



STUDENT - SUPERVISOR AGREEMENT

1 BACKGROUND

The purpose of this Agreement document is to establish, guide, and ensure a healthy supervisor-student relationship for the duration of the qualification by clearly defining the roles and responsibilities of the two parties involved. The student-supervisor relationship should be a relationship of mutual trust for the duration of the study.

2 PURPOSE OF THE AGREEMENT

The main purpose of this document is to explain the relationship between, and the respective responsibilities of, the supervisor and student and not to dwell on the general relationship between the University of Johannesburg (UJ) and the supervisor (as employee) or the student. This agreement aligns and acts as an annexure to the Policy: Student-Supervisor Relationship (<https://www.uj.ac.za/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/student-supervisor-relationship-2021.pdf>).

3 BASIS OF THE AGREEMENT

- 3.1 This agreement does not replace any agreements between UJ and the student or supervisor/employee and should be read in conjunction with the general rules governing the enrolment of a student, Academic Regulations, and conditions of employment for employees.
- 3.2 The responsibilities and legitimate expectations of the supervisor (and co-supervisor(s) where applicable) and the student, respectively, are by and large applicable generically across all faculties.

4 DEFINITIONS PERTAINING TO THE AGREEMENT

4.1 Abbreviations

HOD // HOS	Head of Department // Head of School
FHDC	Faculty Higher Degrees Committee
SHDC	Senate Higher Degrees Committee

4.2 For the purpose of this Agreement, unless otherwise stated or the context otherwise indicates, the following definitions apply:

Agreement	The terms and conditions recorded in this document.
Supervisor	A member of staff, appointed on academic conditions of service by the University to give professional and academic guidance to a student registered for a formal postgraduate qualification (masters or doctoral studies). Where approved // agreed to by the line manager, professional support staff members could also be supervisors, provided they have the required qualifications. The supervisor provides academic guidance and facilitates and oversees the research process for the duration of the study.
Co-supervisor	A person who may or may not be an employee of the University, and who is appointed through the initiative of the supervisor, HOD or relevant faculty official or structure to give assistance and guidance to a student in those areas where the supervisor is not sufficiently familiar with the full scope of the field to be covered in the project, especially where the project is multidisciplinary. A co-supervisor may also be appointed for purposes of mentorship by the supervisor.
University // UJ	The University of Johannesburg
Faculty Officer	The faculty officer is responsible for postgraduate student administration in the faculty office.
Parties	The supervisor, co-supervisor (if one has been appointed), and student collectively.

PRINCIPLES OF STUDENT-SUPERVISOR RELATIONSHIP

5 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE STUDENT, AND LEGITIMATE EXPECTATIONS BY THE STUDENT'S SUPERVISOR(S)

- 5.1 Students are responsible for diligently exercising the responsibilities listed below, and where appropriate, consult with supervisors to give effect to the responsibilities. Conversely, supervisors may reasonably expect the student always to exercise these responsibilities.
- 5.2 Students must draft a work schedule specifying submission dates for the research proposal and components such as questionnaires, chapters, and the list of sources // references.
- 5.3 Students must implement the agreed research program or project.
- 5.4 Students must find and source relevant literature, extract the relevant information from it, and synthesise the information contained therein as may be appropriate for master's and doctoral studies, respectively.
- 5.5 Students must complete the research proposal in the time stipulated. Refer to the University Academic Regulation for submission timelines.
- 5.6 Students must prepare all documents required for obtaining ethical clearance (if applicable). No project that requires ethical clearance may start before such clearances have been received (in full). Similarly, where permits are required for research, fieldwork may not commence before receiving full approval from relevant authorities/committees.
- 5.7 Students must maintain regular contact with supervisors and keep to the agreed work schedule. If, for whatever reason, students do not keep to the agreed work schedule, they must discuss these reasons with their supervisors and co-supervisors and submit a revised workplan schedule.
- 5.8 Students must inform the supervisor and faculty officer of any changes to their contact details.
- 5.9 When students become aware of funding opportunities, they should inform their supervisor. Working with the supervisor, students may prepare funding proposals.
- 5.10 Students must always adhere to all general academic ethics regarding academic integrity, misconduct, and ethical requirements relating to the research work.
- 5.11 Students must engage in any required fieldwork, laboratory experimentations, data gathering, data processing, and statistical analyses, as required to complete the research successfully.
- 5.12 Students must submit neatly typed or otherwise legible work to the supervisors as per the agreed work schedule. Students must always keep copies (electronic or paper) of submitted work in a safe, access-controlled place.
- 5.13 Students must discuss any fieldwork or experiments they may undertake or

questionnaires, interviews, or synthesis they may want to use in detail with their supervisors prior to implementation. See also the sections above dealing with ethical approval and requirements for permits.

- 5.14 If medical or other acceptable reasons exist for interrupting/suspending a student's registration with the University, the faculty may grant such an interruption/suspension for a stipulated period of time, provided that the request by the student is supported by a medical certificate to this effect, as issued by a registered physician, or other applicable documentary proof to substantiate the request. Students who seek such abeyance must apply for this in writing to the supervisor and faculty officer, who will submit the application to the relevant faculty official or faculty structure for consideration.
- 5.15 Students must make regular appointments with supervisors and inform them in time if any administrative or academic difficulties are being experienced in the study programme so that the supervisors may advise in respect of corrective action.
- 5.16 Students must meticulously attend to any corrections, amendments, or revisions related to their minor dissertation, dissertation, or thesis required by the supervisor.
- 5.17 Students must participate in seminars, courses, research projects, and programmes as determined by the supervisor, department, or as required by the faculty's regulations, including attending, and presenting at symposia, seminars, and conferences.
- 5.18 If necessary, students must purchase items and pay for the services (such as, e.g., language services) that may be required to complete the production of the dissertation, minor dissertation, or thesis. Students are encouraged to also make use of the university services, offered by the Research Capacity and Development Unit at the Postgraduate School, through writing consultants, as well as a dedicated UJ Writing Centre.
- 5.19 Students must renew their registration with the University annually at the stipulated times and in accordance with the Higher Degrees Administration: Structures and Processes Policy until they have completed the relevant qualifications. If medical or other acceptable reasons exist for interrupting // suspending a student's registration with the University, the faculty may grant such an interruption/abeyance for a stipulated period of time, provided that the request by the student is supported by a medical certificate to this effect, as issued by a registered physician, or other applicable documentary proof to substantiate the request. The University and faculty may refuse to re-register students who interrupted or suspended their studies for any period without having been granted leave to do so.
- 5.20 Students must type and proofread their work properly before submitting it to their supervisors. Students cannot expect supervisors to be responsible for proofreading or be generally responsible for editing grammar, punctuation, spelling, and formatting. Where appropriate // required, supervisors may insist on the work being proofread and edited by a professional editor at the student's expense.
- 5.21 Students must liaise with their supervisors in terms of finalising their studies and submitting their theses, dissertations, or minor dissertations for final assessment (examination).

- 5.22 Students must ensure that all hard/digital copies (*depending on Faculty requirements*) of the minor dissertation, dissertation, or thesis, as well as other required documents and forms are complete and meticulously prepared when submitting for final assessment purposes.
- 5.23 In the case of a research masters or doctoral study, students must finalise at least one research article ready for submission to an accredited journal by the time the faculty assessment committee considers the assessment results (*It is important to note that faculties may have different approved requirements, and these should be adhered to*). A student may be required to submit a publishable article based on a minor dissertation that may, at the discretion of the supervisor, be submitted for publication in a journal under the authorship of the student or the student and the supervisor (this is field-dependent). Authorship and co-authorship of publications arising from the research are dealt with in terms of the university's "Policy on Authorship" available on the UJ website ([authorship-policy-2021.pdf](#)) and by approval of the Senate Higher Degrees Committee.
- 5.24 Students must meticulously attend to all corrections and amendments proposed by the assessors under the supervision of their supervisor.
- 5.25 In the case of doctoral students, students are required to also partake in an oral defense of their work (to be organised by the designated persons in the department // school and // or faculty).
- 5.26 Students must submit the revised copy of their minor dissertation, dissertation, or thesis (electronic copy) and the accompanying documents to their supervisors. It is the responsibility of the supervisor to submit all these documents timeously to the faculty officer (and in the case of a doctoral thesis, also a laudation). Failing to submit the relevant documents (student → supervisor → faculty officer) may result in students missing deadlines for graduation or being required to reregister in the subsequent year.
- 5.27 Students must submit reports on their progress to their supervisors, faculty officials, or faculty structures, as may be requested. This must happen twice per year and should accurately reflect their progress. Supervisors are required to comment on the progress of students.
- 5.28 Students are required to be reasonable in their dealings with supervisors and may not expect Supervisors to adhere to unreasonable requests such as asking them to review their work over holidays/weekends or asking for letters of recommendation on short notice. Students are generally required to consult with supervisors at the University's premises.
- 5.29 Students must meet all the minimum requirements to successfully complete their qualifications and graduate.

6 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SUPERVISOR (AND CO-SUPERVISOR) AND LEGITIMATE EXPECTATIONS BY THE STUDENT OF THE SUPERVISOR AND CO-SUPERVISOR

- 6.1 Supervisors are responsible for exercising the responsibilities below diligently, and

students may reasonably expect supervisors to exercise these responsibilities.

- 6.2 Where co-supervisors have been appointed, they must coordinate their inputs and liaise regularly with each other in order to clarify, on an ongoing basis, their roles and responsibilities in regard to the academic supervision of the student.
- 6.3 Supervisors administer and manage matters associated with the student's studies in accordance with the rules, regulations, policies, and procedures (processes) of the University and faculty.
- 6.4 Supervisors provide academic guidance to students to ensure the development of research skills and mastery of the research discipline and the field of specialisation and ensure that these competencies are demonstrated in the relevant minor dissertation, dissertation, or thesis.
- 6.5 Clarify the respective roles of the supervisor and co-supervisor(s) (if the latter is appointed) and communicate these clearly to the student.
- 6.6 Maintain a cordial but professional relationship with the student taking due cognisance of the power relations between the supervisor and the student.
- 6.7 Encourage and assist the student to seek and apply for external financial support (bursaries) for their studies. It remains the responsibility of the supervisor to ensure that research projects are funded.
- 6.8 Coordinate the inputs of the supervisors (where co-supervisors have been appointed).
- 6.9 Ensure that the student is provided with the basic infrastructure and necessary resources to undertake the research.
- 6.10 Ensure that the faculty officer concerned with postgraduate studies and the relevant committees are furnished with all the relevant documentation at the specified times. These include, but are not limited to, project proposals, ethical clearance and permits (where relevant), progress reports twice per year, appointment of external examiners, and assessment reports.
- 6.11 Facilitate the student's access to necessary research resources, such as the library, fieldwork, locations, and equipment while not diminishing the student's obligation to take responsibility for their own research.
- 6.12 Introduce the student to the department and faculty in order to, where possible and practicable, involve them in academic activities.
- 6.13 Supervisors meet with students regularly to provide guidance, monitor progress in relation to agreed-upon timeframes, and recommend corrective measures if necessary.
- 6.14 Supervisors must be available for regular supervisory meetings with students – at least monthly but more frequently during the planning and final stages.
- 6.15 Supervisors must see to it that there is a written record of meetings, feedback supplied to students, and progress.
- 6.16 Supervisors must supply timely and constructive feedback to students on submitted work.

- 6.17 Supervisors must provide regular progress reports required by the faculty and University, including by the FHDC or SHDC.
- 6.18 Supervisors supply reports to external funders or agencies whenever these are requested.
- 6.19 Supervisors guide students to adhere, at all times, to academic integrity, academic misconduct principles, and ethical requirements for research.
- 6.20 Supervisors propose suitable assessors for the particular study in accordance with the University and faculty guidelines.
- 6.21 In the case of a research masters or doctoral study, supervisors ensure that students finalise and submit to them at least one research article ready for submission to an accredited journal by the time the faculty assessment committee considers the assessment results. (It is important to note that faculties may have different approved requirements, and these should be adhered to). A supervisor may require from a student to submit a publishable article based on a minor dissertation that may, at the discretion of the supervisor, be submitted for publication in a journal under the authorship of the student or the student and the supervisor. If the supervisor does not require the submission of a publishable article based on a minor dissertation, a student is exempt from such an obligation. Authorship and co-authorship of publications arising from the research are dealt with in terms of the university's "**Policy on Authorship**" available on the UJ website ([authorship-policy-2021.pdf \(uj.ac.za\)](#)).
- 6.22 Supervisors prepare and submit the reports that may be necessary for the assessment of the minor dissertation, dissertation, or thesis.
- 6.23 Supervisors must oversee any changes proposed by the assessors and/or the relevant postgraduate assessment committee, FHDC, or SHDC.
- 6.24 Supervisors must generally consult with students at the University's premises.

7 DISPUTE RESOLUTION

- 7.1 Disputes between the parties must be resolved in terms of the Higher Degrees Administration Policy and UJ Academic Regulations.
- 7.2 In the event of disputes between students and supervisors, the parties are generally expected to resolve the dispute amicably on their own. If such attempts fail, the parties may request the intervention of a facilitator to assist in finding a resolution to the dispute.
- 7.3 If all *bona fide* attempts to resolve a disagreement without the formal involvement of third parties with decision-making authority have failed, the parties should then alert the HOD of the particular academic department of the dispute. The HOD will then mediate a resolution if possible. Where a resolution cannot be achieved with the involvement of the HOD, the matter will be referred to the Executive Dean of the faculty for final resolution, who may consult with or refer the matter to an appropriate Academic Ethics Committee, the FHDC or any other structure within the University.

8 PARTIES TO THIS AGREEMENT

The Parties to this Agreement are:

(A) THE STUDENT

Student Surname:			
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(hereafter referred to as '*the student*')

Student number:									
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Qualification	
Research Area (Tick the area relevant to your research)	(a) Societal Impact (SI) (b) 4IR- related research
Highlight the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) applicable to your research.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No Poverty 2. Zero Hunger 3. Good Health and Well-being 4. Quality Education 5. Gender Equality 6. Clean Water and Sanitation 7. Affordable and Clean Energy 8. Decent work and Economic Growth 9. Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure 10. Reduced Inequalities 11. Sustainable Cities and Communities 12. Responsible Consumption and Production 13. Climate Action 14. Life below Water 15. Life on Land 16. Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions 17. Partnerships for the Goals

Physical address:	
Postal code:	
E-mail address:	
Cell phone number:	
Other contact number:	

(B) THE SUPERVISOR

Surname		Initials	
Department			
Faculty			
University or Institution			

(hereafter referred to as "*the Supervisor*")

Staff number:										
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(and if applicable)

(C) THE CO-SUPERVISOR

Surname		Initials	
Department			
Faculty			
University or Institution			

(hereafter referred to as "*the Co-supervisor*")

Staff number:										
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9 SIGNATORIES OF THE PARTIES INVOLVED IN THIS AGREEMENT

9.1 STUDENT

Signed at _____ on this _____ day of _____ 20____.										

STUDENT _____ (Name in print)										
Student number:										

9.2 SUPERVISOR

Signed at _____ on this _____ day of _____
20__.

SUPERVISOR **(Name in print)**

CO-SUPERVISOR

Signed at _____ on this _____ day of _____
20__.

CO-SUPERVISOR **(Name in print)**

