# Guideline: Postgraduate Supervision and Submission
**(December 2019)**

In relation to policy *AP0705 Postgraduate Supervision and Submission* the following guidelines and processes are indicative of best practice. However, **specific information contained in the relevant postgraduate programme document should prevail.**

Contents

**RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPECTATIONS**

1. **Supervisors' (including Mentors')**

   1.1. Primary supervisors should be appointed from the College offering the qualification. They are responsible for overseeing learner progress in the research from the time that they are appointed as supervisors to the point at which the learner submits the final research output. In the case of work-based learning programmes, the Academic Mentor will take the role of the primary supervisor and the role of secondary supervisor will be taken by either an Academic Mentor or Professional Mentor or both.

   1.2. Secondary supervisors should be chosen on the basis of specific knowledge or expertise and should also be able to broaden the advice and guidance received by the learner. Secondary supervisors should also be prepared to act as primary supervisors if and when primary supervisors are unable to perform this task. Additional secondary supervisors may be co-opted where necessary.

   1.3. The Role of the Supervisor is:

       a. To provide guidance about the nature of research and the standard expected, advice and mentoring in the field of research or work-based inquiry undertaken by the learner and to arrange the practical support necessary for the realisation of the research project or work-based inquiry.

       b. To draw the learner's attention to all relevant Otago Polytechnic policies including but not limited to, those on the conduct of research, ethical requirements, safe work practices, intellectual property, copyright requirements and authorship.

       c. To assist in the definition of the aims and objectives of the examinable components of the research or work-based inquiry and to advise on methodological, conceptual and procedural matters relating to their production.

       d. To discuss the appropriate format, layout and style for the required output and provide advice on preparing a timetable for preparation of the output.

       e. To arrange regular meetings with the candidate to discuss progress. It is the supervisor's responsibility to ensure that there is good communication between the learner and supervisor whether the candidate is working on or off campus within a work place.

       f. To arrange group meetings between a learner and all their supervisors or advisors or mentors at least once per semester, but preferably once a term and to report on such meetings to the Programme Leader.

       g. To be accessible to the learner at other appropriate times when he or she may need advice.

       h. To ensure that prompt responses are provided to submitted work.

       i. To provide written reports on the learner's progress to the Programme Leader, with a copy to the candidate for comment, at the end of each review.

       j. To examine course work components of programmes moderated by an internal staff member or external industry partner who has not been involved with the learner's supervision.

       k. To encourage learners to discuss his or her work with other staff and peers for added feedback.

       l. To ensure that the learner is made aware, as early as possible, of inadequate progress or standards that fall below that generally expected; and to notify the Programme Leader.

       m. To provide the learner with pastoral care and/or to refer the learner to the appropriate support services.

       n. To align learner projects with Otago Polytechnic Strategic Directions where appropriate.

   1.4. While supervisors have no role in assessing research projects that they have supervised, they do, however, have a role in assessing course work components of programmes, including those which are part of work-based inquiry

## 2. Qualifications and training of supervisors

2.1. Primary supervisors will normally have an academic qualification which is equal to, or higher than, the degree in question. However, where it is deemed appropriate, significant experience in the specific research field or, as in the work-based inquiry case, significant experience in mentoring and/or facilitating work-based learning projects may qualify staff to act as primary supervisors.

2.2. All primary supervisors (or, in the case of work-based inquiry, the Academic Mentor) must be provided with adequate training in order to undertake effective supervision.

2.3. Knowledge and skill set of supervisory team should integrate current theoretical knowledge of the particular discipline or area of work-based inquiry with:

   a. Relevant practical experience within the field of research or work-based inquiry;

   b. Research methodology skills or skills in work-based inquiry methods;

   c. Meta-cognitive skills for high-level problem solving and wider contextualisation of research projects or work-based inquiry;

   d. Ability to communicate clearly and to listen to learners;

   e. Writing and analytical skills;

   f. Project management skills;

   g. Mentoring ability and feedback skills;

   h. Pastoral care sensitivity and awareness of learner support services.

## 3. Learners

3.1. it is expected that the postgraduate learner will:

   a. Adhere to all Otago Polytechnic regulations, policies and guidelines, particularly with respect to the conduct of research (including academic integrity, requirements for ethics approval and copyright) and health and safety in the workplace (including research undertaken outside the Polytechnic e.g. fieldwork);

   b. Maintain clear and open communication with supervisors;

   c. Take the initiative in raising problems or difficulties, including difficulties with accessing sources or resources;

   d. Discuss with the supervisor/s the type of guidance and comments that are most helpful, and agree on a schedule of meetings;

   e. Maintain contact as agreed with supervisor/s and attend all arranged meetings with the supervisor/s fully prepared;

   f. Give serious attention to the guidance and feedback given by the supervisor/s and negotiate between feedback from the supervisor, secondary supervisor and other adviser/s should it differ;

   g. Take responsibility for their learning and show initiative and self-motivation in their research as part of developing their intellectual independence;

   h. Maintain the progress of the work in accordance with the stages agreed with the supervisor/s, including, in particular, completing and presenting written material as required in sufficient time to allow for comments and discussion before proceeding to the next stage;

   i. Alert the supervisor/s to any issues arising that might impact on their ability to progress with the research;

   j. Decide when to submit the thesis, taking due account of the supervisor's opinion, and ensuring that Otago Polytechnic deadlines are complied with.

**4. Problems or disagreements between learners and supervisors**

4.1. Where problems, issues or disagreements occur between learners and supervisors, the learner should approach the supervisor concerned in the first instance.

4.2. If the learner is genuinely uncomfortable with this, or if the supervisor is unavailable, the learner can approach the responsible Programme Manager who will review the situation with both parties.

    a. At this point, the Head of College/Department will be informed of the issue or disagreement by the responsible Programme Leader.

4.3. If the problems or disagreements are not resolved at this stage then the Head of College/Department may appoint a new supervisor or co-supervisor.

4.4. If the problem or disagreement is still not resolved then refer to policy *AP0603 Resolution of Learner Complaints.*

**5. Supervision meetings, reporting and record keeping**

5.1. The frequency of supervision meetings may vary depending upon learners, supervisors, College/Department and whether programmes are on-campus, distance or work-based. However, these should be held frequently enough to ensure that good dialogue and research progress are maintained.

5.2. Regular evaluation of learner feedback should be sought and acted upon.

5.3. It is required that supervisors keep a record (written notes, e-mail messages, etc.) of the supervision process including dates of meetings, both as a record of what has occurred and as a means of easily preparing the six monthly report.

5.4. Supervisors and learners are required to produce a six-monthly report, which details progress and which highlights any concerns in relation to the research process.

5.5. These reports should be received by the responsible school Programme Manager and a summary passed on to the Head of College/Department for noting on an annual basis.

5.6. For audit purposes these are retained for one year after completion of the qualification.

5.7. Opportunity for feedback on the supervision process should be provided to candidates throughout the process and also by completing an exit questionnaire after completion of the qualification.

**PRESENTATION AND SUBMISSION OF RESEARCH OUTPUT**

*For assistance with this process please consult your Supervisor and/or Programme Leader, and refer to specific information in the relevant postgraduate programme document.*

1. **Presentation and Submission**

    1.1. Candidates must submit an electronic version and the required number of printed copies of the thesis / dissertation in interim binding to the designated person, or as outlined in the programme document.

       a.    Candidates will be issued with a receipt.

    1.2. Following marking and amendments as necessary, 2 or 3 copies in permanent binding will be submitted to the person designated in the programme document.

    1.3. The programme document information will specify and provide guidelines for:

       a.   content, order of content, title page, referencing, font, spacing, pagination, margins, and binding of interim and final written research outputs;

       b.   presentation of non-text materials, and

       c.   number of copies.

    1.4. Final bound copies must be received prior to the awarding of the qualification.

    1.5. Production of all copies, including costs, shall be the learner's responsibility.

    1.6. Learners are entitled to use scholarship or other funding applications to support the cost of production.

    1.7. It is required that an electronic abstract and thesis is provided to the Robertson Library and to the Otago Polytechnic online repository (OPRES).

    1.8. Electronic abstracts are searchable by keyword and by Google Scholar. It is therefore important that abstracts are of the highest quality as keywords will be used to facilitate global access to the quality research undertaken by Otago Polytechnic learners and staff.

2. **Declarations**

    2.1. Research outputs including and not limited to, theses, dissertations, and professional practice projects and/or reports shall be submitted accompanied by a declaration signed by the learner declaring the following:

       a.    Author's declaration claiming the work as their own;

       b.    Permission to reproduce copies and publish to Otago Polytechnic's online repository (OPRES);

       c.    Learner declaration giving the Robertson Library permission to provide access to thesis or dissertation for research and study purposes;

    *Note: Samples of declaration forms are attached in Appendix 1.*

**FINAL ASSESSMENT PROCESS**

Final assessment is the role of internal and external examiners/work-based learning assessors who have been recommended by the supervisor/s.

1. **Signoff of submission**

   1.1. It is preferred that learners and supervisors sign off all examinable submissions using programme specific formats.

   1.2. Where learners choose to sign off without their supervisor(s) also signing off, they should be made aware they do this at their own risk. They do this in conjunction with the programme manager who ensures that all programme specific relevant information is available and adhered to.

   1.3. Once a submission has been signed off by a learner for examination, it is considered to be the final submission.

2. **Composition of Examination Panel and Appointment of Examiners**

   2.1. The Head of College/Department (or delegate) will appoint the internal and external examiners where these are required unless the Head of College/Department (or delegate) is involved in the supervision process, in which case the Programme Manager will appoint the examiners.

   2.2. Where applicable candidates, supervisors and examiners may be provided with details of the composition of the examination panel and the process through which the panel is constituted and moderated.

   2.3. Candidates and supervisors are to be given the opportunity to provide input concerning the choice of examiners, but are expected to refrain from further contact with the potential examiners until after the examination reports have been received and moderated.

   2.4. Programme managers (or their equivalent), in consultation with Heads of College, formalise the examination panel; the examination process including timelines; receive the examination reports; and formalise the moderation process (if applicable).

   2.5. Examination in Te Reo Māori will comply with the assessment regulations in the programme document and Otago Polytechnic policies.

   2.6. Candidates, supervisors and examiners must be provided with the programme specific criteria, programme specific outcomes and moderation procedures.

   2.7. Examiners may complete a programme specific waiver of confidentiality form agreeing that their written report can be shared with the candidate, supervisor and Head of College/Department.

3. **Reporting of Results**

   3.1. Examination reports are received by the Programme Leaders (or their equivalent), the final outcome is then determined and the moderation process (if applicable) carried out.

   3.2. Copies of the final examination report will be shared with:

   a. The learner; and

   b. The supervisors; and

   c. Head of College/Department (or delegate);

   and will be kept confidential.

   3.3. Any appeal must be lodged in writing with the Head of School/College/Department (or delegate) within **seven** (7) working days of receiving examination report.

   3.4. Once all requirements are completed by the learner in satisfaction of the relevant programme specific document, the Head of College/Department (or delegate) shall refer the learner for graduation.

**Appendix 1 – samples of declaration forms**
*Please consult your Supervisor and/or Programme Leader for correct form(s) and format*



# Declaration Concerning Thesis / Dissertation / Exhibition
# Presented for the Degree of Master of

**Programme name** …………………………………………………………………………

**I, (full name)** …………………………………………………………………………

**Learner ID** …………………………………………………………………………

**declare, in relation to the thesis/dissertation/exhibition entitled:**

…………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………

 **(a) That work was done by me, personally**

  **and**

 **(b) The material has not previously been accepted in whole, or in part, for any other degree or diploma**

  **and**

 **(c)  The work has been checked for plagiarism**

**Signature:  …………………………………………… Date:  …………………………….**

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*Please tick the statements to which you consent:*

☐    A further two softbound copies being made for use by learners and staff in the School of _____ Otago Polytechnic

☐    Replacement softbound copies, for use by learners and staff in the School of _____ Otago Polytechnic, if either of the original two softbound copies are damaged

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☐    Electronic Abstract (required) and full electronic copy (desirable) for publication on Otago Polytechnic's online repository (OPRES).
*Abstracts / Theses can be submitted to OPRES by email opres@op.ac.nz*

Signed _____

Date _____

Please return this form to School of _____ Otago Polytechnic.

**THE ROBERTSON LIBRARY**

## Candidate Declaration Concerning Dissertation

Author's full name: _____

Title of Dissertation: _____

School: _____

Year of submission: _____


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I consent to this Dissertation being copied for the purpose of private study or research as set out in Section 56 of the Copyright Act 1994.

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Signed: _____


Date: _____


*Note: This is the standard library declaration form used by The Robertson Library for all theses.*

*The form is designed to protect the dissertation work of the candidate by requiring proper acknowledgment of any quotations from it.*