###### Department of Preventive and Social Medicine

###### Memorandum of Understanding for Master’s Thesis Supervision

*(Available on the Department website)*

The University strongly encourages supervisors and their thesis students to develop a written Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) so that expectations are explicit between the parties at an early stage. Clear expectations about the responsibilities of both parties are essential to a successful supervision relationship.

The Department of Preventive and Social Medicine expects an MoU to be completed for all new Master’s thesis students (MPH, MHealSci etc) enrolling in the Department, using this MoU template.

The MOU is an aid for the planning and conduct of Master’s study. It represents statements of intent, and the implied obligations are what a supervisor and student could reasonably be expected to meet under normal circumstances. **It can have additional clauses added.** For example, a more explicit agreement about publications from the thesis may be made between the parties. If the project changes substantially, a new MOU should be drawn up.

A copy of the agreed version of the MoU should be held by all signatories, along with the research proposal and project timeline approved by the Research Advisory Committee (RAC).

A copy of these should be provided to the HOD when the MoU is completed.

The student and supervisor(s) should be familiar with the **regulations for the particular Master’s degree** as printed in the University Calendar. All parties should also be familiar with the **roles and responsibilities** of the respective parties (see Section B3 of the Handbook for Research Masters’ Degrees available electronically under the heading “Masters’ Supervision” at [www.otago.ac.nz/study/masters](http://www.otago.ac.nz/study/masters)). See also the **Checklist** in the Handbook (Appendix A). This Checklist is available separately on the web at the same address as above.

**1 Student’s name:**

2 Thesis details:

Start date: Part- or Full-time:

Expected submission date:

(The University’s expectation is that Master’s research should be of a kind which a diligent and competent student might reasonably be expected to complete within one year of full-time study or two years half-time.)

# 3 Title of Project:

**4 Supervisors:**

(Indicate the % supervision provided by each supervisor, and the affiliations of supervisors if not PSM)

Primary supervisor:

Co-supervisor:

**5 Statistical advice (if applicable)**

Who will do the statistical analyses? student and/or biostatistician

(which biostatistician?\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_)

Is the student required/advised to complete coursework in biostatistics?

Specify \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**6 Is any other coursework/training planned (e.g. qualitative methods)?**

**7** What is the primary supervisor's contribution to **preparing the project**?

What is the contribution of the other supervisors? A summary of their roles should be provided.

(Suggestion: provides student with an introductory reading list, ensures the student understands the nature of the project, discusses best way to tackle the project, provides initial training in the technical skills required, etc):

**8** Taking part in **tutoring** where appropriate by students has the potential to develop the student’s teaching skills and knowledge base. There is an expectation that students would take part in some tutoring within the Department, where appropriate, as part of the development of their skills in public health. What additional **teaching, demonstrating, non-Masters studies or part-time employment** does the student have?

**9** The Department expects a **regular meeting** at least monthly between all supervisors and the student. The purpose of each meeting would be discussed by the students and supervisors prior to each meeting. If a face-to-face meeting is not possible every month, there must be some other reporting mechanism at least monthly advising on progress.

How often will the student have regular meetings with the supervisors?

What arrangements are in place if supervisors or students are off campus?

**10** Who will take responsibility to arrange suitable times and venues for meetings?

**11** Who will keep minutes of the meetings and circulate them?

**12** How will the student access the supervisor(s) for unscheduled meetings or advice eg. email, phone, informal meetings etc.?

Are any barriers to supervisor access foreseen?

**13** Where will the student have **working space**?

**14** What is the **cost** of the student’s research project?

Where are the funds coming from?

If you intend to apply to the PSM Research Student Contribution Fund, please discuss the likely amount, and the timing of that expenditure.

**15 Ethical approval.**

Who will write the first draft of the ethics application? When will the application be submitted?

(The primary supervisor must submit the final application. No work involving human or animal subjects can begin until approval is obtained. )

**16** Where relevant, indicate **who is responsible** for dealing with each of the following issues, and give details.

• Securing assistance of others:

(eg technician, nurse, doctor, academic\*)

• Agreements or contracts with external agencies:

\*Please list **who else is involved in the research** and in what capacity:

**17** Who will meet **obligations to funding bodies**, such as writing interim and final reports? What are the dates for meeting such obligations?

**18** There is an expectation that the student will give a **presentation of the project** at the Research Student Seminar or other Department seminar. When will the student do this?

Seminar dates should be arranged with the Research Student Convener.

Seminar:

**19** Attendance at all **Research Student Seminars** is expected of students enrolled in the Department and based in Dunedin. Attendance at **Department/PHA seminars** (usually Thursday 12pm) is considered part of post-graduate research training and is also expected.

Are there any barriers to attendance at these seminars?

What other regular meetings is the student expected to attend?

**20 Support for Māori or Pacific students**

Please discuss with Māori or Pacific students the support the Ngāi Tahu Māori Health Research Unit provides

**21 Timelines**

Students are expected to keep to the timeline for their project, and any objectives which have been agreed with the supervisor(s). If there is a situation where this is not possible, the student must take responsibility for discussing this with the supervisor **before** any work is overdue. Is there a timeline in place?

What is a reasonable time in which to expect a response from supervisor(s) reviewing a draft?

**22** There is an expectation that the student will submit a paper based on their work for publication during the course of their Master’s. Typically, the student would be first author and supervisors would also be authors. Students should also take care to acknowledge other people who have contributed to the research. When preparing the data for **publication**, who will write the first draft of the manuscript, who will be corresponding author, and how will the order of the authors be determined?

**23** In the event that student is **dissatisfied with supervision** or other issues have arisen that have been unable to be resolved with the supervisor(s), the student would usually consult with the Research Student Convener or Head of Department.

(This item does not limit the right of the student to use the normal disputes procedures within the University)

Is this agreed upon by both parties?

**24** Outline **any other issues** that are relevant to this project.

**25** Has the written proposal been approved by the **RAC?** Date:

**26** Signatures

The student and supervisors have met and agreed the above issues.

**Student:** .......................................................... Date: ………………..

**Supervisor:** .......................................................... Date: ………………..

**Supervisor:** .......................................................... Date: ………………..

**Supervisor:** .......................................................... Date: ………………..

I have read the Memorandum of Understanding and am satisfied with the arrangements.

**Head of Department:** ................................................... Date:...........................