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## 1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out the principles, expectations and responsibilities of doctoral research supervisors and candidates to ensure that the National Institute of Organisation Dynamics Australia (NIODA) attracts and retains high-quality supervisors and ensures that candidates produce research of the highest international quality.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all NIODA staff responsible for the supervision, governance and administration relating to doctoral research supervision and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) candidates.

## 3. Principles for supervision

- NIODA ensures that all PhD candidates have appropriately qualified and trained supervisors.

- All doctoral candidates have a principal supervisor. Associate supervisors are added to the supervisory team for topic-specific areas or for other capabilities that they possess to support the candidate in their research. Candidates have at least one associate supervisor in the course of their candidature.

- In addition to a final thesis, the development of research skills and research integrity is considered a critical component of the graduate research candidate's training at NIODA. Should a candidate wish to use a particular method in their research, and NIODA staff are not expert in that particular method, an associate supervisor/s or expert advisor with the appropriate knowledge is sourced by NIODA to become part of the supervisory team, and/or training in the particular method is arranged at NIODA's expense.

The development of this policy is informed by the Australian Council of Graduate Research Guidelines for Quality Graduate Research Supervision[1].

## 4. Definitions

### 4.1. Principal supervisor

Principal supervisors:

- have primary responsibility for the conduct of the candidature in accordance with this policy

- are responsible for monitoring the provision of appropriate support, resources, information and guidance to the candidate

- are responsible for reporting the progress of the candidature to the PhD Course Committee in accordance with the *PhD Progression and Exclusions Policy*, including completing the supervisor section of the candidate's Annual Progress Report.

### 4.2. Co-supervisors

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Co-supervisors may be appointed by the PhD Course Committee to meet the particular requirements of an individual candidate. Both supervisors act as principal supervisors and have equal responsibility for the candidature.

The academic workload for each supervisor is determined by the PhD Course Committee.

### 4.3. Associate supervisor

Associate supervisors are appointed to assist in the supervision of a candidate. The model for associate supervision is flexible to allow for a variety of arrangements appropriate for individual candidates, such as a person or persons who is/are expert on the subject matter. This may be an appointment for a period of the candidature or for the whole duration

### 4.4. Expert advisors

Expert advisors may be recruited to supervisory teams to assist the candidate with a particular aspect of their research. This may be an appointment for a period of the candidature or for the whole duration. Expert Advisors are not considered supervisors and as such are not on the NIODA *Register of Supervisors*.

## 5. Selection of supervisors

### 5.1. Requirements to be a supervisor

All supervisors :

- are listed on the NIODA's *Register of Supervisors*, meaning they have a qualification at least equivalent to the level of qualification being supervised and have met the 'research active' and evidential requirements of admission to the register

- have research expertise and experience relevant to the area of the proposed research

- are a continuing or fixed term contract NIODA staff member

- have the necessary knowledge, time and commitment to undertake the supervision throughout the period of candidature

- the principal supervisor has at least one successful AQF level 10 completion (or equivalent). In the case of co-supervisors at least one of the co-supervisors has at least one successful AQF level 10 completion (or equivalent).

Note: requirements for admission to the NIODA *Register of Supervisors* is found in the *PhD Supervisor Registration Policy.*

### 5.2. Selecting supervisors and establishing supervision

In the first year of the course, candidates develop their research proposal. In this year supervision occurs in small groups with additional individual support when required. At the end of the first year the candidate presents their research proposal to a Confirmation Panel. The Confirmation Panel comprises the PhD Course Lead and another person who may be a registered supervisor or other academic expert in the area the candidate is proposing to research in.

Candidates discuss selection of a principal supervisor at length with the first year group supervisor after having had opportunity to meet potential supervisors through a "meet and greet" occasion held in the latter part of the first year, through contact with the supervisors at the annual NIODA Research Forum and at other seminars and workshops held throughout the year.

On confirmation of the research proposal the candidate enters the second year of the course and selects a Principal Supervisor to approach from the Register of Supervisors. The candidate makes contact with the potential supervisor and agreement is reached about supervision. If either party does not agree to supervisory arrangements then the candidate is supported by the group supervisor in approaching other supervisors as a possible principal supervisor.

At the point of agreement, in discussion with the principal supervisor, the candidate may also elect to approach an associate supervisor or content expert to form a part of their supervisory team. Note - inclusion of an associate supervisor or content expert may occur at any time throughout the candidature.

A formal meeting is then held between the principal supervisor, the candidate, the associate supervisor or content expert as applicable, the group supervisor from the first year of the course and one of the PhD Course Leads. The intent of the meeting is to: 1) handover from the group supervisor; 2) establish the supervisory team as a team to ensure consistency of approach between supervisors; 3) enable clarity about NIODA supervisory processes; and 4) enable clarity for the candidate about the ongoing supervisory arrangements.

## 6.    Ongoing supervisory team meetings

Supervisory teams, including the candidate, meet formally once each year with a PhD Course lead. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the experience of supervision from both the candidate and supervisor/s perspective of the supervision arrangements, and to refine agreements for the following year. Supervisor teams also agree on a schedule of additional ongoing contact. This schedule differs according to the progress and stage of the research.

The Supervisor Professional Development Group supports supervisors in the taking up of their supervisory roles as a part of the supervisor teams. The PhD Course lead/s maintain ongoing contact with all supervisors through this group and through supervisor involvement in the research forum and other NIODA research related activities.

## 7.    Supervisor development

All supervisors must undertake development activities relating to the supervision of doctoral candidates. This involves taking part in formal and informal opportunities for exchanging expertise on research supervision, research learning and research processes.

All supervisors participate in the Supervisor Professional Development Group and any other supervisor development programs offered by NIODA.

A newly contracted Supervisor must participate in a staff induction in accordance with the Staff Induction Policy, at a time notified by NIODA, which would be expected to occur within two weeks of starting.

## 8.    Contribution to NIODA's research environment

Supervisors are required to contribute to, and inform NIODA's research environment. Scholarship and research output requirements are common to all supervisors. Other contributions may include, but are not limited to: participating in the Research Forums; PhD Course Committee meeting attendance; taking a role in a PhD confirmation panel, developing research project opportunities within NIODA or between NIODA and other institutions; designing a public seminar on behalf of NIODA, or a PhD forum seminar; delivering PhD class on a research method or exposing students to current research scholarship; participating in NIODA's colloquium; and participation in the annual Staff Retreat.

**9. Supervisor workload**

Principal supervisors do not normally supervise more than five part-time equivalent postgraduate research candidates at one time, or pro rata for a supervisor employed on a fractional basis.

**10. Supervisor responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of the Supervisor to:

a) support and monitor the PhD candidate by:

    i) encouraging the PhD candidate to engage with the research community

    ii) aiding and encouraging the candidate to gain ethics approval for their research

    iii) providing timely and critical feedback on drafts of the PhD candidate's written work, including their thesis

    iv) working with the PhD candidate to design a research program with applicable supporting studies and activities, through a doctoral research study plan

    v) providing guidance in all research related activities

    vi) overseeing all stages of the PhD candidate's candidature

    vii) ensuring frequent and continuous communication with the PhD candidate, including a minimum of monthly communication

    viii) assisting the PhD candidate in developing the necessary skills to complete their degree and future research activities

    ix) tracking the candidate's progress to support the timely completion of the PhD

b) provide advice to the PhD candidate on complying with:

    i) all NIODA graduate research policies

    ii) legislation relevant to the research area

    iii) agreements associated with the candidature and/or the research project

    iv) data privacy legislation

    v) ethics requirements, ensuring they and the candidate follow ethical practices appropriate to the discipline and as specified by the NIODA ethics guidelines

c) maintain a professional relationship at all times with the PhD candidate

d) be aware of NIODA's commitment to diversity and inclusion and of the requirement to practice NIODA's values in all NIODA activities

e) declare to the PhD Course Committee any conflict of interest in supervising a PhD candidate. Any such conflicts of interest are to be dealt with under the PhD Supervision Policy

f) enter all supervision hours in the PhD Supervisors Log at the end of each quarter

g) facilitate interactions between the PhD candidate supervisors in accordance with NIODA's PhD

Supervision Policy, as amended from time to time

h) liaise with and make recommendations to the PhD Course Committee on any matters relevant to the PhD candidate's candidature

i) act as a primary liaison point with the PhD candidate

j) provide fair and accurate progress reports on the PhD candidate to the PhD Course Committee

k) comply with the requirements of NIODA's PhD Supervision Policy, as amended from time to time.

Principal Supervisors

In addition to the above, principal supervisors are required to:

- liaise with and make recommendations to the PhD Course Committee on any matters relevant to the candidature

- act as a primary liaison point with candidates

- provide fair and accurate progress reports to the PhD Course Committee.

## 11. NIODA responsibilities

**Board of Governance**

The Board of Governance has overall responsibility for ensuring the PhD course is of high quality and compliant with all relevant regulatory and legislative requirements. The Board of Governance delegates this responsibility to the Academic Board of Governance. The Board of Governance confers all PhD awards. The Academic Board of Governance reports to the Board of Governance on the PhD course through its annual *Report to the Board of Governance*. This report 1) charts progress against the terms of reference for the Academic Board of Governance 2) contains the annual *Learning and Teaching Report* and 3) the annual *HREC Report*.

**Academic Board of Governance**

The Academic Board of Governance has delegated governance responsibility from the Board of Governance for the all accredited degree courses. The Academic Board of Governance executes this responsibility through monitoring the Dean's quarterly and annual *Report to the Academic Board of Governance* that addresses matters of PhD candidate experience and academic quality in regard the PhD course including:

- annual learning and teaching data-collated from candidate and staff annual feedback

- candidate enrolments, retention and attrition

- staff and candidate research and scholarship activity

- recommendations for improvement

- evaluation of implementation of previous recommendations.

**PhD Course Committee**

The PhD Course Committee, with delegated responsibility from the Leadership Team, are responsible for ensuring that:

- supervisors are admitted to the *Register of Supervisors* when they meet all the requirements all candidates have a principal supervisor and an associate supervisor or supervisors

- the work of all PhD supervisors is regularly monitored

- adequate provision is made for the professional development of supervisors and potential supervisors the appointment of supervisors is consistent with best practice standards in ensuring there are no conflicts of interest

- difficulties arising between supervisors and candidates are dealt with in a manner that minimises impact on the candidate's enrolment, progress and welfare.

The PhD Course Committee reports on the current state of the PhD course to the Leadership Team on a monthly basis. The PhD Course Committee inputs data to the Dean's *Teaching and Learning PhD annual report* to the Academic Board of Governance.

**Administration**

NIODA supports candidates and supervisors by providing administrative support and in the provision of technology for supervision at a distance.

**12.     Candidate responsibilities**

Candidates are responsible for complying with:

- all NIODA graduate research policies

- legislation relevant to the research area

- agreements associated with the candidature and/or research project

- data privacy legislation

- ethics requirements, ensuring they follow ethical practices appropriate to the discipline and as specified by the NIODA ethics guidelines

Candidates are responsible for:

- ensuring they maintain a professional relationship at all times with their supervisors

- taking responsibility for maintaining the progress of their work in accordance with their doctoral research study plan and ongoing arrangements with their supervisors

- dedicating sufficient study hours per week to ensure timely completion of their candidature

In fulfilling their ethical candidature responsibilities, candidates must:

- Comply with ethical guidelines for research

- make regular contact with supervisors and respond to contact and feedback

- ask for support when needed, in particular where there are factors that might impact their research studies or candidature

- raise difficulties arising from their research with their principal supervisor in an effort to seek resolution as soon as practicable

- be familiar with issues in relation to conflicts of interest, and disclose any as soon as they become apparent

**13.      Changes in supervision**

Candidates may request changes in supervision during candidature and may seek advice on this from the PhD Course Lead/s. Applications for changes in supervision must be made in writing to the PhD Course Committee. Normally, the current supervisor must acknowledge the change and the proposed new supervisor and the candidate must endorse the change. All changes must be approved by the PhD Course Committee.

**14.      Absence of a supervisor**

Supervision must be provided for the duration of a candidature. It is not acceptable for a candidate to have their candidature disrupted by supervisor absence.

The supervisor who is intending an absence of four consecutive weeks or more must ensure that the PhD Course Committee is informed so that appropriate alternative supervisory arrangements can be put in place.

Alternate supervisory arrangements may comprise increased direct supervision from another member of the supervisory team i.e. the associate supervisor, co-supervisor or the PhD Course Lead.

When a principal supervisor goes on extended leave for more than four consecutive weeks the associate supervisor (or co-supervisor or one of the PhD Course Leads, whichever is applicable) assumes primary responsibility for supervision. If it is considered necessary, either because of the length of time involved or due to a lack of particular expertise, a temporary associate supervisor or expert advisor is appointed. It is the responsibility of the PhD Course Lead to make a nomination to the PhD Course Committee, normally at least a month before the supervisor departs, and after consultation with the candidate. If a supervisor is leaving NIODA, the PhD Course Lead must notify the candidate as soon as is practical. In that event:

- the departing supervisor must discuss ongoing supervisory arrangements with the candidate and PhD Course Lead

- the PhD Course Lead/s, with authority from the PhD Course Committee, vary the supervision arrangements, including appointing a new supervisor as required.

**15.      Contact and Feedback**

The type and amount of contact between supervisor and candidate depends on a variety of factors including the experience and expertise of the candidate and the stage of candidature. However, the required minimum amount of scheduled contact is monthly.

While it may be appropriate in some cases for supervisors to hold supervisory meetings with several candidates in a group, all candidates should have regular opportunities to meet with their supervisors individually.

Maintaining contact is considered to be a mutual responsibility; supervisor and candidate are jointly responsible for initiating discussions. Meetings may occur using the technology of telephone or video link. Video conferencing (such as Zoom) is utilised as the optimal method for meeting remotely with candidates, with a telephone call as a secondary option. NIODA provides one-on-one technical support to candidates, supervisors and staff to ensure access and quality engagement through the online suite of resources. See the *Learning Management System Policy* for detail.

**15.1.      Interaction between Supervisors and Candidates**

- Very early in candidature, supervisors must discuss what their respective roles are and communicate that to the candidate. From time to time, these roles may need to be reviewed, revised and re-communicated to the candidate.

- The supervisory team of supervisor, associate supervisor/expert advisor and candidate meet at least annually to ensure agreement on important issues and directions.

- There should be clear expectations about written work including which supervisor(s) respond and in what timelines.

- There should be a clear timetable for meetings and agreement on which supervisor attends which meetings, and which meetings are attended by all supervisors.

- Email is a useful means of communicating with candidates; however, this needs to be very carefully managed when providing candidates with criticisms or dealing with difficult situations or crises. In these situations meeting via Zoom (with the video on) is recommended.

- When giving feedback on a candidate's written work, it is good practice to flag comments on the written work and then follow up with discussion.

- Response times to emails from candidates are very important. If a query or written work is not able to be responded to immediately, then a reply indicating the timeline for a response is good practice. Response to emails/phone calls from candidates at NIODA is required within two business days.

- Supervisors need to take responsibility for informing their candidates of NIODA's regulations, rules and procedures.

- Supervisors need to give special attention to ensuring their candidate goes through an appropriate induction process.

- Supervisors should ensure that their candidates are able to present their work at appropriate forums.

### 15.2.    Interaction between Principal, Associate Supervisors and Expert Advisors

- Supervisors and expert advisors are to communicate with each other on advice given to the candidate. Agreement on the goals of the project should be made early in the candidature. Supervisors are to spend time discussing the model they have in mind for the research project and who is responsible for the various parts of the project.

- In the case that the supervisors or expert advisor give conflicting advice or disagree, they must meet to work out their differences and agree on what advice they give the candidate.

- All supervisors and expert advisors should copy each other when emailing the candidate.

### 15.3.    Interaction between Candidate and Supervisors

- There may be circumstances where the candidate needs to be proactive in arranging a meeting with their supervisor/s to discuss concerns they have.

## 16.    Conflict of interests and supervision

Where a supervisor becomes aware of an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interests in relation to a particular research project or candidate, the supervisor must immediately declare the conflict of interests to the PhD Course Committee

When a candidate becomes aware of an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interests in relation to a supervisor, the candidate must immediately declare the conflict of interests to the PhD Course Committee.

The PhD Course Lead, with authority from the PhD Course Committee, may vary the supervisory arrangements as a result of a Conflict of Interest declaration.

## 17.    Grievances

Candidate grievances relating to supervision or any aspect of their experience as a candidate should be made in the first instance to the supervisor. If the issues are unable to be worked through then the grievance should be escalated to the PhD Course Lead/s, and if not resolved, to the Academic Board of Governance (given the Dean is also a PhD Course Lead).

Please see the NIODA Student and Candidate Grievance Policy for a detailed explanation of levels of grievance processes. The Policy is published on the NIODA website (http://www.nioda.org.au).

## 18.    Related documents

Staff Policy

PhD Supervisor Registration Policy

PhD Progression and Exclusion Policy

PhD Annual Progress Report

PhD Examination Process Policy

Guidelines for PhD Examiners

Ethics Guidelines

Student/Candidate Grievance Policy

Conflict of Interest Policy

Register of Supervisors

Supervisor Professional Development Group Terms of Reference

PhD Course Committee Terms of Reference

Academic Integrity Policy

Artificial Intelligence Policy - students and candidates

Learning Management System Policy

## 19.    References

Australian Council of Graduate Research (n.d.). Graduate Research Good Practice Principles. Retrieved from https://www.ddogs.edu.au/good-practice-principles

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