**THE GOSSIP ON RESEARCH SUPERVISION: THE KEY INSIGHTS FOR RESEARCH SUPERVISORS**

by Simon Moss

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| **Introduction** |

 If you want to supervisors PhD, Masters by Research, or other research candidates successfully, you need to learn many of these practices and procedures that are specific to this university. This document outlines the 20 most important insights.

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| **Support from supervisors** |

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| Image result for light bulb icon | **The culture.** At CDU, the culture is friendly, relaxed, open, but professional. For example, if possible* encourage candidates to question your opinions
* inform candidates a few of their strengths you have observed—a practice that has been shown to significantly increase motivation
* candidates should typically be granted autonomy to reach decisions about the topic and methods—unless parties outside the university impose restrictions
* you might sometimes chat to candidates casually and meet at university cafes
* but refrain from close friendships; otherwise, your capacity to challenge and evaluate your candidates might be compromised
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| Did you know | As research shows, if candidates feel their supervisor understands and accepts their shortcomings, they tend to be more receptive to feedback |

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| Image result for light bulb icon | **Number of supervisors.** PhD and Masters by Research candidates are assigned at least two supervisors* at least one of these supervisors must be designated as a principal—usually someone who has supervised a candidate from admission to completion
* the principal supervisor is the person who is responsible for the progress of candidates but is not always the main contact for candidates
* if you have not supervised a candidate from admission to completion, but would like to become a principal supervisor, an accelerated course will be available
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| Did you know | As research shows, if candidates feel their institution is stable, predictable, and consistent, they become more confident and thus persistent on their goals |

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| **Eligibility and funding of research candidates** |

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| Image result for light bulb icon | **Eligibility.** To determine whether candidates should apply to the PhD program or to the Masters by Research program, you should be mindful that* to enroll in a PhD, applicants must have achieved an Honors Second Class A or equivalent
* to enroll in a Masters by Research, applicants must have achieved an Honors Second Class B or equivalent
* during the first year of a Masters by Research, candidates who progress swiftly can apply to upgrade to a PhD

If candidates have not completed an Honours degree, CDU will then assess whether they have achieved an equivalent degree. Roughly* if individuals have completed a postgraduate degree and at least one semester worth of research activity, they have achieved the equivalence of Honours 2A—provided they also achieved a distinction of higher
* if individuals have completed a postgraduate degree and at least half a semester worth of research activity, they have achieved the equivalence of Honours 2B
* when reaching these decisions, research publications can also be considered
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| Image result for light bulb icon | **Funding.** Research candidates can receive four main categories of funding: * stipends to support their living expenses, usually worth approximately $28 000 a year
* waivers of tuition fees
* funding to partly offset relocation costs—available to all candidates who relocate
* funding to pay research expenses, roughly $900 to $1800 each semester, depending on whether the project is designated as low cost or high cost

 Whether research candidates will receive a stipend or waiver depends on several considerations* at this time, the majority of domestic candidates who are eligible to enroll in a PhD will receive a stipend, although these stipends may become more competitive in future years
* domestic PhD candidates receive a waiver for 4 years if full time; domestic Masters by Research candidates receive a waiver for 2 years if full time
* at this time, only a limited number of international candidates can receive a stipend and fee waiver; usually, they need to have achieved Honours First Class or equivalent
* usually, applications to receive this stipend and waiver are ranked both within colleges and then by the Board of Graduate Studies.
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| **Milestones, progress, and completion times**  |

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| Image result for light bulb icon | To be awarded their degree, candidates will need to complete various **milestones*** such as their confirmation of candidature, ethics applications if applicable, oral presentations, minimum research training, and of course their thesis
* the confirmation of candidature entails a supervision agreement, research proposal, and usually an oral defense
* this confirmation of candidature is supposed to be completed within 6 months of enrolment, if full time. However, if candidates can justify their delays—for example, if they want to complete a pilot study first—CDU tend to be flexible
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| Image result for light bulb icon | Within the first few months of their relationship, supervisors and candidates should develop **a supervision agreement*** candidates receive a template of clauses that both they and supervisors can modify
* some of the clauses, however, are deemed as obligatory. For example, supervisors cannot demand that candidates publish during their candidature.
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| Did you know | As research shows, if supervisors deliver verbal and written feedback on drafts—not just written feedback—candidates learn faster |

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| Image result for light bulb icon | **Completion time.** PhD candidates are supposed to complete their thesis within 4 years, and Masters by Research candidates are supposed to complete their thesis within 2 years. However, the rules are complex. For example* PhD candidates can receive up to 12 months extension, and Masters by Research candidates can receive up to 6 months extension if justified
* PhD candidates can also receive up to 12 months leave of absence, and Masters by Research candidates can receive up to 6 months leave of absence if warranted
* This leave of absence, however, could violate the conditions of candidate visas
* The main scholarships that candidates receive, called RTP stipends, last only 3 years for PhD candidates and 2 years for Masters by Research candidates; PhD candidates could receive a 6 month extension, however.
* Candidates who receive a fee offset during the first 4 year of their PhD might be liable for fees after this time
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| Did you know | As research shows, candidates prefer supervisors who confidently specify uncertainty—such as “the likelihood this method is suitable is about 80%”—than supervisors who claim they are certain |

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|  | **Minimum research training.** Candidates must complete a minimum amount of research training* Typically, candidates must complete 5 modules during the research enhancement program—a program that is presented across two weeks during the year
* Yet, in practice, candidates should be encouraged to develop their own professional development plan and dedicate about 4 hours a week to skill development
* They could utilize Learnline at CDU or Coursera, udemy, udacity, Lynda, and many other platforms to access these opportunities
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| **Outputs** |

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| Image result for light bulb icon | **Kinds of theses.** Candidates can complete either a traditional thesis, a thesis by publication, or a thesis by creative works* a traditional PhD thesis usually comprises about 60 000 to 100 000 words; a traditional Masters by Research thesis is about half this length
* a thesis by publication is similar to a traditional PhD but will include **one or more** submitted or published works
* a thesis by creative work comprises a creative product—such as a film, novel, exhibition, or invention—coupled with an exegesis. The exigesis is about 40 000 words for a PhD and half this length for a Masters by Research
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| Image result for light bulb icon | **Scope of research.** Candidates and staff are often not sure about the scope of a PhD or Masters by Research. For example, how many surveys, interviews, field studies, and so forth should a thesis entail? As a rough guide* for a PhD, the scope of research should be roughly equivalent to between 3 and 4 ordinary papers
* for a Masters by Research, the scope of research should be roughly equivalent to between 1 and 2 ordinary papers
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| Did you know | As research shows, after candidates consume tea, they tend to solve problems more creatively |

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| Image result for light bulb icon | **Authorship.** Supervisors should not be granted authorship on the papers the candidate produce unconditionally. As the Vancouver Protocol implies, supervisors should be granted authorship only if* they contributed intellectually to the design, analysis, or interpretation of the data in this specific paper
* they delivered critical feedback on the draft of this paper
* they approved the final version of this publication
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| Image result for light bulb icon | **Examination procedure.** When the research candidate is ready to submit their thesis to examination, supervisors should* assess whether the thesis is ready to submit—balancing the pursuit of quality with the reality that theses are never flawless
* sign to indicate they agree the thesis is ready to submit
* together with the candidate, identify three potential examiners—usually academics in the field with no perceived conflict of interest
* if the examiners indicate the thesis needs to be corrected, revised, or resubmitted, continue to supervise the candidate to facilitate these changes
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| **How to access information** |

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| Image result for light bulb icon | **Website** Some useful information, and even counterintuitive discoveries, about how to supervise more efficiently, to manage challenging candidates, and to optimize research is available on the CDU website for HDR candidates—under a heading called *Useful Materials*.  |

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| Did you know | As research shows, if people are instructed to check their emails only three times a day, they experience less stress at work |

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| Image result for light bulb icon | **Contacts.** If uncertain about any matter around research supervision, feel free to contact* your line manager
* the HDR convener in your college—or the Assistant Dean of Research
* the Dean or Assistant of Graduate Studies: Simon Moss or Natasha Stacey respectively.
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