### Vice Chancellor’s Awards for Excellence in Research Higher Degree Supervision: Structuring the argument in your application.

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<th>Intention</th>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
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<td><strong>What do you aim to achieve in your supervision? Why?</strong></td>
<td><strong>How do you do this?</strong></td>
<td><strong>How do you convince somebody else that you did this and it actually achieved your aim.</strong></td>
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<td>I aim to develop a supportive structure for my postgraduate research students so that they feel confident about completing on time</td>
<td>I schedule regular meetings with students where we discuss our goals for the degree as a whole and the shorter term goals that we agree will be achieved at different stages. We check that these have been achieved and keep a record so that we can chart progress</td>
<td>The documentation of schedule of meetings and topics charting progress demonstrates this. All my postgraduate research students to date have completed their degrees on time.</td>
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<td>I aim to promote independence in student learning by harnessing students inherent curiosity and engaging them as active partners in their own learning.</td>
<td>I utilise the a structured discussion to compare perceptions of how ‘hands on’ or ‘hands off’ the supervision is (the supervision alignment tool) that I learnt about in the supervisors’ development program at regular intervals so that my students and I can look at whether the type of supervision is appropriate to their needs at that particular time.</td>
<td>Employers of graduates have written to me noting the capacity of my students to take responsibility and to work without supervision.</td>
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<td>I aim to ensure that students from diverse backgrounds have supervision which suits their needs including their level of English.</td>
<td>I ask students to begin writing right from the beginning of their candidature. This enables me to assess the level of difficulty they are likely to have with the thesis and provide appropriate help. Where considerable help with English written work is needed I ensure they are referred to the Language Centre early.</td>
<td>I now have a much higher % of students from overseas enrolling, and more importantly, a much higher completion rate. Students have commented on the value of the support I have given to them rather than identifying the fact that they are from overseas as a source of ‘difficulty’ as many had in the past.</td>
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<td>I aim to make students’ learning pathways more directly relevant to their diverse lives and to their future career paths in their communities.</td>
<td>I ask students to complete a ‘learning contract’ at the start where they set out their career and other goals and how their candidature is going to help them achieve these.</td>
<td>Completed learning contracts provide evidence of this process. Students who have completed their degrees have achieved positions detailed in their contracts.</td>
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<td>I believe it is important to ensure that students are inducted into the research community by taking part in departmental seminars and going to conferences</td>
<td>I have organised a series of departmental seminars where students present to staff other students and visitors. I have secured a small travel grant from an outside agency which I used to assist students in attending international conferences.</td>
<td>A full Seminar program has been prepared and each seminar has been attended by at least 15 people. Students have commented how much they have valued this in the evaluation form they completed after each semester. I have prepared a booklet containing papers presented at conferences by my postgraduate students.</td>
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A thesis has to have a solid grounding in the literature. Students have to understand the landscape of the literature; who are the important and who the less important researchers are in the field and convey this in their thesis.

I provide specially prepared resources to assist students in doing a literature review which is thorough and as complete as possible.

The students who have been through this process and have completed their degrees have all had very good comments in examiners’ reports. Two theses have been described in examiners’ reports as ‘exemplary’ and one commented: ‘the students’ grasp of the literature in this field is superbe.’

I challenge students to think critically about the theory they are building. They have to be able to defend their ideas in the face of critical challenge.

My postgraduate students all meet together once a month and talk about their ideas. They are encouraged to challenge each other in these meetings.

I have received invitations from overseas universities to talk about my supervision practices and how I develop students’ ability to critically reason and defend their arguments.

Students should be encouraged to critically reflect on their practice in order to improve it. Critical reflection is viewed in the literature as an essential component of professional practice.

Students keep a journal detailing their ideas about their research as they critically reflect on their practice and change it. The use of journals as an effective strategy for reflection has been emphasised by Brookfield 1999.

In their exit interview all but one of my students mentioned how they had learned from the practice of reflection. Some students have used their analysis of their reflective journal in their thesis. I prepared a chapter jointly with one postgrad student and this was published in a book of readings.

I critically reflect on my supervisory practice in order to improve it. Such reflection is one of the three aspects of professionalism in teaching identified by…..

I have negotiated with a colleague to spend time supporting each other’s reflection through critical peer review and professional development discussions. We have jointly studied the postgraduate supervisors’ online program and discussed our responses.

I completed the Recognition Module for the Postgraduate Supervision Development Program and achieved the Certificate of Program Completion.

In order to further the scholarly understanding of student learning I am active in research and inquiry into supervision pedagogy…..

I initiated a collaborative research project with my colleagues in … and successfully applied for funding from the faculty…… I prepared a paper on supervision in my field.

The outcomes of this research were presented at the HERDSA conference and an article on this research has been accepted for publication in the refereed journal…..

**And some not so convincing examples……….**

I include a focus on writing because when students complete their thesis they need to be able to write cogently in English. I think this is an important student learning outcome.

If my students have a problem with English I tell them.

All my students’ theses have been written in English and I have never had a student complain about my supervision.

I am enthusiastic about my students and genuinely committed to their learning.

I try to make sure that all students complete their thesis. This is important because I really care about the students and want them to succeed.

I have supervised 10 students. Five of these have gone on to Post-doctoral work and one is now a senior lecturer in the US. The others are all working in industry and one works as a middle manager in a large chemical company.