



Faculty of Education and Social Work
The University of Sydney

EDPR 6001: Research Higher Degree Supervision Unit of Study Outline

Semesters 1 and 2, 2007

1. Welcome and introduction.....
2. Teaching Staff Details.....
3. Timetable and Teaching Mode
4. What is this Unit about?.....
5. Essential Readings, Textbooks and Other Resources
6. Assessment.....
7. Seminar/Tutorial/Workshop Program.....
8. Other notes on this unit of study
9. Other recommended reading and resources

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1. Welcome and introduction

We welcome you to the Development Program for Research Higher Degree Supervision. The Program is an initiative of the Institute for Teaching and Learning (ITL), in collaboration with the University's Research and Research Training Committee, the Dean of Graduate Studies and the Faculty of Education and Social Work. As a consequence, the Program can now be completed as a unit of study in the Graduate Diploma/Masters in Education (Higher Education) course.

You access the Program website and materials at <http://www.itl.usyd.edu.au/supervision>

2. Teaching Staff Details

2.1. Unit of Study Coordinators

Associate Professor Angela Brew and Dr Tai Peseta

Room and building *Institute for teaching and Learning, Carslaw F07*

Phone number *(02) 9351 4820"*

Email contact *You can contact Angela at A.Brew@usyd.edu.au, or Tai at tpeseta@usyd.edu.au*

Arrangements for student consultation The Coordinator for the Graduate Diploma and Masters course in 2006 is Angela Brew. Contact Angela with general questions about any of the units which comprise the Diploma or Masters course.

Please note, too, that if you have enquiries about your **enrolment or fees**, these issues are handled through the **Faculty of Education and Social Work** Graduate Division, where the contact person is **Maryke Sutton**, email m.sutton@edfac.usyd.edu.au. Her telephone number is 9351 4605 and she is located in Room 307 in the Education Building A35.

3. Timetable and Teaching Mode

In order to complete this unit, it is essential that you have regular email and internet access. This unit is offered through a flexible learning mode. It is primarily a web-based independent learning program of study. This means that it relies on you to plan your study appropriately.

There are no official class meetings, only a series of optional workshops and sessions that support your learning in the Independent Study Program modules. Since the Workshop Program is optional, it is up to you to decide whether they will benefit your learning and then register to attend. You can read about the different types of workshops and sessions, and access the dates for 2006 at <http://www.itl.usyd.edu.au/supervision/workshops/overview.cfm>

Since this unit is offered flexibly, a large part of your time learning will seem like it is at a computer screen. You should aim to set aside time each week to make progress through the modules. Putting a regular time in your diary will help you keep on track. Feedback from supervisors who have completed the Program suggests that the first 6 modules take on average about 1.5 - 2 hours each to complete. The precise timing will depend on the extent to which you choose to follow up on extended discussions and the scholarly reading.

Unit of Study Outline

To help make the process feel a little less isolating and to generate some local discussion in your context, you might consider forming a peer support group with colleagues in your Faculty who have completed, or are currently engaged in the Program. You can find a list at <http://www.itl.usyd.edu.au/supervision/atusyd/peersupport.cfm> or you can contact Angela or Tai (see Staff Contact Information) for further information

Learning Situations

If you have not done so already, you need to register separately to gain access to the Independent Study Program. You can do that at <http://www.itl.usyd.edu.au/supervision/isp/register.cfm>. Once you have registered, your password, along with your registration details will be sent to your email inbox. This password will give you access to the modules which comprise the Independent Study Program. You should use it to login to your work on the Program. Please keep it secure.

The Independent Study Program comprises of 7 modules.

1. Preparing for Supervision
2. The First Meeting
3. Managing the Process
4. End of Year Review
5. Helping Your Student to Write
6. Completing the Thesis
7. The Recognition Module

The first six modules are structured around the stages of supervision. The stages represent the steps you might be expected to progress through whenever you undertake to supervise a research project or thesis. Each module contains background reading, interactive activities as triggers for reflection and discussion, together with an opportunity to post reflections of your learning to a discussion forum. Through the discussion forum, you will have contact with all other supervisors currently engaged in completing the Program. Throughout the modules, you will be asked to draw on your experiences of being supervised, or engaging in supervision in order to improve it.

The Recognition Module provides the assessment framework in which you critically reflect on your practice and learning about supervision. It should only be attempted once you have completed the first six modules since it is structured somewhat differently from them. You will be asked to draw together your reflections through the preparation of a staged case study. The case study process is intended to help you demonstrate a coherent and scholarly educational rationale for your supervision. You will receive feedback on your submissions since the case study will be assessed against the University's criteria for good supervision practice, together with a set of grade descriptors (see Assessment).

The face to face workshops and sessions provide an opportunity for you to meet and talk with other participants who are completing the Program. Participating in these is an optional part of completing this unit. In other words, you can complete the unit having attending none, one or all of the workshops. 2006 dates are available at http://www.itl.usyd.edu.au/postgrad/wkshop_rego.htm.

Learner Preparation

Before you begin, you may find it helpful to download the set of scholarly readings which support your learning for each of the modules (see Unit of Study Resources).

You may also find it useful to download the University's Postgraduate Research and Coursework Handbook for 2005/2006. You can access it at <http://www.itl.usyd.edu.au/supervision/workshops/overview.cfm>. The Handbook contains the most up-to-date information about the institutional context for research higher degree supervision such as the Code of Practice for supervising postgraduate research students, information about intellectual property, satisfactory progress and examination of theses.

Unit of Study Outline

We suggest that you might also find it helpful to find out who your Faculty Postgraduate Coordinator or Associate Dean (Research) is. This is usually the person who has carriage of supervision matters in the faculty and can offer you specific advice about the interpretation of university policy at that level.

4. What is this Unit about?

4.1. Unit of Study Aims

This unit aims to provide professional and scholarly academic development and training in research higher degree supervision through a flexible learning mode. It caters particularly for academics who are new to supervision. You will gain most from it if you are actively engaged in the supervision of research students or contemplate being so in the near future.

The unit is also designed to support you in developing a coherent and scholarly account of your practice as a supervisor. It introduces you to the scholarly literature on postgraduate pedagogy and supervision development in order for you to take a pro-active approach to the challenges and changes in the relationship. The unit also helps to develop your skills as a research higher degree supervisor and provides you with opportunities to practise those skills.

The unit also builds on the work you would have encountered in the Graduate Certificate in Educational Studies (Higher Education) course. It extends the work of critical reflection, academic professionalism and student-focused approaches to learning in the context of your role as a supervisor, and the role of research supervision more generally. By the end of the unit, you will have understood the necessity in taking a critically reflective approach to your supervision practice.

4.2 Student Learning Outcomes

In addition to any personal learning outcomes you set yourself, by the end of this unit, you will have:

- become familiar with the institutional and organisational policies and procedures related to research higher degree supervision in the University;
- gained a better understanding of what is involved in developing a professional, scholarly and research-based approach to your supervision practice;
- engaged with aspects of the literature on supervision development and postgraduate pedagogy;
- begun to critically evaluate aspects of your practice that you would like to improve;
- begun to think about the importance of developing a set of pro-active strategies to address challenges in the supervisory relationship;
- considered the importance of locating your supervision within a collegial context (communities of practice);
- inquired into; and written a case study about an aspect of your supervision that you would like to improve.

5. Essential Readings, Textbooks and Other Resources

5.1. Unit of Study Resources

There is no single set text for this unit of study. Many of the readings and resources that support your learning in this unit will be downloadable via the Course Online Reading Service (CORS) through Fisher Library. Each of the modules has a list of readings. We suggest that you download the readings at the point at which you come to study the modules. This will provide you with a structure to your study. You can access CORS at <http://www.library.usyd.edu.au/databases/ereserve.html> to get a full list of the readings available.

6. Assessment

6.1 Assessment policies in Education and Social Work

All assessment in this Unit of Study occurs in conformity with the policies of the Faculty of Education and Social Work, which is outlined on the web site of the Faculty of Education and Social Work.

Please refer to these policies for such matters as:

- Marking and grading
- Questioning a mark
- Submitting an Assignment
- Exams
- Seeking an extension
- Penalties for late submission of work
- Plagiarism and academic honesty
- Seeking special consideration
- Seeking leave of absence
- Student appeals process

All students enrolled in this unit of study are expected, without exception, to make themselves familiar with these policies. They are available at the following website:

http://www.edsw.usyd.edu.au/current_students/policies/

The University has adopted severe but fair procedures for dealing with plagiarism. It is imperative that students understand what constitutes plagiarism. The threat of being accused of plagiarism is generally relieved by expert referencing of your assignments. If you are unsure on how to reference well, please refer to the publications of the Faculty mentioned above, and also the following website:

<http://www.usyd.edu.au/senate/policies/Plagiarism.pdf>

6.2 Assessment

There are no examinations in this unit. Assessment is based upon the completion of the Independent Study Program, in particular, the work which comprises the Recognition Module Case Study. In order to complete this unit, you must pass the Recognition Module.

Grade Descriptors: The following grades are used as a basis for feedback in all units of study in the ITL's graduate programs.

| | |
|--|--|
| High Distinction 85% - 100% | As for the criteria for 'Distinction' however the work also shows a high degree of originality and creativity. There is evidence that the view of teaching and learning in professional, vocational and/or higher education and their application in practice, has contributed to personal learning. There is good evidence of critical reflection on academic practice and identification of strategies for development. There is evidence of the ability to generalize the subject content to areas not covered in formal class session. |
| Distinction 75% - 84% | The work shows a good appreciation of the general purpose of the topic. There is good coverage of the topic with relevant and accurate support and a well developed scholarly argument. The work demonstrates a clear view of how the various aspects of the topic integrate to meet the purpose. There is good evidence of application of assignment content to a relevant context. |
| Credit 65% - 74% | The work is relevant, accurate and addresses several aspects of the topic. There is demonstration of understanding in relation to a reasonable amount of the content and a scholarly argument has been advanced. There is limited evidence of an overall integrative view of the topic and limited application or integration. |
| Pass 50% - 64% | The information in the various aspects of the work is relevant and accurate but is not integrated and only covers core aspects of the topic. There is an attempt at a scholarly argument and the work indicates a limited understanding of the topic. |
| Fail 0% - 49% | The information in the work is irrelevant, inaccurate or has missed the point. The work is insufficient; there is a lack of engagement with learning tasks or a failure to submit in the agreed timeframe. |

6.3 Assessment tasks in this Unit of Study

There are two points of assessment in this unit - both relate to the case study you will complete as part of the Recognition Module. Your work at both these points must have achieved a Passing grade or above in order to meet the requirements of the unit.

If your case study or an aspect of your case study does not meet the requirements for a Pass you may be asked to submit a revision. If by the end of semester, your revised case study has still not been completed to at least a Passing standard, it will be assessed as Fail.

In the ITL, we work firstly with qualitative descriptions rather than numerical marks. So your case study will receive a grade based on the qualities demonstrated and we will then assign a mark. Your overall grade for the semester will be based on your results at these two points of assessment.

With regard to the kind of academic writing appropriate for a unit in the ITL's graduate programs, we also expect you to adhere to certain minimum standards and the referencing follows the conventions set out in the Faculty of Education & Social Work Style Guide (see http://www.edsw.usyd.edu.au/current_students/policies/style_guide_04.shtml)

| Task | Weighting | Word count |
|----------------------------|-----------|------------|
| • Descriptive Account: 30% | 30% | 3000 |
| • Case Study Account: 70% | 70% | 3000 |

6.3.1 Descriptive account

Due date for completion: *See attached timetable*

Submission instructions: *Via the Program website*

The **Descriptive Account** asks you to describe your supervision practices and your experiences of supervision and identify key issues that have concerned you, or that you have been dealing with. When you are ready, you will submit that work to us for feedback.

Following feedback, you are asked to explore at a deeper level, the rationale for your supervisory practice and engage more critically with the issues that you have been concerned with throughout your study of this Program. This **Reflective Account** will act as the foundation to your Case Study.

Full details are on the web site

Assessment criteria

- demonstrated some familiarity with the institutional and organisational policies and procedures related to research higher degree supervision in the University;
- have begun to critically evaluate aspects of practice that to improve;
- have begun to think about the importance of developing a set of pro-active strategies to address challenges in the supervisory relationship;
- evidence that the program has been studied seriously through use of terms, techniques, information contained in the modules.

6.3.2 Case study account)

Due date for completion: *See attached timetable*

Unit of Study Outline

Submission instructions: *Via the program website*

Using a combination of your writing in your first descriptive piece and your responses to reflective questioning, your **Case Study** will start to take shape. In writing your Reflective Account, you will be encouraged to identify the constraints and possibilities involved in your future supervision. You will also be asked to develop realistic strategies to provide a framework for improving your practice. This will be written up as your Case Study.

Full details are on the web site

Assessment criteria

The following must be demonstrated in the case study

1. Interest in, and enthusiasm for, the supervision of postgraduate research students.
2. Appreciation of a range of good practice approaches to supervision and an understanding of what constitutes a productive research learning environment.
3. Establishment, for and with students, of clear goals and expectations in the light of up to date knowledge of the University's requirements.
4. Productive and regular meetings held with students which provide them with sympathetic, responsive and effective academic, professional and personal support and guidance.
5. Careful management of the supervisory process to achieve timely and successful completion of the thesis.
6. Development of a partnership with students which takes account of the need to assist them to develop a range of generic attributes and to introduce them to the research community.
7. Open communication established with students with timely feedback, which is both supportive and challenging, given on progress.
8. Utilisation of a repertoire of supervisory strategies to take account of the differing and diverse needs of individual students including assisting students from equity groups and those off campus to achieve success in their study.
9. Evidence of systematic evaluation of competency in supervisory skills and of critical reflection and engagement with salient and emergent issues in their own field of research, to improve supervisory practice.
10. Use, by the supervisor, of the literature on the scholarship of supervision pedagogy, and of relevant policy issues in research education to enhance the postgraduate research experience of their students.

7 Seminar/Tutorial/Workshop Program

The following schedule is a guide only. It is intended to help you plan the progress of your study throughout the semester. Please note the dates at which we have suggested the submission of your work for the Recognition Module.

7.1 Semester 1 Guide

| Semester Weeks | Suggested timeframe for completion of Modules | Optional face to face meetings Workshops & Sessions |
|---------------------------|--|---|
| | Register for the Program | Wed 1 March: Online session 12-2pm, Carslaw 174 |
| Week 1 6 March | Read the Unit Outline and download all materials ready for independent study | |
| Week 2 13 March | Complete Module 1: Preparing for Supervision | |
| Week 3 20 March | Complete Module 2: Meeting the Student | |

Unit of Study Outline

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| Week 4 27 March | Complete Module 3: Managing the Process | Wed 29 March: Online session 12-2pm, Carlaw 174 |
| Week 5 3 April | Complete Module 4: End of Year Review | |
| Week 6 10 April | Complete Module 5: Helping Your Student to Write | Wed 12 April: Recognition Module Workshop 9.30-1pm, Carlaw 354 |
| Mid-semester break (17-21 April) | | |
| Week 7 24 April | Complete Module 6: Completing the Thesis | Wed 26 April: Online session 12-2pm, Carlaw 174 |
| Week 8 1 May | | |
| Week 9 8 May | Module 7: Recognition Module Submit Descriptive Account | |
| Week 10 15 May | | |
| Week 11 22 May | Module 7: Recognition Module Receive Feedback on Descriptive Account | |
| Week 12 29 May | | Wed 31 May: Online session 12-2pm, Carlaw 174 |
| Week 13 5 June | Module 7: Recognition Module Submit Final Case Study Account | |
| Week 14: STUVAC 12 June | | |
| Week 15: EXAMS 19 June | Module 7: Recognition Module Receive feedback on Final Case Account | |
| Week 16: EXAMS 26 June | | Wed 28 June: Online session 12-2pm, Carlaw 174 |

7.2 Semester 2 Guide

| Semester Weeks | Suggested timeframe for completion of Modules | Optional face to face meetings? |
|----------------------------|--|---|
| | Register for the Program | Thurs 20 July: Understanding Research Higher Degree Supervision Workshop |
| Week 1 23 July | Read the Unit Outline and download all materials ready for independent study | Wed 25 July : Online session 1-2pm, Carlaw 174 |
| Week 2 30 July | Complete Module 1: Preparing for Supervision | |
| Week 3 6 August | Complete Module 2: Meeting the Student | |
| Week 4 13 August | Complete Module 3: Managing the Process | |
| Week 5 20 August | Complete Module 4: End of Year Review | |
| Week 6 27 August | Complete Module 5: Helping Your Student to Write | Wed 29 Aug: Online session 12-2pm, Carlaw 174 |

Unit of Study Outline

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|---|---|--|
| Week 7 3 September | Complete Module 6: Completing the Thesis | |
| Week 8 10 September | | |
| Mid-semester break (24-28 September) | | Tues 19 Sept: Recognition Module Workshop 9.30-1pm, Carslaw 361 |
| Week 9 17 September | Recognition Module Submit Descriptive Account | Wed 19 Sept: Online session 12-2pm, Carslaw 174 |
| Week 10 1 October | | |
| Week 11 8 October | Recognition Module Receive Feedback on Descriptive Account | |
| Week 12 15 October | | |
| Week 13 22 October | Recognition Module Submit Final Case Study Account | Wed 24 Oct: Online session 12-2pm, Carslaw 174 |
| Week 14: STUVAC 29 October | | |
| Week 15: EXAMS 5 November | Recognition Module Receive feedback on Final Case Account | |
| Week 16: EXAMS 12 November | | |

8 Other notes on this unit of study

8.1 Evaluation

The teaching team of this unit is committed to the participation of learners in the process of planning and evaluation teaching. We will be asking you to provide feedback, formally and informally, on your experiences of learning in this unit of study so that we can continue to incorporate your views in our planning. In addition to any formal evaluation strategies, we hope you will feel comfortable enough to share your experiences as learners with us in a private conversation. We are committed to incorporating your feedback into future iterations of the unit.

9 Other recommended reading and resources

9.1 Useful web links

Institute for Teaching and Learning (ITL)

The ITL website contains information on graduate courses and programs as well as useful resources that may be relevant to your assessment components. From the ITL website you can also access other useful higher education websites such as HERDSA (Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia) and AAHE (American Association of Higher Education).

<http://www.itl.usyd.edu.au>

2005/06 Postgraduate Research and Coursework Handbook

This handbook sets out the university's regulations surrounding the research higher degree student experience at the University of Sydney.

<http://www.usyd.edu.au/fstudent/postgrad/study/pub/handbooks.shtml>

Academic Policies of the University of Sydney

Unit of Study Outline

You will find policies on the research higher degree supervision training through the University's policy index.
<http://www.usyd.edu.au/su/planning/policy/index.html>