



# GUIDELINES FOR CURRENT AND PROSPECTIVE UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE SUPERVISORS WHO WISH TO ENROL IN A HIGHER DEGREE BY RESEARCH

Under normal circumstances, University of Adelaide staff are prohibited from supervising HDR students, whilst themselves enrolled in a HDR program. Underlying this prohibition is the assumption that this approach best protects both the academic staff member and the HDR student(s) from any conflict of interest.

For the academic the most significant risk to be confronted is the allegation that the work of a student has been misappropriated to form part of the academic's own thesis. Such an allegation would be corrosive of both the supervisory relationship and the reputation of the academic. If proved it would amount to serious academic misconduct.

For the student the major risk stems from the same issue of the ownership of original research. That is the possibility of research, methodology or data will be appropriated by a research leader. Even if there is no appropriation the perception or suspicion that the student's work has found its way into the supervisor's thesis would cause a breakdown in the relationship. A starting point in this context is an acknowledgement that some students often feel disempowered in the relationship with their supervisor.

Again any proved appropriation would amount to academic misconduct.

The final perspective is that of the University and its reputation. Instances of academic misconduct are rare; however, when they surface they cause great damage to a University's hard won reputation. The University has a legitimate interest in minimising and monitoring such issues.

## **Simultaneous Supervision may be Approved in Some Circumstances**

The University acknowledges that a blanket prohibition appears to be an inflexible approach given that:

- the risks outlined above can be mitigated in some cases through a robust system of disclosure and approval;
- the granting of permission to simultaneously supervise would provide a benefit to an Adelaide academic and thus to the Department/Faculty through staff development;
- The student may in some cases benefit from the input of a supervisor who has an unparalleled level of experience and expertise in their field; and
- A seasoned researcher's likelihood of successful HDR completion is high.

Accordingly, the Academic Board has approved the Dean of Graduate Studies to consider applications from current and prospective University of Adelaide supervisors who wish to seek an exemption to the prohibition on simultaneous supervision.

In exercising this discretion, the Dean of Graduate Studies will have regard to the overall welfare of affected HDR students and the integrity of the programme and ensure that the following issues are addressed:

1. Consideration of whether the supervisor's existing qualifications and research experience are sufficient for the level of supervisory responsibility being sought. Registered supervisors may only be assigned to students who are studying for a degree less than or equal in status to their own highest qualification. However, where this is not the case, but the supervisor can demonstrate a strong record of research which might be deemed equivalent to a PhD, appointment at the level of co-supervisor may be considered.
2. The proximity of the supervisor's proposed thesis topic to that of any of the supervisor's enrolled student(s). In other words, what is the likelihood of overlap or crowding out? If there is a lack of

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delineation then the Dean of Graduate Studies will ordinarily not authorise the simultaneous supervision.

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<sup>1</sup>This experience should include a sound record of publication and over the last five years meet the minimum requirements for at least one research quality measure and at least one research output measure equal to a [Level C academic](#) in the relevant discipline.

3. Consultation, and where necessary, agreement from the student(s) regarding the relationship between the student's thesis and that of supervisor. It is anticipated that this understanding be committed to writing and kept on file. Such an approach will provide clarity to all parties and go some way to preventing misunderstandings in the future.
4. That the other members of the supervisory panel be made responsible for monitoring of the demarcation between the two projects. The Head of School should also be made aware of the simultaneous supervision and be required to monitor this aspect of the candidature.
5. Where the supervisor in question would normally be eligible to supervise at the Principal level, the Dean of Graduate Studies, on advice of the Head of School, will consider whether or not it is necessary to amend the supervision so that the Principal Supervisor becomes a co-supervisor and/or for what percentage of supervision.

### Application to the Dean of Graduate Studies

After due consideration to the issues highlighted above, if you choose to proceed with an application to undertake simultaneous supervision and HDR study, please make your case in writing, ensuring that sufficient information is provided to enable the Dean to make a determination. Your application may be submitted to: [ddog@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:ddog@adelaide.edu.au)

It is advisable to discuss your study plans with the relevant student(s), Head of School and other members of the supervisory panel and to draw their attention to the "[Student Agreement to be Supervised by a Registered University of Adelaide Supervisor who is Simultaneously Studying for a Research Degree at The University](#)", prior to submitting your application.

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Dean of Graduate Studies

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### Further Information

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