

Meeting in the middle: Expectations of PhD students and supervisors



LET'S GET STARTED

essential information for new postgraduate research students 2009



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Some background...

- PhD completions are important for:
 - You!
 - Your supervisor
 - Your department or school
 - The University

- But not everyone completes, and not everyone completes in a timely manner





Supervisors and expectations

- Your relationship with your supervisor can have a big impact on your progress and experience
- Having clear expectations of the process and of what to expect from your supervisor may help





Supervisors and expectations

- Research Student Handbook
 - Guidelines about responsibilities of supervisor and student
 - Recommends use of Expectations in Supervision form
 - Student and supervisor meet to fill in form consisting of 12 Likert scale items





Some preliminary research findings...

- Surveyed some staff and students in the School of Psychology about:
 - their experiences of supervision
 - the expectation issues they believe are important to address prior to beginning, and during, a thesis





Some feedback from students...

- Regularity and frequency of meetings; who initiates meetings
- Timeline for work
- Models for different methods and write-ups
- Draft turn-around and feedback
- Information about conferences, funding for travel
- Publications
- Personal support; nature of relationship





Some recommendations...

- Use the Expectation in Supervision form as a way to prompt discussion (even if you already know your supervisor, and especially if you don't really know your supervisor)
- Things your supervisor(s) has assumed may not be clear to you and vice versa
- Problematic issues to be referred to the HDR Coordinator to facilitate a solution; possibly also the Graduate Centre





Some recommendations...

- Ask questions of your supervisor
- Talk to other students
- These kinds of things need to be talked about at the beginning of your PhD, but also throughout – your needs and expectations will shift
- Your opinion is valuable – we want you to finish!



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