

# Exploring Supervision Program Semester 1, 2009

RESEARCHER EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Adelaide Graduate Centre

## **Short Assignment**

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## **Background**

This Self Evaluation and Assessment form has been designed as a non-threatening way of encouraging students to think through what is required to successfully complete a PhD and then to evaluate their skills at different stages of their candidature. It also provides a simple way for supervisors to find out how their students are progressing and to identify areas where extra support may be needed.

The rationale for developing this tool is that often students are unsure what technical skills are needed, for example, managing the large amounts of information that they will gather during their research. They are also often unsure about different approaches to gathering and analyzing data and the different tools that are available to assist this process. By completing this form I would anticipate that students would begin to think about some of these things before they became a problem, or even before they arrived at that stage in their research project.

Students would be asked to complete this form at a regular basis during the early and middle stages of their candidature, normally every three to four months. This would then form the basis of a discussion about progress to date, areas for concern and areas requiring skill development. It would also track individual progress and perhaps fluctuations in confidence and understanding across the course of the research. For example, I would imagine that at various points students may feel less confident about the focus and/or scope of their topic as they grapple with ideas and try to determine how broad or how narrow their research should be.

Unlike other evaluation tools this one does not ask for supervisor input. My expectation is that as students become more comfortable with regular self-evaluation they will become more confident to discuss issues openly thus reducing the need for supervisor evaluations. I also believe that supervisors are not always aware of these more operational issues so are not able to comment. To overcome this there needs to be some way of encouraging students to raise concerns and to ask for help. I believe that this method would be well suited to international students who come from more directive university systems and who therefore may struggle with the self-directed learning style underpinning tertiary education in Australia. I also believe it would be particularly suitable in the humanities disciplines where students often work much more independently than in the sciences. It is something that I would have found useful when completing my own PhD.

In addition, the form has potential to support the formal annual review of student progress.

### Self Evaluation and Assessment

<b>Student's name</b>	<b>Date</b>
Rating (1= completely disagree , 5=completely agree)	
1. I have a clear idea of the broad scope of my topic	1    2    3    4    5
2. I have a clear idea of the main focus of my topic	1    2    3    4    5
3. I have the necessary skills to plan my research program	1    2    3    4    5
4. I know how to access information in my topic area	1    2    3    4    5
5. I know how to conduct a literature review	1    2    3    4    5
6. I have good information management skills	1    2    3    4    5
7. I have the necessary skills to collect data for my research	1    2    3    4    5
8. I have the necessary skills to analyse and interpret my data	1    2    3    4    5
9. I have writing skills appropriate to completing a thesis in my discipline	1    2    3    4    5
10. I have good oral skills and feel confident that I can discuss my research with others	1    2    3    4    5
11. I am satisfied with the current level of support from my supervisor	1    2    3    4    5
12. I am satisfied with the current level of direction from my supervisor	1    2    3    4    5
13. I am satisfied with the amount of time spent discussing my research with my supervisor	1    2    3    4    5
14. I am satisfied with the amount of feedback that my supervisor provides	1    2    3    4    5
At this stage of my research I would like further help with.....	
Supervisor's comments	

Adapted from Edwards, H., Aspland, T., O'Leary, J., Ryan, Y., Southey, G., and Timms, P. (1995) cited in Aspland, T., Edwards, H., O'Leary, J., and Ryan, Y. (1999).

### Bibliography

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