3.   MPhil, MPhil/PhD and PhD RESEARCH SUPERVISION

3.1   Introduction

The study of a candidate who has been accepted for admission shall be supervised by a Supervisor or a team of Supervisors. However, in exceptional cases a candidate's Committee may be appointed by the Chairperson of Senate on the recommendation of FB/CILL Board.

The candidate is required to maintain frequent consultation with his/her Supervisor(s) during the period of his/her study.

3.2   Definitions

For the purpose of this document, the following definitions will apply:

3.2.1   Main Supervisor

"Main Supervisor" means a full time staff either of the University of Mauritius or of an external institution to provide appropriate academic and administrative guidance and support so as to enable the student to achieve his/her full research potential and reach the standard required for MPhil or PhD.

3.2.2   Co-Supervisors

"Co-Supervisors" means two full-time staff of the University of Mauritius, or one from the University of Mauritius and another from an external institution or a person agreeable to the University of Mauritius, who both provide appropriate academic and administrative guidance and support so as to enable the student to achieve his/her full research potential and reach the standard required for MPhil/PhD.

Co-Supervisors are normally appointed in the case where a research project has an interdisciplinary dimension. Co-Supervisors should meet the same criteria as for the Main Supervisor. Similarly, the Co-Supervisors will have the same responsibilities as the Main Supervisor.

3.2.3   Associate Supervisor

"Associate Supervisor" means:
- *Either* a person with relevant research experience from within or outside the University of Mauritius, recommended by the Main Supervisor when the latter is a full time staff of the University of Mauritius, to provide complementary supervision to the research student
- *Or* a full time staff of the University of Mauritius with relevant research experience, agreeable to the Main Supervisor when the latter is from an external institution, to provide support and complementary guidance to the student and to advise the Main Supervisor on the student's progress.

3.2.4   Medical/Industrial Supervisor

For certain disciplines of the University and in exceptional cases where the proposed supervisor is not a holder of a PhD, a Medical Supervisor may be appointed to cover clinical aspects or an Industrial Supervisor to cover industrial aspects of the research project.

3.3 Supervision

The onus is normally on the student to identify his/her potential supervisor(s). For students who are not staff of the University, the supervisor(s) must normally be from the University.

When the Main Supervisor is from an external institution, the Associate Supervisor must normally be from the University of Mauritius.

When the Main Supervisor is absent for an extended period, the Associate Supervisor will take up his/her administrative duties. When the local Supervisor(s) is(are) absent, the Dean of Faculty/Director of Centre will act as Administrative Supervisor.

When the Main Supervisor is an expatriate working at the UoM on a contractual basis, in the event that the contract of the Main Supervisor comes to term, an Associate Supervisor normally from the UoM will be appointed within six months of the expiry of the Main Supervisor's contract unless the latter agrees to continue with the supervision.

In exceptional circumstances, the Chairperson of Senate can appoint, upon the recommendation of the Faculty/CILL, a candidate's Committee comprising of not less than three members, for the supervision of a candidate. Members of the Candidate's Committee should be senior academic staff with experience in supervision at MPhil/PhD level and with expertise closely related/related to the field of study.

3.4 Criteria for Supervision

The Supervisor (whether Main, Co-Supervisor or Associate Supervisor) should meet one of the following criteria:

(i) An Academic Staff or Researcher with a PhD Degree and with at least two (2) years of post-PhD research experience and Publications in the proposed Field of Study;

(ii) An Academic Staff or Researcher without PhD Degree who is at least at Associate Professor level and who has extensive research experience as evidenced by Publications in ranked/impact factored international journals in the proposed Field of Study; and

(iii) (a) However, an Academic Staff or Researcher holding a PhD Degree but with less than two (2) years post-PhD research experience will be eligible to act as Associate Supervisor only. The maximum number of supervision as Associate Supervisor in this category will be two (2) (actual number of students [no pro-rata]); and

(b) An Academic Staff or Researcher without a PhD Degree (and in the grade of Lecturer or Senior Lecturer) and who has extensive research and industry experience as evidenced by Publications in ranked/impact factored international journals in the proposed Field of Study will be eligible to act as Associate Supervisor only. The maximum number of supervision as Associate Supervisor in this category will be two (2) (actual number of students [no pro-rata]. However, an Academic Staff who is currently doing any MPhil/PhD Degree will not be allowed to supervise until she/he has completed the degree.

Supervisors who meet:

(a) any of the criteria at (i) and (ii) above and who has no student transferred to PhD, will be eligible to supervise a maximum of two (2) MPhil/PhD students;
(b) any of the criteria at (i) and (ii) above AND who, in addition have at least one student who has already been successfully transferred to PhD, will be eligible to supervise a maximum of four (4) MPhil/PhD students; and
(c) any of the criteria at (i) and (ii) above AND who, in addition have at least one student who has

already been awarded a PhD, will be eligible to supervise a maximum of six (6) MPhil/PhD students at any point of time.

To Note:
- 'Supervisors' imply "Main, Co and Associate Supervisors"; and
- Supervision load is in terms of effective numbers, unless otherwise specified (for e.g. as in (iii) above). Co-supervision will be counted as ½ load irrespective of the number or type (i.e. Co or Associate supervisors) of Supervisors in the supervisory team.

Note: For a Medical/Industrial Supervisor who is not an Academic Staff and who is neither the holder of a PhD Degree or its equivalent from an approved University nor has had appropriate experience of supervision at doctoral level, a CV together with letters of recommendation or references of the proposed Supervisor shall be submitted at the time of the student's application, for consideration by the Higher Degrees Committee to show evidence of required expertise in the relevant field for the Supervisor to carry out the duties adequately."

3.5   Roles and Responsibilities of the Supervisors

3.5.1   Expertise of Supervisor

(i)   The supervisor should possess recognised subject expertise, skills and experience to monitor, support and direct research students' work.
(ii)   The supervisor should ensure that the topic is feasible, given the candidate's abilities and the available resources.
(iii)   The supervisor should clearly state at the very outset the field of the research work.
(iv)   The particular role and responsibilities of an Associate Supervisor should be spelt out before the research work starts.

3.5.2   Provision of Structure

(i)   Provide a clear picture to the students of the supervisor's research to avoid any ambiguity between supervisor's and student's work.
(ii)   Provide clear direction for the requirements each student must meet.
(iii)   Discuss with graduate students about research program plan and research methodology and ethics (research rigour, theoretical and experimental aspects of the research, expected standard of the research output and professional integrity).
(iv)   Ensure that students stay abreast of the literature and cutting-edge ideas in the field.
(v)   Supervisors need to closely monitor experimental work, keep a watch on results obtained and allocate sufficient time and effort in discussion of the interpretation of the results.
(vi)   Help students to develop professional skills in writing reports, papers, and grant proposals.
(vii)   Ensure that students participate actively in seminars and colloquia at the University or at national level.
(viii)   Establish professional networks and making use of professional contacts for the benefit of students.
(ix)   Ensure that time lines are set and strictly observed. Students should be requested to submit written work and the supervisor has to provide feedback and constructive criticism within a reasonable time. At the thesis writing stage, supervisors should ensure that individual chapters or parts of chapters are submitted for correction instead of the whole thesis.

3.5.3   Respect of University Policies

(i)   Ensure that the student fully understands the University Regulations and procedures for research degrees, and other relevant codes, policies, procedures and regulations of the University (health and safety, IPR) and ensure compliance;

(ii)   Ensure that all the University's procedures relating to the approval of the various stages of registration to completion of the programme are followed.

3.5.4 Development of Good Relationship and Creation of a Conducive Environment

(i)   Develop good working relationships with students that stimulate their creativity
(ii)   Provide regular feedback on the progress of students toward degree completion, including constructive criticism if the progress does not meet expectations.
(iii)   Acknowledge student contributions in research presented at conferences, in professional publications, or in applications for copyrights and patents.
(iv)   Facilitate career development, including advising students on the preparation of application materials for appropriate fellowship, scholarship, and other relevant opportunities.
(v)   Write letters of reference for appropriate fellowship, scholarship, award, and job opportunities.
(vi)   In case students face personal problems, supervisors should try as far as possible to assist them to avoid eventual drop-outs.

3.5.5 Time Allocation

Time allocation will depend on the stage of the research reached (eg. there will probably need to be more intensive supervision in the initial planning stage and at the writing-up stage). Also, the nature of the supervision (face-to-face meetings, contact via email/fax/telephone, and reading of submitted material) will have a bearing.

A minimum time allocation of:

(i)   *90 hours supervision per year for a full-time research student and*
(ii)   *45 hours per year for a part-time student should be observed.*

3.5.6 Joint Supervision Between Different Departments/Faculties

Due to the inter-disciplinary nature of some research programmes, it is often necessary to create supervisory teams consisting of academics from different Depts./Faculties across the University. In such cases, supervision as a 'team-based' approach should be encouraged and the student should meet with the team as a whole, rather than to focus on individual supervisors. This ensures that the project retains its inter-disciplinarity and that one subject is not trying to dominate another.

3.6 Academic Staff Development Scheme

The Academic Staff Development Scheme provides funding to academic staff members who are registered for an MPhil/MPhil/PhD/PhD programme to go for short attachments abroad to carry out further research.

3.7 Responsibilities of the Student

- Agree with the designated Supervisor(s) on research topic and proposal;
- Work diligently with the ultimate goal of successful completion of the research project within the prescribed period;
- Be able to work independently;
- Be innovative in the research project as it progresses;
- Be familiar with the procedures, rules and regulations governing registration, progress, transfer from MPhil to PhD (wherever applicable), examination and intellectual property rights;
- Be familiar with the University health and safety regulations;
- Attend lectures, seminars and any training programmes on the advice of the Supervisor(s);
- Agree with the Supervisor(s) on a schedule of meetings and seek to meet the Supervisor(s) for

assistance between formal meetings whenever necessary. Prepare all materials in a legible format for discussion during meetings, take notes including items for action and submit a copy to the Supervisor(s);

- Inform the Supervisor(s) promptly of any problems which may be hindering progress;
- Prepare and submit progress reports as and when required;
- Decide when to submit thesis, taking into consideration the advice of Supervisor(s);
- Report to the Dean of Faculty /Director of Centre any item of disagreement or conflict with the Supervisor(s);
- Act in accordance with ethical principles appropriate to the discipline/area.

3.8 Change of Supervisor(s)

The student or the Supervisor or both shall make a formal request to the FRC/CILLRC for any change in supervision arrangements. The FRC/CILLRC will then follow the normal procedure for appointment of Supervisor(s).

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