

21 May 2009

University of Birmingham

Roles of the Recognised Supervisor and the Research Programmes Visitor

Purpose of Paper

1. To establish the role of Recognised Supervisor, together with the role of the Research Programmes Visitor.

Proposals

2. That members of academic staff in collaborative organisations, who meet certain criteria (Appendix A), be awarded the title of Recognised Supervisor in order to supervise postgraduate research students registered at the University of Birmingham as the lead supervisor without the appointment of a University of Birmingham supervisor. This may also be extended to other "external" supervisors, for example, in industry;
3. That Recognised Supervisors be regarded "as if" they were full members of the appropriate University of Birmingham School;
4. That members of academic staff in collaborative organisations, who are identified as potential supervisors of postgraduate research students, are considered by the University of Birmingham for the award of the title of Recognised Supervisor by completing a recommendation form (Appendix B) for consideration by the University's Research and Progress Awards Board;
5. That those members of academic staff in collaborative organisations, as a condition of the award of the title of Recognised Supervisor, undertake an induction briefing in terms of University of Birmingham Codes of Practice, in particular relating to postgraduate research students, expectations of supervision and related matters;
6. That a senior member of academic staff in the appropriate School in the University of Birmingham be appointed as a Research Programmes Visitor (Appendix C) to provide a pivotal link between the collaborative organisation and the University;
7. That the University's Regulations be amended as follows:

3.11 Award of Recognised Lecturer/Recognised Supervisor Titles

- 3.11.1 A Head of School may recommend for approval to the Senate or delegated authority the award, for a defined period, of the title of Recognised Lecturer or Recognised Supervisor on a member of staff of a collaborative organisation. The member of staff should normally meet specified criteria and be undertaking teaching and/or assessment on a programme or be experienced and actively engaged in research in that collaborative organisation which leads to an award of the University or where the student being supervised is a registered student of the University.

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3.11.2 The award is subject to the following conditions:

- 3.11.2 (a) The individual does not hold an appointment financed from University funds or from outside funds administered by the University;
- 3.11.2 (b) The individual is not subject to the Conditions of Employment governing Honorary Staff, but to the employment, disciplinary and other staffing

- procedures of the collaborative organisation. Deleted: partner
- 3.11.3 Recognised Lecturers/Supervisors may be entitled to certain benefits from the University as notified from time to time.
8. That the University's Code of Practice on the Supervision and Monitoring Progress of Research Students be amended as follows:
- 2.13 With the approval of Senate or delegated authority, a Recognised Supervisor may be appointed as a lead supervisor.
- 2.14 In instances where supervision from suitably qualified and experienced persons based in other institutions is deemed to be appropriate for some students, a University supervisor should always be appointed in addition. With the approval of Senate or delegated authority, where students are being supervised by a Recognised Supervisor as the lead supervisor, no additional University supervisor is appointed. Deleted: 3
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9. That the University's Code of Practice on Assessment of Research Degree Theses be amended as follows:
- 4.6 A person not on the University of Birmingham's payroll but holding an honorary University of Birmingham title or having been awarded the title of Recognised Supervisor of the University of Birmingham may be appointed as an internal but not as an external examiner. *Note: In such cases, it may be appropriate for the chairperson of the oral examination to undertake the administrative duties of the internal examiners (See also 3.3 of this Code of Practice).*

Consultation

10. The Head of the School of Philosophy, Theology and Religion, the Head of Quality Assurance and Enhancement for the College of Arts and Law, the Director of Legal Services, the Principal and Director of Research at Queen's, members of Academic Services.

Background

Queen's

11. The University of Birmingham has a longstanding working relationship with The Queen's Foundation for Ecumenical Theological Education (Queen's): a validation arrangement for taught programmes in Applied Theological Studies, and an arrangement whereby postgraduate research students are registered at the University, but supervised by academic staff at Queen's. The School values this additional resource.
12. For some time, there have been ongoing discussions, occasionally involving the then Vice-Principal, Professor Michael Clarke, concerning a range of issues in connection with the supervision of University of Birmingham postgraduate research students by members of academic staff at Queen's.
13. Queen's academic staff who deliver the taught programmes are awarded the title of Recognised Lecturer of the University, if they meet certain criteria; those supervising research students are appointed Honorary Lecturers of the University.

Recognised Lecturers

14. Academic staff in collaborative organisations who make a substantial contribution to teaching or assessing taught programmes which result in an award of the University should have appropriate academic status within the University. The normal way of recognising this is through the award of the title of Recognised Lecturer. (http://www.as.bham.ac.uk/work/legislation/docs/regulations_part3.pdf) (3.11)

15. This also fulfils precept A17 of the QAA's code of practice on collaborative provision:

"The awarding institution should be able to satisfy itself that staff engaged in delivering or supporting a collaborative programme are appropriately qualified for their role, and that a partner organisation has effective measures to monitor and assure the proficiency of such staff..."
16. A suite of documentation and procedures, including criteria for the award of the title of Recognised Lecturer and a recommendation form, is available at:
<http://www.as.bham.ac.uk/work/progman/collaborate/>.
17. The approval process, handled by the Programme Approval and Collaborations Section, for the award of the title of Recognised Lecturer is similar to that in place for the appointment of the University's external examiners.
18. Recognised Lecturers are neither employees of the University nor paid from any funds available to the University. They are subject to all of the relevant terms and conditions of the collaborative organisation in which they are employed.

Honorary Lecturers

19. University regulations
http://www.as.bham.ac.uk/work/legislation/docs/regulations_part3.pdf) (3.9) state that an Honorary Teaching Title may be conferred on any person of appropriate status who is undertaking teaching for or on behalf of the University and does not hold an appointment financed from University funds or from outside funds administered by the University.
20. Members of academic staff at Queen's who have been appointed as Honorary Lecturers are the sole supervisor of research students, and no University supervisor is appointed. This is contrary to University's Code of Practice on the Supervision and Monitoring Progress of Research Students (see 17 below).

University Code of Practice on the Supervision and Monitoring Progress of Research Students

21. The Code of Practice sets out details of supervision arrangements, in particular:

Clause 2.12 "With the approval of Senate or delegated authority, an Honorary member of academic staff may be appointed as a co-supervisor".

Clause 2.13 "In instances where supervision from suitably qualified and experienced persons based in other institutions is deemed to be appropriate for some students, a University supervisor should always be appointed in addition".

Arguments to Support Proposals

22. That it regularises a situation which has been ongoing for a number of years;
23. That it ensures quality and standards are maintained through a robust approval mechanism for the award of the title of Recognised Supervisor, through the link and monitoring role of the Research Programmes Visitor, and adherence to the relevant University Codes of Practice;
24. That it provides academic expertise which is not necessarily available in the College;
25. That the Recognised Supervisor would be an "as if" full member of the appropriate University of Birmingham School, and would be involved in activities for research supervisors, including circulation lists, access to intranet, training sessions (including Academic Practice and Organisation Development supported by the School), relevant committee meetings. In addition, briefings, where appropriate, would be provided by Academic Services;

26. That the Recognised Supervisor would be required, as a condition of the award of the title, to undertake relevant induction briefing;
27. That the arrangements would be clearly set out in Legal Agreements;
28. That, in addition to Queen's, it provides a model for the Urban Theology Unit and Woodbrooke, whose academic staff also supervise postgraduate research students registered at the University, and potentially for other collaborative organisations, as well as supervisors from Industry and other external organisations.

CRITERIA FOR THE AWARD OF THE TITLE OF RECOGNISED SUPERVISOR

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The QAA's Code of practice on collaborative provision and flexible and distributed learning (including e-learning) (September 2004) states in precept A17 that: "The awarding institution should be able to satisfy itself that staff engaged in delivering or supporting a collaborative programme are appropriately qualified for their role, and that a partner organisation has effective measures to monitor and assure the proficiency of such staff...".
- 1.2 Staff in collaborative or other organisations or industry who are awarded the title of Recognised Supervisor are entitled to supervise postgraduate research students who are registered at the University of Birmingham, without the appointment of a University of Birmingham supervisor as the lead supervisor.
- 1.3 Those staff who are recommended for the award of the title of Recognised Supervisor must be shown to have appropriate qualifications and/or relevant experience. This is to ensure that the supervision is of a standard compatible and comparable with equivalent University supervision, and that it is informed by scholarship and research.
- 1.4 The award of the title of Recognised Supervisor should be sought, using the recommendation form, in advance of the supervisor being linked to a particular candidate.

2. Criteria

- 2.1 Recognised Supervisors should:
 - hold a research degree at the same level as, or higher than, the degree being supervised or have appropriate equivalent experience or professional qualifications or status;
 - be experienced and actively engaged in research;
 - have demonstrable ability in scholarship or research through published work or appropriate professional experience;
 - attend an induction briefing, Research Supervisor Training and/or will attend University of Birmingham Research Supervisor Training;
 - not be in their probationary year in the collaborative or other organisation.

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

Recommendation for Award of the Title of Recognised Supervisor
(for collaborative organisations)

Please word-process this form, which is available at: insert web address: tba

This form should be completed and considered by your organisation and then returned to:
Margaret Cannadine, Programme Approval and Collaborations Manager, Academic and
Student Administration, Academic Services, The University of Birmingham, Edgbaston,
Birmingham B15 2TT in respect of all recommendations for the award of the title of
Recognised Supervisor.

Collaborative Organisation	
Programme	

Surname/Forenames	
Title	Dr/Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Other: please indicate
Correspondence Address	
Date of Birth	

Degrees, Diplomas, Certificates, specifying teaching qualification, where appropriate			
<i>Qualification and Subject</i>	<i>Awarding Body</i>	<i>Date of Award</i>	<i>Classification, if appropriate</i>

Membership of Professional Bodies (If none, write "None")	
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Present Appointment	
Date of Appointment	

Previous Posts (Please list in chronological order, starting with the most recent.)		
<i>Name of Employer</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Dates</i>

Number of postgraduate research students supervised to date, and outcome of the examination of the thesis

Publications (Please use a separate sheet in necessary. If none, write "None".)

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<p>Research (Please use a separate sheet in necessary. If none, write "None"). Please indicate whether the work was part of a submission for a degree or whether it has been published and if so, by whom and the date of publication.</p>

<p>Current Research (Please use a separate sheet in necessary. If none, write "None".)</p>

<p>Industrial Experience/Updating/Professional Practice/Consultancy (Please list in chronological order, starting with the most recent.) (If none, write "None".)</p>		
<i>Activity</i>	<i>Where undertaken</i>	<i>Dates</i>

Research Supervisor Training (Please list in chronological order, starting with the most recent.) (If none, write "None".)		
<i>Activity</i>	<i>Where undertaken</i>	<i>Dates</i>

Internal/External Examiner/Viva Chair for Research Degree Theses (Please list in chronological order, starting with the most recent.) (If none, write "None".)		
<i>Internal/External Examiner/Viva Chair</i>	<i>Where undertaken</i>	<i>Dates</i>

Quality Assurance and Enhancement Experience (Please list in chronological order, starting with the most recent.) (If none, write "None".)		
<i>Quality Assurance and Enhancement Experience</i>	<i>Where undertaken</i>	<i>Dates</i>

Details of Proposed Supervision Duties

I confirm that the University of Birmingham may hold this information and share any relevant information as necessary for the fulfilment and implementation of the agreement between the University of Birmingham and [] dated the [] day of [] or any subsequent extension thereof.

Signed	Date
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Approved and signed on behalf of the Collaborative Organisation		
Name (Block Capitals)	Signature	Date

Approved and signed by the Research Programmes Visitor		
Name (Block Capitals)	Signature	Date

School to provide details of proposed/attendance at the Research Supervisor Training and procedures for support from the School

Approved and signed by the Head of the University School (or designated nominee)		
Name (Block Capitals)	Signature	Date

Approved and signed on behalf of the University by the University's Research and Progress Awards Board		
Name (Block Capitals)	Signature	Date

For Office Use Only:

Conditions	
Letter sent to applicant	
Copy sent to collaborative organisation	
Information to database	

ROLE OF THE RESEARCH PROGRAMMES VISITOR

1. Introduction

The University works in collaboration with a range of organisations, both within and outside the United Kingdom. The nature of these collaborations varies, and they are covered by legal agreements. Collaboration is set within the overall context of the Quality Assurance Agency's (QAA) Codes of Practice and the University's own Legislation and Codes of Practice.

(<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/codeOfPractice/section2/default.asp>)

The University shall appoint a Research Programmes Visitor (RPV) where students registered on University postgraduate research programmes, including professional doctorates, are supervised by academic staff from a collaborative or other organisation. The RPV is a full academic member of University staff, appointed on the basis that they have sufficient standing and appropriate academic and quality assurance experience to undertake the role. The Head of School nominates the RPV.

The role of the RPV is crucial:

- to represent the University;
- to be the main conduit between the University and the collaborative or other organisation on all matters concerning the programme and supervision of postgraduate research students;
- to take a leading part in quality assurance and enhancement.

The normal term of office will be until the next renewal of the agreement. The RPV should be permitted sufficient time in order to perform this role at the same time as their other University duties.

2. Responsibilities

2.1 *Regulations and Codes of Practice*

- 2.1.1 Must be familiar with University Legislation, including Regulations and Codes of Practice, as well as those of the QAA, ensuring that those who are awarded the title of Recognised Supervisor from the collaborative organisation are also fully briefed.

2.2 *Legal Agreement with Collaborative Organisation*

- 2.2.1 Monitors compliance with any conditions of initial approval and reports to their Head of School and the Programme Approval and Collaborations Section (PACS).

2.3 *Publicity and Marketing*

- 2.3.1 Ensures that the University's role in the programmes is clear in any publicity and/or marketing using the University's name/logo that may be utilised by the collaborative organisation and that presentation conforms to University norms. This covers all advertising, including broadcasting and web-based advertising.
- 2.3.2 Must ensure that descriptions of the programmes and the nature of the link between the collaborative organisation and the University are appropriate and factually correct, especially as printed material can be seen as a contract with the student.

- 2.3.3 Must agree draft publicity before publication with the University's Design and Publications Section. (This constraint does not generally apply to the subsequent re-issue of publications or to appropriate updating of content, eg date of entry, etc. Any proposal for new or significantly amended publicity must be submitted for approval.)

Note: QAA has discovered some cases (in other institutions) where extravagant or inaccurate claims were made by collaborative organisations or by agents as a local marketing ploy without foundation and without consulting the awarding institution.

2.4 *Recruitment of Students*

- 2.4.1 Reports on the range of students' admissions qualifications for the programmes, including APEL.

Note: the admission of students to postgraduate research programmes will normally be through the usual University of Birmingham admissions processes, in consultation with the relevant collaborative institution.

2.5 *Academic Environment*

- 2.5.1 Shall not teach on the Research Programmes with taught elements in the collaborative organisation.
- 2.5.2 Shall not act as a main supervisor/adviser/mentor of a student being supervised at the collaborative organisation.
- 2.5.3 Reports on the resources and staffing to ensure that they remain of an appropriate quality and quantity to deliver the programmes, including supervision.
- 2.5.4 Ensures that the University is advised of significant staff changes to the PACS.
- 2.5.5 Submits recommendations for the award of the title of Recognised Supervisor (web address: tba) to the Head of the relevant School.
- 2.5.6 May play the role of an "experienced outsider" in advising on issues of professional development for staff of the collaborative organisation.

2.6 *Examining: Taught Elements of Programmes*

- 2.6.1 Does not assess modules or examinations.
- 2.6.2 Ensures that the examination process and the appointment of the external examiner is conducted in accordance with the University's Codes of Practice, policies, protocols, guidance and regulations on (external) examining (<http://www.as.bham.ac.uk/work/legislation/cops.shtml>).
- 2.6.3 Recommends to the Head of School, following discussion with the collaborative organisation, the nomination of the external examiner if, exceptionally, the nominee is not the same as for other programmes in the School.
- 2.6.4 Considers, in conjunction with the Head of School and the Academic Quality Unit, whether any additional procedures or training are required for the external examiners. This is to ensure that quality and standards are appropriate and match those of a similar or identical programme delivered at the University.

- 2.6.5 Is a member of the Boards of Examiners at the collaborative organisation where the University award will be considered, providing advice and guidance on University student assessment procedures. Exceptionally, may act as chair of the Board, but there is no requirement to do so.
- 2.6.6 Ensures that the signed pass lists and minutes of the Boards of Examiners are submitted to the University after each examination board and that a decision is recorded on mark sheets concerning each student on the programme.
- 2.6.7 Attends the School Board of Examiners which receives and considers the results and progress decisions, commenting on these, on any issues and on processes for handling mitigating circumstances.

2.7 *Examining: Theses*

- 2.7.1 Does not act as an internal examiner or chair of a viva.
- 2.7.2 Ensures that the Recognised Supervisors know and understand the examination and appointment of the external examiner processes as specified in the Code of Practice for Assessment of Research Degree Theses (<http://www.as.bham.ac.uk/work/legislation/cops.shtml>) and other related documentation.
- 2.7.3 May provide guidance on the nomination of the external examiner.

2.8 *Progress*

- 2.8.1 Is a member of the relevant College and/or School's Research Progress and Awards Sub-Panel or equivalent body, which makes final decisions on students' progress.

3. **Quality Assurance**

3.1 *Annual Report*

- 3.1.1 Prepares a full annual report for submission to the relevant School and College Committees, using the standard report form (web address: tba), Prepares a summary report, noting exceptions, for submission to the University Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee.

3.2 *Internal and External Audit/Review*

- 3.2.1 Contributes to any review of the programmes (Schools' Reviews, BIQAES; external reviews), review of the legal agreement covering the arrangement and the implementation of any recommendations.

3.3 *Visits*

- 3.3.1 Frequency of visits will depend upon a variety of factors.
- 3.3.2 Minimum expectation for visits: possibly staff and student recruitment, ongoing monitoring of procedures and facilities and for meetings relating to assessment of students, as well as by letter, telephone and email. Visits should be sufficient to gain an adequate knowledge of the way in which the institution and programme(s) operate, with access to staff and students.
- 3.3.3 Provides an additional presence and support during periods of review or external inspections, or should any issues arise. Potentially fewer visits when none of these is in progress.

3.4 *Student Feedback*

- 3.4.1 Holds meetings with students to elicit information concerning the student experience. Any actions required as a consequence of meetings with students should be appended to the annual report form.

4. **Study Leave, Successor**

4.1 *Study Leave*

- 4.1.1 Ensures that the Head of School appoints a temporary RPV to cover study leave, so providing continuity.

4.2 *Successor*

- 4.2.1 Provides, with PACS and School, briefing for their successor.