago.ac.nz/_data/assets/pdf_file/0029/552872/ChangeResearchDetails-form.pdf.
- If a candidate wishes to have a deferral (greater than one month off) from their study, they must apply for this via eVision or by using the form at: https://www.otago.ac.nz/_data/assets/pdf_file/0022/211837/SE013-Request-for-deferral.pdf and give a reason for the break e.g. medical reasons, financial etc. Note that while they are on deferral, they MUST NOT have access to laboratories or undertake fieldwork as this has implications for insurance cover should any accident occur. While on deferral the candidate loses access to the

library and other student services. Supervisory support is usually withheld during this period, and scholarship payments cease.

- If the candidate is an international student and wishes to defer their study, they can normally only apply for a deferral for up to 3 months in any 12-month period during their PhD candidature (this is an Immigration NZ rule; they could have longer but may lose their student visa and would need to go home).
- If the candidate is an international (or NZ permanent resident) student, they can only study overseas for up to one year in order to be eligible to pay domestic fees. This overseas study **MUST BE** for research-related reasons such as fieldwork or visiting a lab or advisor etc. – they cannot go home to write up!
- Relevant documentation on the candidate has been filed.
- The supervisor maintains a supervision diary (containing, for example, notes concerning the formulation of the topic, the progress of drafts, the nature of the response to them, and guidance of the project).

Two Months Prior to Submission Checklist (date: ____/____/ 20____)

- The candidate has been consulted over possible examiners. Note they are not allowed to know who has been selected, but they can have some input into possible options.
- Three examiners (internal, NZ external and overseas external) and a Convener of Examiners (choose from the list at: https://www.otago.ac.nz/_data/assets/pdf_file/0029/496613/List-of-PhD-Conveners-of-Examiners.pdf) have been approached to determine their availability. Note that there should be no conflict of interest (e.g. no role AT ALL in supervision, advice or publishing with the candidate, no relationship etc.), all examiners should have a PhD, and at least two should be experienced (having examined more than three doctoral theses). Exceptions can be made for the latter two criterion (qualifications and experience), providing a satisfactory case is made. In some cases it may be necessary to have two overseas external examiners or two New Zealand examiners – the make-up of the panel can be varied providing there is always at least one overseas external.
- The candidate is aware of the guidelines regarding editing and proofing of their thesis (see <https://www.otago.ac.nz/administration/policies/policy-collection/proof-reading-and-editing-of-theses-and-dissertations-guidelines>).
- The candidate has run their thesis through Turnitin (or other software) to check for unintentional plagiarism. Note that Turnitin is available in the Blackboard website for PhD support. The candidate should show the Turnitin report to the supervisor, and evidence they have checked any text matching.
- The candidate is aware of the digital format for examination (a pdf version) of their thesis to be submitted for examination, as well as the Thesis declaration form (available at: <https://www.otago.ac.nz/graduate-research/policies>).

Submission Checklist (date: ____/____/20____)

- The examiners have been nominated in eVision, the form printed and signed (this can be done electronically) and sent to phd@otago.ac.nz.
- A date for an oral examination has been tentatively set by the Convener. Note that setting a date at the time of submission can help expedite the examination process.
- The supervisor(s) and candidate have discussed the thesis and agree that it is ready for submission. Note that the candidate can submit against the wishes of their supervisor, though this is usually unwise!
- A PhD Publishing Award Bursary application has been completed (if applicable). See guidelines and application form at: <https://www.otago.ac.nz/graduate-research/scholarships/bursaries>.
- The candidate does not have to re-enrol once their thesis is submitted, even if they need to make amendments following the examination. If a candidate receives a 'revise and resubmit' result they normally will not be required to re-enrol. However, they will likely be put on three-monthly reporting until submitting their thesis for the second examination. If the candidate takes longer than 6 months (EFT) to revise they may be required to re-enrol and pay fees.