



Supervision of doctoral candidates at the University of Turku

Educating future experts who will solve complex scientific questions and social issues and build a sustainable world is a strategic goal of the University of Turku. In doctoral training, this goal is met by providing high-quality supervision, with emphasis on supervisors' expertise and commitment to personalised supervision of doctoral candidates. In accordance with the goals set in the strategy, supervision of doctoral candidates should be inspiring and flexible, and it should support the doctoral candidates' research and doctoral education.

In conflict situations in the supervision of doctoral candidates, University of Turku Graduate School procedural guidelines are followed. The guidelines are available on the Graduate School website and appended to this decision. Where relevant, the guidelines also apply to candidates pursuing a licentiate degree.

The purpose of this decision is:

1. To define procedures which ensure equality in supervision of doctoral candidates throughout the University.
2. To ensure that the supervision of doctoral candidates provides the most effective support possible for dissertation work and postgraduate studies.
3. To draw the attention of Department and Faculty management to supervision of doctoral candidates and the resources allotted to supervision.
4. To provide supervisors with better resources for supervision of both dissertation work and career planning.

To support the execution of this decision, the University of Turku will provide training and material on e.g. the support services available for doctoral candidates. The execution of this decision will be evaluated as part of Faculty operations.

Responsibilities in organising supervision, and appointment of supervisors

- The Faculty ensures that the responsibilities, goals and methods of supervision are defined.
- Each doctoral candidate must have at least two supervisors. One supervisor acts as the main supervisor or UGIS supervisor.
 - From 1 January 2021, each doctoral candidate will be appointed at least two supervisors upon granting a right



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to study for a doctoral degree or upon reactivating a passive study right.

- From 1 January 2021, the minimum requirement of two supervisors must be taken into consideration when changes are made to a doctoral candidate's supervision.
- All doctoral candidates at the University of Turku must have two supervisors from 1 January 2025 onward.
- A supervisor must have completed a doctoral degree, and at least one of a doctoral candidate's supervisors must be a professor or an adjunct professor.
- Doctoral programmes ensure that supervision meets the standards set by Faculties, and that supervisors are selected based on supervision skills and commitment to supervision as well as expertise.
- It is recommended that doctoral candidates and supervisors be supported by a follow-up group. Best practices for follow-up groups, as defined by the University of Turku Graduate School, are appended to this decision.
- At least one of a doctoral candidate's supervisors must have access to University of Turku electronic systems.
- Supervisors are expected to develop their supervision skills by e.g. completing university pedagogic studies or participating in supervisor training.
- The Faculty and departments are responsible for ensuring that supervisors employed at the University of Turku have sufficient working hours to dedicate to supervision, relative to the amount of doctoral candidates they supervise and the nature of their research work.
- The University of Turku Graduate School director and steering committee offer support to doctoral programmes and Faculties in conflict situations in supervision.

Supervision plan, personal study plan, and supervision, career and development discussions

In supervision of new doctoral candidates, particular attention must be paid to orientation, the drafting of a supervision plan and a personal study plan, career planning, and the frequency and regularity of supervision.

- The content and schedule of supervision are agreed upon in a supervision plan drafted at the start of the dissertation project of



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each doctoral candidate. The rights and responsibilities of participants are recorded in the supervision plan. Appended to this decision is a University of Turku Graduate School supervision plan template.

- A possible division of responsibilities among supervisors is agreed upon in the supervision plan.
- Other agreed upon matters, such as furthering the doctoral candidate's career planning, may also be included in the supervision plan.
- During their first semester, doctoral candidates, personally guided by their supervisor(s), draft a personal study plan (HOPS). The study plan is approved by a supervisor or other Faculty appointed person.
- Both the supervision plan and the personal study plan are reviewed and revised as needed.
- Supervisors conduct supervision discussions with doctoral candidates regularly, as agreed upon in the supervision plan. All participants prepare for these discussions in advance. Regular and frequent discussions are especially important at the early stages of supervision.
- Doctoral candidates are annually offered the opportunity to have a career and development discussion with their supervisor, immediate superior or follow-up group.

Responsibilities of supervisor and doctoral candidate

The minimum required responsibilities of both supervisors and doctoral candidates are defined in this decision. These minimum requirements must be met at all Faculties.

The rights and responsibilities of the doctoral candidate

- The doctoral candidate is responsible for planning and completing their studies.
- The doctoral candidate commits to long-term, demanding work, to keeping to agreed-upon schedules, and to immediately notifying their supervisor of any significant delays in their dissertation work.
- The doctoral candidate carefully prepares for supervision meetings, and keeps to agreed-upon meeting schedules.



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- The doctoral candidate annually completes the agreed-upon amount of postgraduate studies, and regularly reports to their supervisor on the progress of their research work.
- The doctoral candidate is responsible for the progress of their research work and for actively seeking advice and guidance in case of problems.
- The doctoral candidate must take into consideration suggestions related to doctoral training that are based on their supervisor's expertise and knowledge.
- The doctoral candidate is entitled to supervision meetings and to feedback on their studies and research from their supervisors according to an agreed-upon schedule.
- The doctoral candidate is ultimately responsible for all decisions concerning their research.

The rights and responsibilities of the supervisor

- When agreeing to supervise a doctoral candidate, the supervisor commits to regular communication with the doctoral candidate, and to a long-term supervisory relationship. They also commit to informing the doctoral candidate of any significant changes in their circumstances that may affect their ability to supervise the doctoral candidate.
- The supervisor ensures that the doctoral candidate is familiarised with the principles of academic work and other academic practices (e.g. publication, conferences, international mobility, ethical principles), aids in e.g. seeking funding, and provides references and recommendations as needed.
- The supervisor encourages the doctoral candidate's research work and delivering the doctoral candidate's texts to both supervisors and the scientific community for commenting. The supervisor provides critical, constructive feedback regularly and within a reasonable amount of time. The supervisor does not complete work for the doctoral candidate.
- The supervisor, or other entity as determined by the Faculty, monitors the quality of the doctoral candidate's dissertation work and evaluates the dissertation manuscript to ensure it meets the standards for preliminary examination set by the Faculty.
- The supervisor supports the doctoral candidate in finalising their dissertation and preparing for public defence.



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The shared responsibilities of the supervisor and the doctoral candidate

- The supervisor and the doctoral candidate familiarise themselves with Faculty regulations and recommendations on doctoral training.
- The supervisor and the doctoral candidate agree to follow good academic practices.
- The supervisor and the doctoral candidate ensure that practices concerning shared publications and projects are agreed upon at as early a stage as possible and in accordance with Finnish National Board on Research Integrity TENK recommendations for research publications (tenk.fi/sites/tenk.fi/files/TENK_suositus_tekijyys.pdf).
- The supervisor and the doctoral candidate commit to drafting an agreement on the use and licencing of research materials and results.
- If the research work undertaken may result in inventions or patents, the supervisor and the doctoral candidate agree upon the principles of the use and licencing of these inventions or patents at as early a stage as possible.

Ending the supervisory relationship

- The supervisory relationship may be ended by both the supervisor and the doctoral candidate for a justified reason, such as
 - The supervisor or the doctoral candidate fails to meet the responsibilities agreed upon in the supervision plan.
 - The doctoral candidate's study right is declared passive.
 - Irreconcilable problems in the supervisory relationship.
 - The supervisor retires or leaves the University of Turku. A retired supervisor may continue as supervisor if they so wish.
- If the supervisory relationship ends for a reason other than the doctoral candidate's study right being declared passive, the doctoral programme will assist and advice the doctoral candidate in finding a new supervisor as permitted by the resources of the doctoral programme.



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The original document to be signed by rector Jukka Kola and prepared by Meri Heinonen.

Appendices to the original document:

1. University of Turku Graduate School procedural guidelines for conflicts in supervision
2. University of Turku Graduate School supervision plan template
3. University of Turku Graduate School principles on follow-up groups/advisory committees

The original document to be delivered to Faculties, the University of Turku Graduate School, Research Career unit, Development Services, Education Affairs