For email:

Evaluation of Postgraduate Supervision

[Insert supervisor’s name] is your current supervisor or was your supervisor in the past. [He/she] is seeking feedback on the quality of their supervision. We would be grateful if you could take the time to reflect on the process of your supervision and provide some feedback using the attached form. To preserve your anonymity, please email your responses in confidence to [insert facilitator’s name] who will remove any identifiers, collate replies, and prepare a report for your supervisor. This report will be used by [insert supervisor’s name] to improve their supervisory practice, and may be an important source of data for performance appraisal at Otago. We welcome your honest and frank responses to the following questions. Can you please reply within 2 weeks.

**For questionnaire:**

Evaluation of Postgraduate Supervision

We would be grateful if you could take the time to reflect on the process of your supervision and provide some feedback using this questionnaire. You are invited to provide comments on *your experiences* of [his/her] research supervision under each of the following headings that describe important qualities of graduate research supervisors (University of Otago, 2006). Write your comments in the boxes. To preserve your anonymity, please email your responses in confidence to [insert facilitator’s name] who will remove any identifiers, collate replies, and prepare a report for your supervisor. This report will be used by [insert supervisor’s name] to improve their supervisory practice, as well as being an important source of evaluation data for promotion applications. We welcome your honest and frank responses to the following questions.

SUPPORT (This involves supervisors being encouraging, mentoring, and aware that students’ lives extend beyond the PhD. Supportive supervisors make an effort to understand how the student prefers to work. In addition, such supervisors attend to the student as a whole person, rather than purely as a research student.)

*Your comments on your experience of this aspect of [supervisors name] research supervision.*

AVAILABILITY (Students value availability in their supervisors. This involves supervisors meeting with students regularly, setting aside adequate time for students, and being contactable through several media (e.g., email, phone) – particularly if they are not physically present.)

*Your comments on your experience of this aspect of [Insert supervisor’s name] research supervision.*

INTEREST AND ENTHUSIASM (Students portrayed the ideal supervisor as someone who is interested and enthusiastic about the student’s work. This is achieved by supervisors who are positive, empowering, motivational, and committed. Such supervisors are often in the vicinity of their students and are likely to show an interest in the student’s progress.)

*Your comments on your experience of this aspect of [Insert supervisor’s name] research supervision.*

KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERTISE IN THE FIELD SURROUNDING THE PhD (Ideal supervisors are those who have expertise in the field surrounding the student’s research. Students value highly a supervisor who can use their knowledge of the area to understand and demonstrate how the student’s research topic fits within the wider field. Students do not necessarily expect the supervisor to have expertise in the precise topic of their research, however. Having a supervisor with expertise in the methodologies required in their research is particularly important.)

*Your comments on your experience of this aspect of [Insert supervisor’s name] research supervision.*

INTEREST IN THE STUDENT’S CAREER (Ideal supervisors are likely to show an interest in the student’s career. They help to provide support for the establishment of the student’s career in several ways. These include having good contacts and introducing students to their network of colleagues, looking out for and informing students of conferences and seminars relevant to their research and career, and encouraging and facilitating the publication of the student’s research.)

*Your comments on your experience of this aspect of [Insert supervisor’s name] research supervision.*

GOOD COMMUNICATION (Ideal supervisors have good communication skills. In particular: good listening skills; the tendency to maintain an open dialogue about the project, its progress and problems; the ability to communicate in an open, honest, and fair manner about issues that arise as they arise; and making expectations clear with regard to matters such as the process of completing a PhD or Master’s thesis, budget considerations, and the role each party must play in performing the project research.)

*Your comments on your experience of this aspect of [Insert supervisor’s name] research supervision.*

CONSTRUCTIVE FEEDBACK (Students see an ideal supervisor as one who provides feedback and criticism of their work that is constructive and prompt. In addition students value consistency in the feedback given. Some valued consistency across time. This is often a sign that the supervisor and student share the same focus regarding the project. In addition, where more than one supervisor is responsible for providing feedback, consistency between supervisors is important.)

*Your comments on your experience of this aspect of [Insert supervisor’s name] research supervision.*

PROVIDES DIRECTION AND STRUCTURE (The ideal supervisor is perceived to be one who provides an appropriate amount of direction and structure to the student’s research project. She or he is prepared to create deadlines, challenge, and push the student a little when required. Such a supervisor is informative and helpful when it comes to areas of uncertainty. Further, the ideal supervisor helps to encourage good work habits in the student, thereby helping the student to help her or himself achieve the desired outcomes from their research.)

*Your comments on your experience of this aspect of [Insert supervisor’s name] research supervision.*

APPROACHABILITY AND RAPPORT (The ideal supervisor is approachable and works to establish a good rapport with their students.)

*Your comments on your experience of this aspect of [Insert supervisor’s name] research supervision.*

EXPERIENCE AND INTEREST IN SUPERVISION (Part of being experienced and interested in supervision, a key quality of an ideal supervisor, is having a complete understanding of the requirements and process of completing a thesis. In addition, students value supervisors who consider the needs of particular subgroups of the student population (e.g., international students, those with children, those with disabilities, and those with cultural differences). It is important that supervisors recognise the individual supervisory needs of each student. These vary between students and between different stages of their studies.)

*Your comments on your experience of this aspect of [Insert supervisor’s name] research supervision.*

OVERALL RATING: Overall, on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being the highest and 5 the lowest) how would you rate [insert supervisors name] as a supervisor? What are your main reasons?

*Overall rating:*

Excellent 1……….2….……3….……4….……5 Poor

*Your reasons?*

University of Otago. (2006). *Postgraduate research supervision. Otago students’ perspectives on: quality supervision, problems encountered in supervision.* Dunedin: University of Otago.