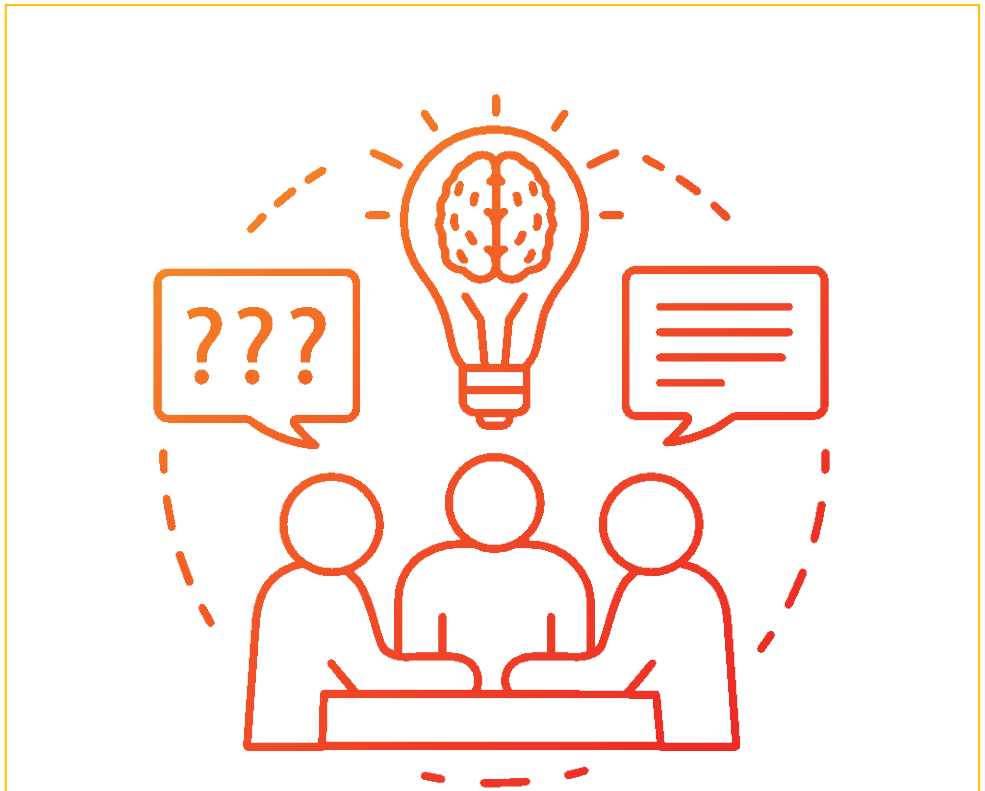
Supporting Doctoral Researchers

A workshop for supervisors



Doctoral Strategy (2022-2027)

The doctoral strategy aims to nurture and enhance doctoral research excellence by growing research quality, achievement and impact, and promoting an inclusive and collaborative research community. This is anchored in a commitment to build a research culture that promotes collaboration and networking; encourages new ideas and innovation; nurtures leadership talent; coordinates the delivery of cutting-edge training; and provides a challenging and enriching researcher experience. Through these commitments, we look to raise the profile of doctoral research across the University, and be recognised, nationally and internationally, as a centre of excellence for doctoral education. **The doctoral strategy implies a multi-stakeholder commitment involving Faculties/School, academic departments, professional services, and the Doctoral College.**

1. Enhance the doctoral experience through an inclusive and engaged research culture.
2. Increase doctoral performance and submission rates.
3. Improve doctoral students' skills and employability.
4. Increase the number of doctoral students in a sustainable and inclusive manner.

All of the above can only be achieved if the supervisor/supervisee relationship is effective

Rationale for supervisor workshops

- To optimally support and empower doctoral supervisors in their role
- To continually develop and enhance research culture
- To meet external funder supervision requirements and regulations (e.g., QA7, OfS)
- To be agile in order to deal with challenges in the University of Bath doctoral space (e.g., high number of doctoral supervision related appeals and complaints, not currently meeting University targets for on-time submission rates etc)
- In a recent UoB survey, 28% had never engaged with any supervisor training and 39% had not engaged in the past 2 years. 72% said that supervisor training and support would be useful in the future

Objectives for this session

- **Peer Learning:** Share experiences and advice with peers to enhance collective supervisory practices.
- **Enhancing Your Supervision Practice:** Making more effective the roles of different supervisors (first, second etc), and reflecting on ways you might improve your own supervision practices by applying new tools and concepts.
- **Accessing Resources:** Identify potential sources of help and additional tools or training to enhance your supervisory practice.
- **Understanding Expectations:** Gain or refresh knowledge of university expectations regarding supervision.
- **Aligning with University Objectives:** Understand and align with the university's objectives for supporting doctoral researchers and identify ways to contribute to these goals.

What to expect

- Focus on a few key supervision topics, not in-depth exploration or answers to all aspects of supervision.
- Facilitated conversations and highlighting good practice, not expert-led teaching.
- Presented content on:
  - the vision for Doctoral at UoB, context, procedures, and expectations.
  - tools and resources for supervisory practice.
- Signposting to additional tools, resources, and support.
  - This workshop will complement but not replicate the Student Services “Pastoral Support for Doctoral Supervisors/Personal Tutors” course.

And…

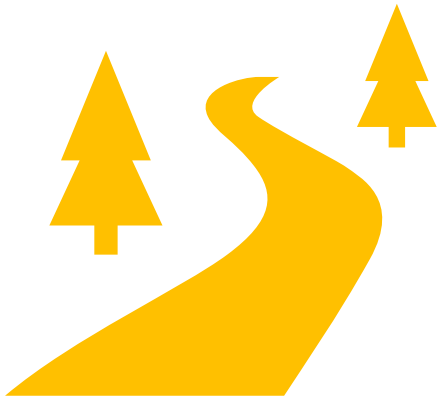
- We will be short on time so may have to cut some discussions short
- You won’t have every question answered
- You will have heard some of these messages before
- Workshop is designed for supervisors providing support across all programmes/formats/researchers
- We understand that you didn’t all choose to be here

HELLO
MY NAME IS

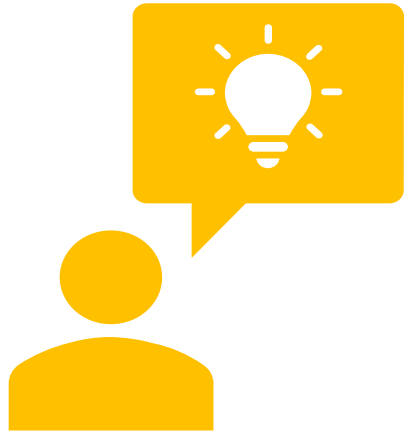
UKCGE Good Supervisory Practice Framework

Three broad themes today

1. Expectation setting



2. Keeping on track

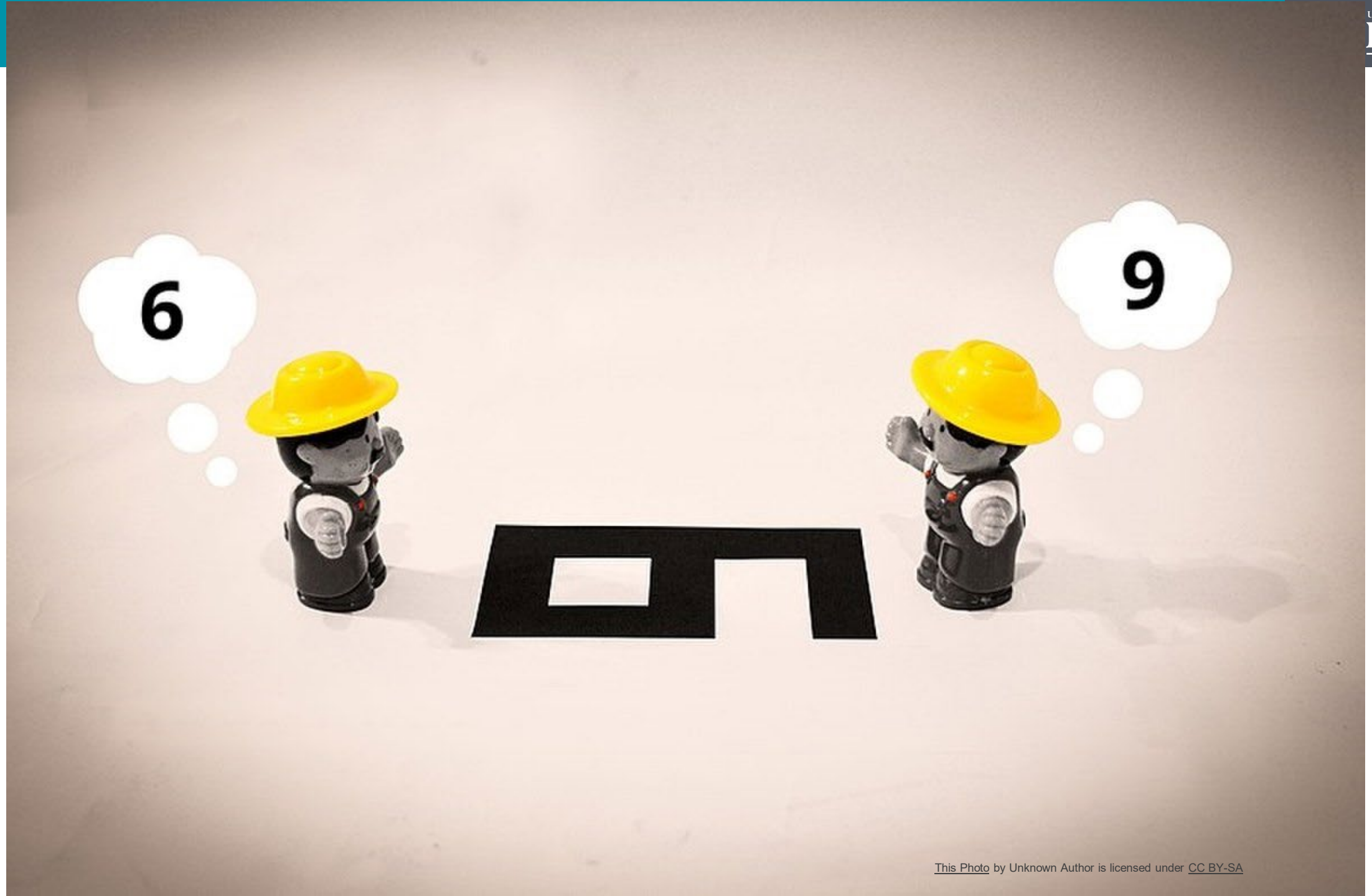


3. Developing and supporting doctoral researchers (and relationships)

1. Expectation setting

"There can be mismatches between the expectations of candidates and supervisors which can adversely affect their relationship, and supervisors may need to ensure that these are calibrated."

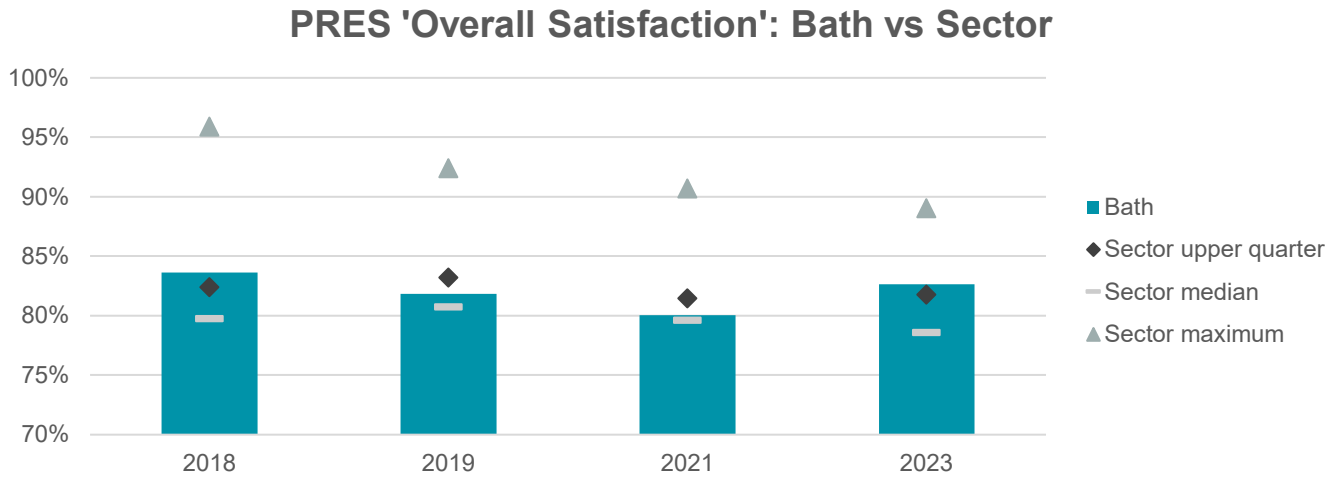
UKCGE Good Supervisory Practice Framework



This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY-SA

Context and targets

- We are committed to a more inclusive and engaged doctoral researcher community.
- In recent years, we have seen improvements in doctoral researcher experience at the University (e.g., rising from 45th to 16th in the country according to PRES); however, we are not yet sector-leading.



- Areas of ongoing concern from PRES/PDES are a poor sense of belonging to a community, limited recognition of doctoral achievements, a lack of doctoral voice, and concerns over supervision.
- This points to a need to improve student experience which rests on the supervisory relationship.

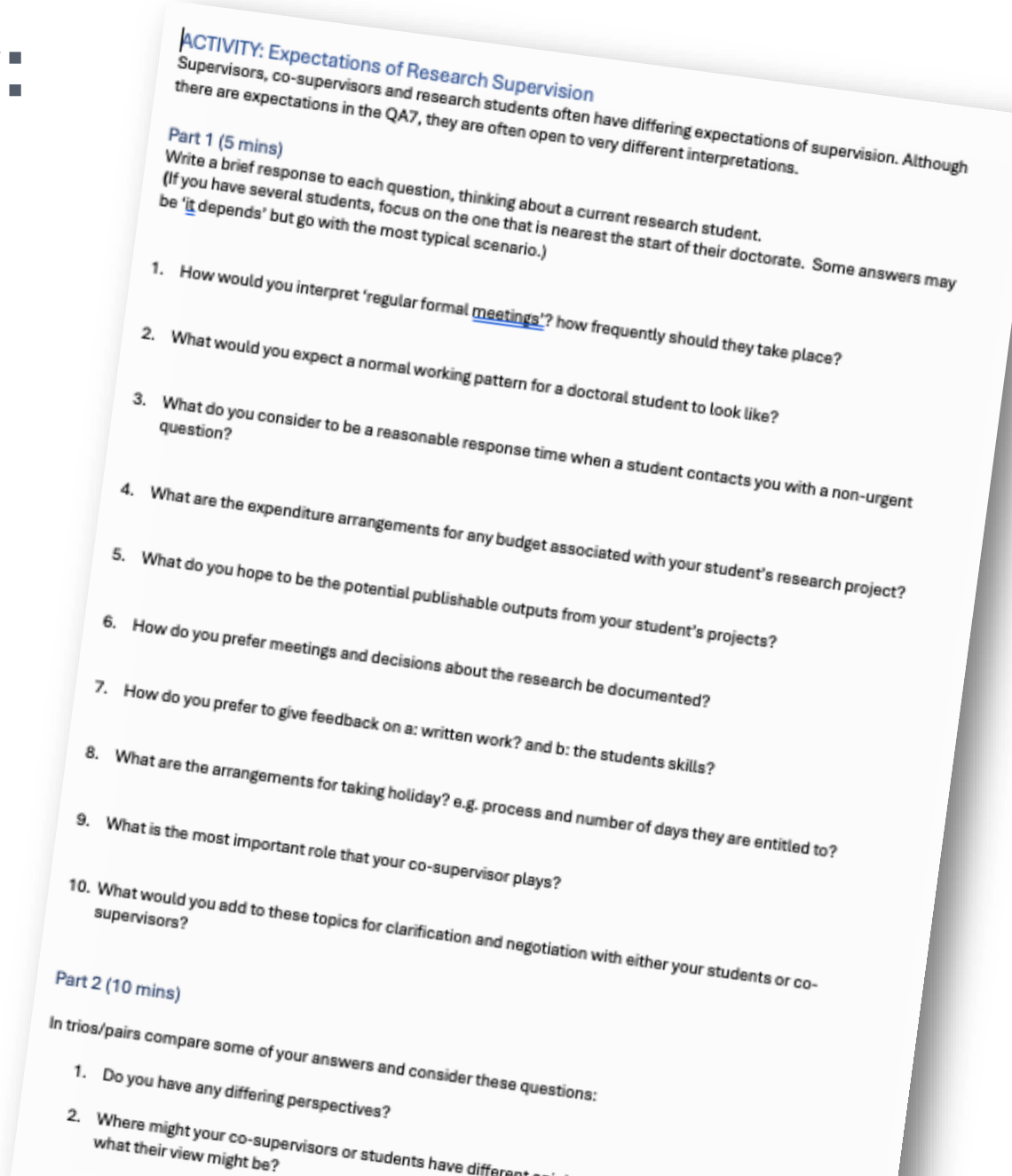
Reflection and group activity: expectations questionnaire

Write a brief response to each question in the handout (5 mins)

In pairs, compare some of your answers and consider these questions (10 mins):

1. Do you have any differing perspectives?
2. Where might your co-supervisors or students have different opinions? Do you know with certainty what their view might be?
3. What would you add to these topics for clarification and negotiation with either your doctoral researchers or co-supervisors?

Be ready to feedback one or two examples of topics you would add.



ACTIVITY: Expectations of Research Supervision

Supervisors, co-supervisors and research students often have differing expectations of supervision. Although there are expectations in the QA7, they are often open to very different interpretations.

Part 1 (5 mins)

Write a brief response to each question, thinking about a current research student.
(If you have several students, focus on the one that is nearest the start of their doctorate. Some answers may be 'it depends' but go with the most typical scenario.)

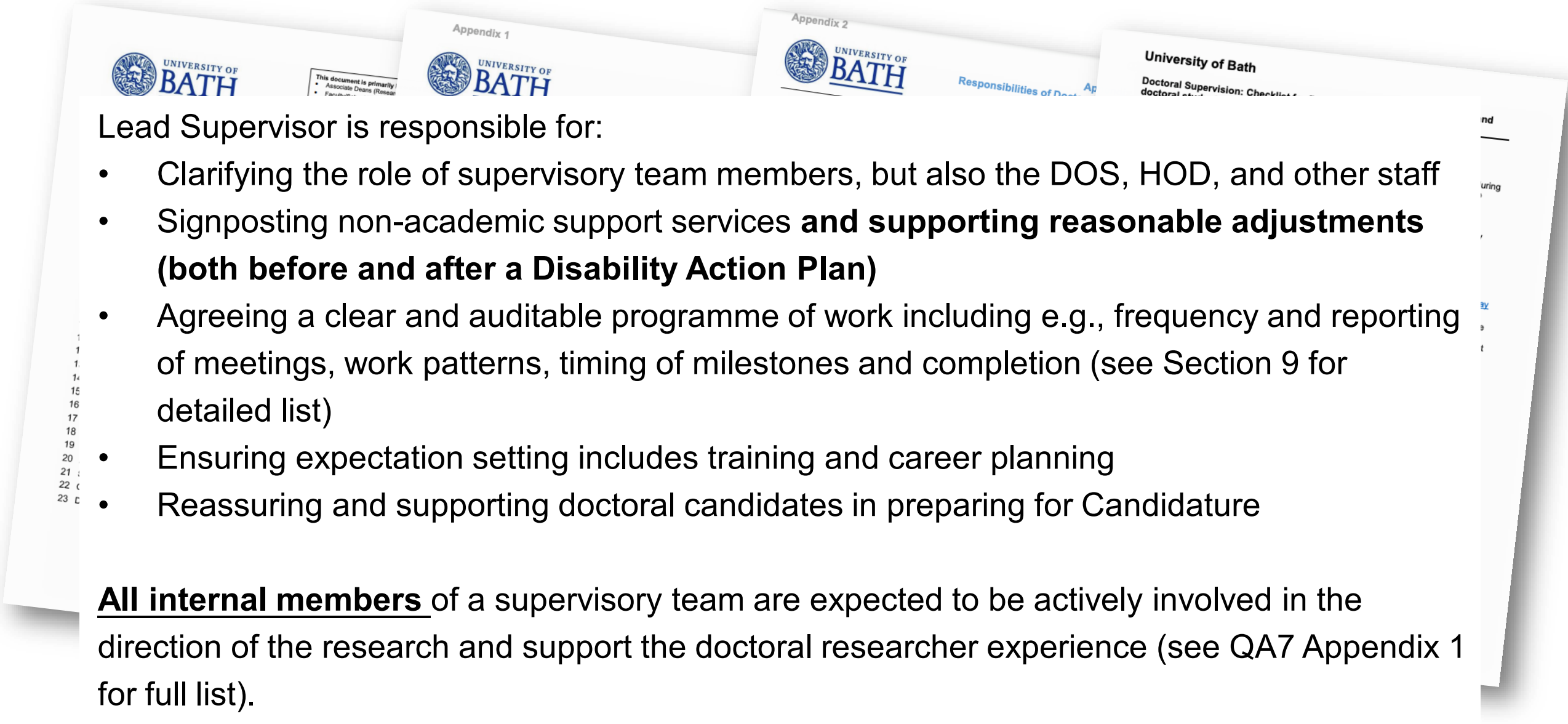
1. How would you interpret 'regular formal meetings'? how frequently should they take place?
2. What would you expect a normal working pattern for a doctoral student to look like?
3. What do you consider to be a reasonable response time when a student contacts you with a non-urgent question?
4. What are the expenditure arrangements for any budget associated with your student's research project?
5. What do you hope to be the potential publishable outputs from your student's projects?
6. How do you prefer meetings and decisions about the research be documented?
7. How do you prefer to give feedback on a: written work? and b: the students skills?
8. What are the arrangements for taking holiday? e.g. process and number of days they are entitled to?
9. What is the most important role that your co-supervisor plays?
10. What would you add to these topics for clarification and negotiation with either your students or co-supervisors?

Part 2 (10 mins)

In trios/pairs compare some of your answers and consider these questions:

1. Do you have any differing perspectives?
2. Where might your co-supervisors or students have different
what their view might be?

Reminders and signposting (QA7, Section 9)



Lead Supervisor is responsible for:

- Clarifying the role of supervisory team members, but also the DOS, HOD, and other staff
- Signposting non-academic support services **and supporting reasonable adjustments (both before and after a Disability Action Plan)**
- Agreeing a clear and auditable programme of work including e.g., frequency and reporting of meetings, work patterns, timing of milestones and completion (see Section 9 for detailed list)
- Ensuring expectation setting includes training and career planning
- Reassuring and supporting doctoral candidates in preparing for Candidature

All internal members of a supervisory team are expected to be actively involved in the direction of the research and support the doctoral researcher experience (see QA7 Appendix 1 for full list).

Resources

UNIVERSITY of BATH

COURSES RESEARCH ENTERPRISE SPORT

On this page

- Guidance
- Supervisor & Director of Studies Resources
- Regulations and Policy
- Admissions and Recruitment
- Induction and Getting Started
- Confirmation
- Change of Circumstances
- Students approaching the end of their studies
- Final Examination
- Other Resources

Guid

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Supporting Doctoral Supervisors Toolkit – these Wiki pag
and resources for supervisors, including tips from other
the doctoral supervision journey.

Supervisors Guide - a guide for Supervisors developed by

Student Services advice for staff - guidance to help staff support their students and enable them to succeed and develop resilience.

UNIVERSITY OF BATH

Courses Research Enterprise Sp

From Doctoral College

Checklist for
supervisor an

A useful checklist of things that n
between supervisor and student

Form

View more publications in Doctoral College

first-meeting-checklist-supervis
245.64 KB

SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

A SUMMARY OF QA7 APPENDIX 1

hello

INDUCTION: Acquaint their doctoral researcher with their home department or school introducing them to the local academic culture, key contacts, and the facilities available.

EXPECTATIONS Set expectations for the relationship between the lead supervisor and the rest of the supervision team. Ensure regular meetings are arranged.

MANAGING THE RELATIONSHIP Managing the researcher-supervisor working relationship by discussing and agreeing with the researcher and the rest of the supervisory team the areas on the first meeting checklist, and revisiting these points throughout the project.

SUPERVISORY TEAM Working with the Director of Studies and consulting with the researcher to ensure a continuity of supervisory cover if a member of the team is absent.

CANDIDATURE Joint responsibility with the researcher and Director of Studies to ensure that the candidature form is completed by the deadline.

SUPPORT TO PROGRESS Lead Supervisors are responsible for supporting their doctoral student to progress satisfactorily and in accordance with the University's Regulations and Quality Assurance principles. Provide regular constructive feedback.

DEVELOPMENT & CAREERS Ensure that researchers complete a training needs analysis, discuss and monitor development needs. Regularly discuss career plans and signpost to Careers for specialised support and advice.

QA7 APPENDIX 1 FOR FULL TEXT AND DETAILS

RESPONSIBILITI
SUPERVISORY

A SUMMARY OF QA7 APPEND

GUIDANCE Giving guida
of research a
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and the thes

PASTORAL CARE Providing the researcher with an appropriate level of pastoral care and signposting to further sources of support within the University.

SUPPORT Implement
specific re
identified b
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conjunctio
support se
Access Pla

PLANNING Giving advice on planning the research programme and developing a schedule of work to ensure completion of each stage and submission of the final thesis by the deadline.

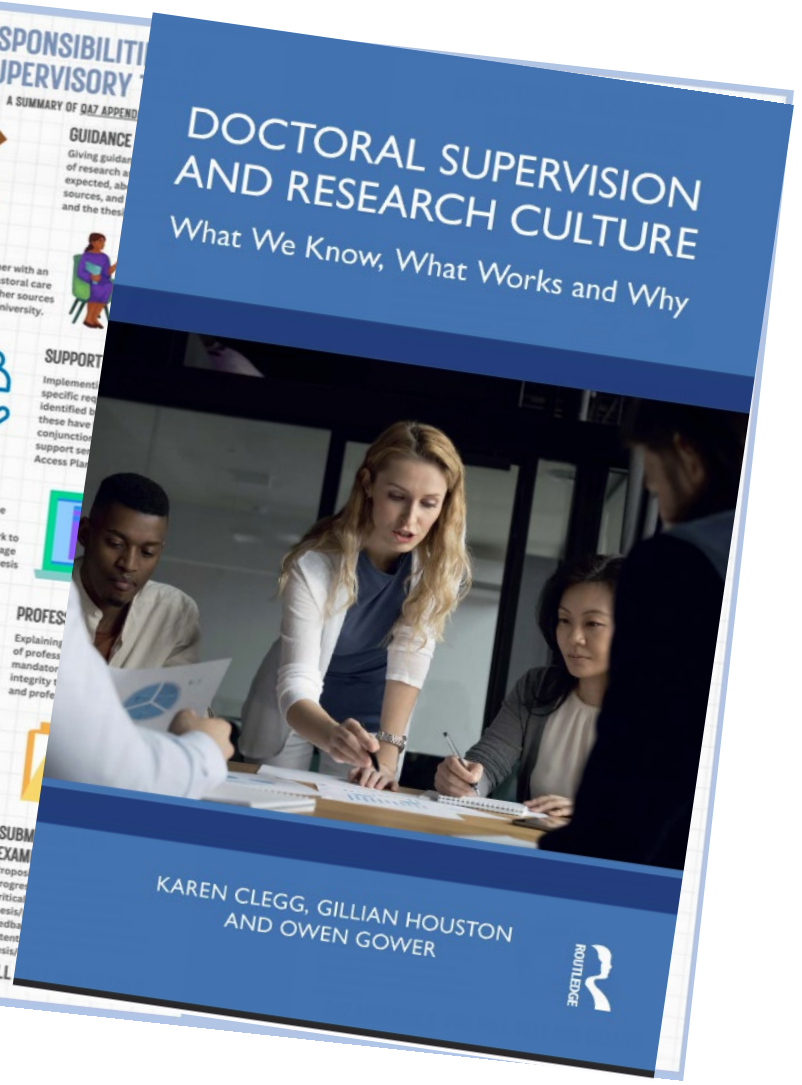
PROFES Explainin
of profess
mandator
integrity t
and profe

RECORD KEEPING Ensuring an appropriate written record is kept of supervisory meetings, including advice or instructions given and agreed actions. Ensuring that the researcher is made aware and is notified in writing of inadequate progress or of standards of work below that generally expected.

SUBM EXAM Propos
progre
Critica
thesis/
feedba
potent
thesis/

THESIS

QA7 APPENDIX 1 FOR FULL



2. Keeping on track

"Candidates may [also] need support when the research is underway. They may expect that research is conducted in the same way as it is published, i.e. a linear progression. But research in the real world can be very messy and progress is often two steps forward and one backwards. Candidates may, for cultural reasons or variously through 'Top Gun' or 'imposter' syndromes, be unwilling to acknowledge that they are 'stuck'.

"Supervisors need to be aware of slippages and ready to correct them, e.g. through progress reviews in supervisions. Supervisors are therefore fundamental to keeping the progress on track."

UKCGE Good Supervisory Practice Framework

Context and targets

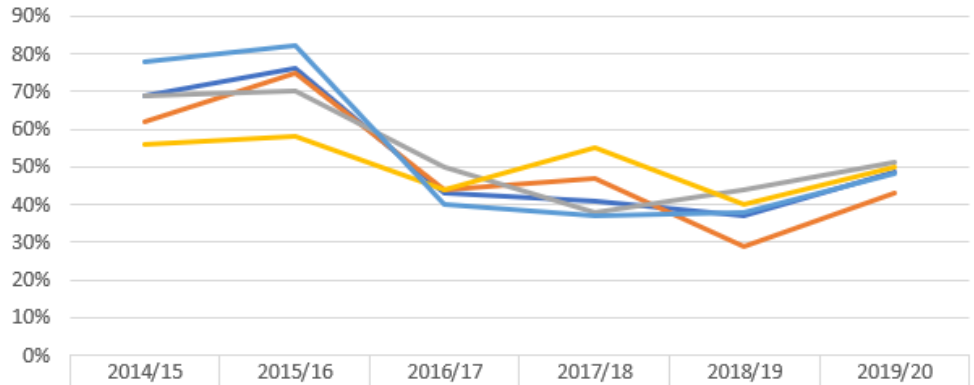
Timely submission rates are important for a number of reasons, including:

- The wellbeing and career development of doctoral researchers
- External constraints and implications (e.g., finances, visas, EDI)
- It is the only doctoral-related University of Bath KPI
- Increasing expectation and monitoring by Research Councils and funders
- Demands on doctoral education have increased

Bath data shows some improvements in timely submission rates post the COVID pandemic; however, we are not yet meeting targets.

Supervisors play a key role in encouraging and supporting doctoral researchers to submit their thesis on time.

Full-time PhD Four-year Submission Rates Over Time and By Faculty/School



Starting Cohort	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
UNIVERSITY	69%	76%	43%	41%	37%	48.70%
ENGINEERING & DESIGN	62%	75%	44%	47%	29%	42.90%
HSS	69%	70%	50%	38%	44%	51.20%
MGMT	56%	58%	44%	55%	40%	50.00%
SCIENCE	78%	82%	40%	37%	38%	48.40%

% of FT PhD students (by starting cohort) who submitted within a 4-year timeline.

Concepts and practices to consider

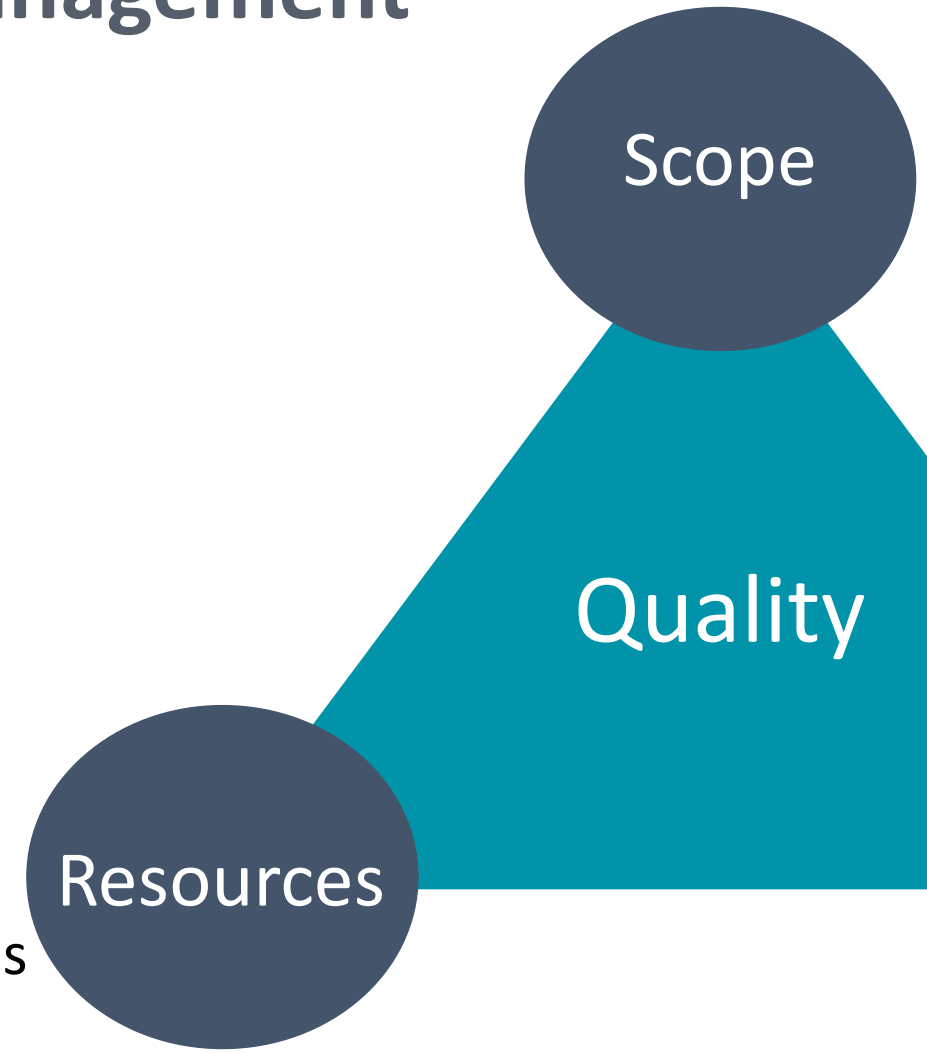
Horizon Planning

Example agenda for a review meeting

1. Check in: how are they? “Can you tell me a little about how you are?”
2. Achievements since last meeting
3. Feedback from you:
   - Progress of the researcher
   - Progress of the project
4. Feedback from them on your support: what do they need from you?
5. Current questions/issues/decisions to be made
6. What they will do in the next few weeks/months
7. The immediate priority
8. Date/content of next meeting

Adapted from Hugh Kearns’ Meeting Agenda
(see the online resources list for links)

The “Iron Triangle” of Project Management

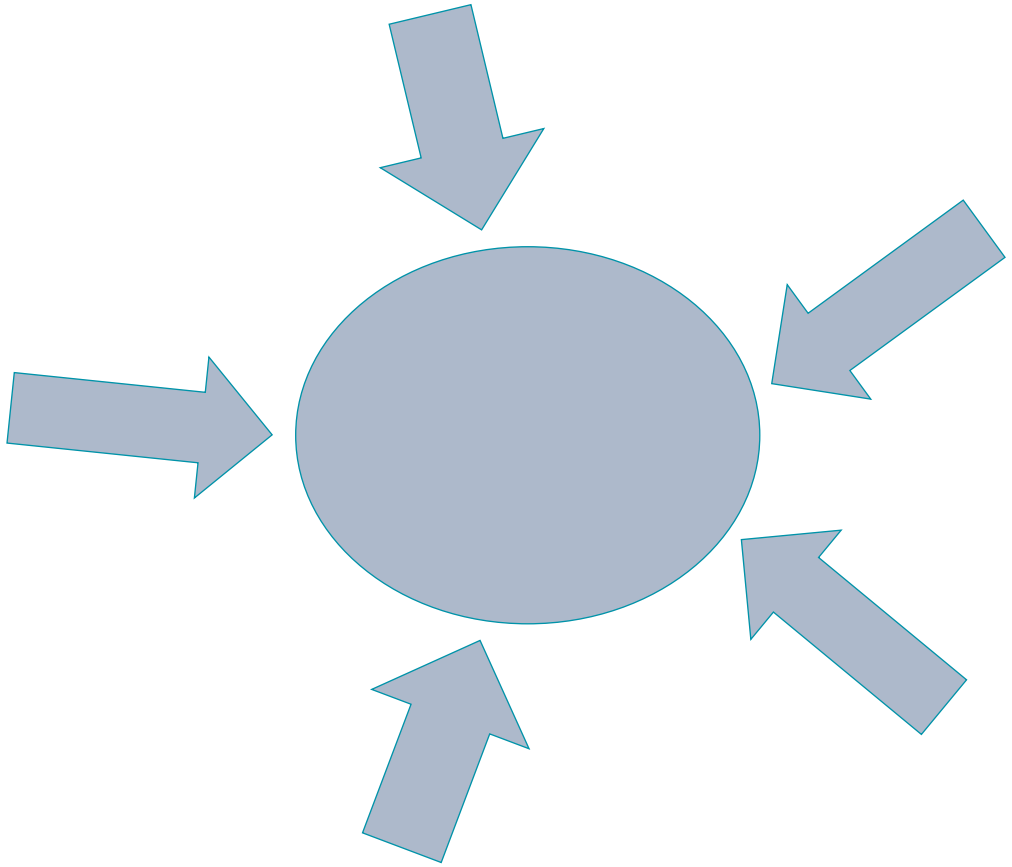


- Features
- Functionality

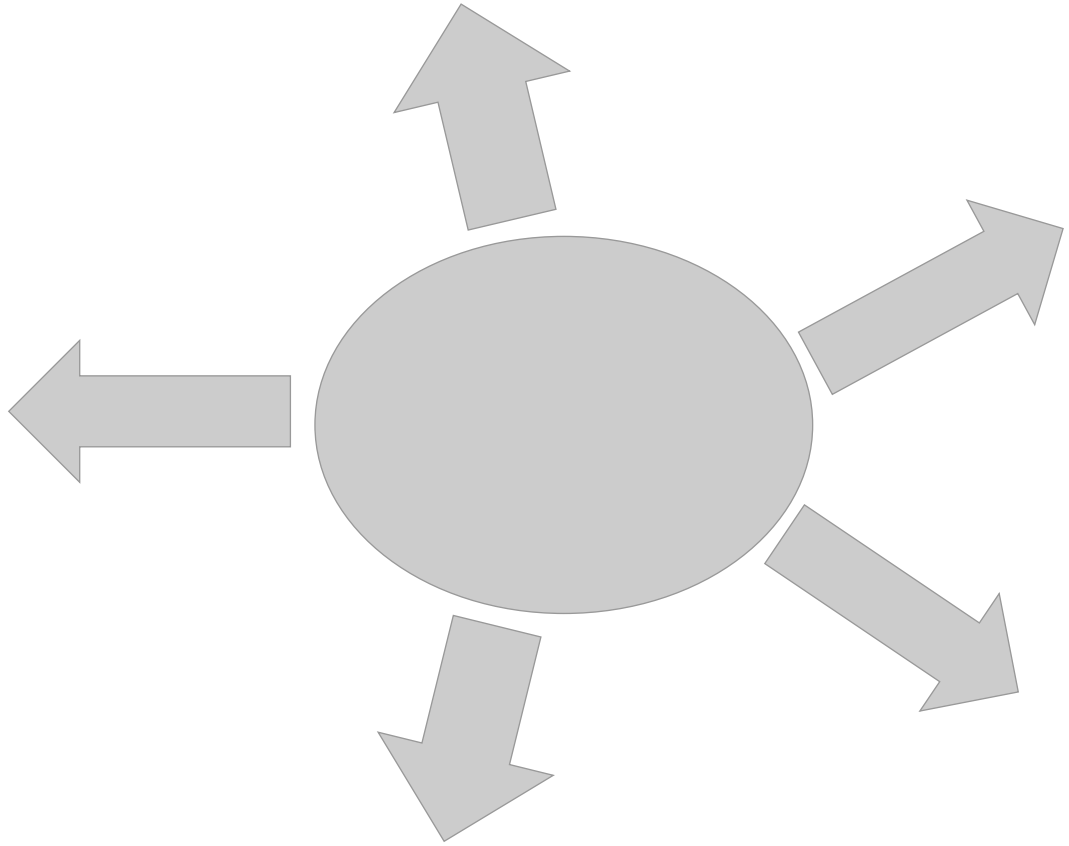
(outputs, impact, outcomes)

- Budget
- People
- Facilities

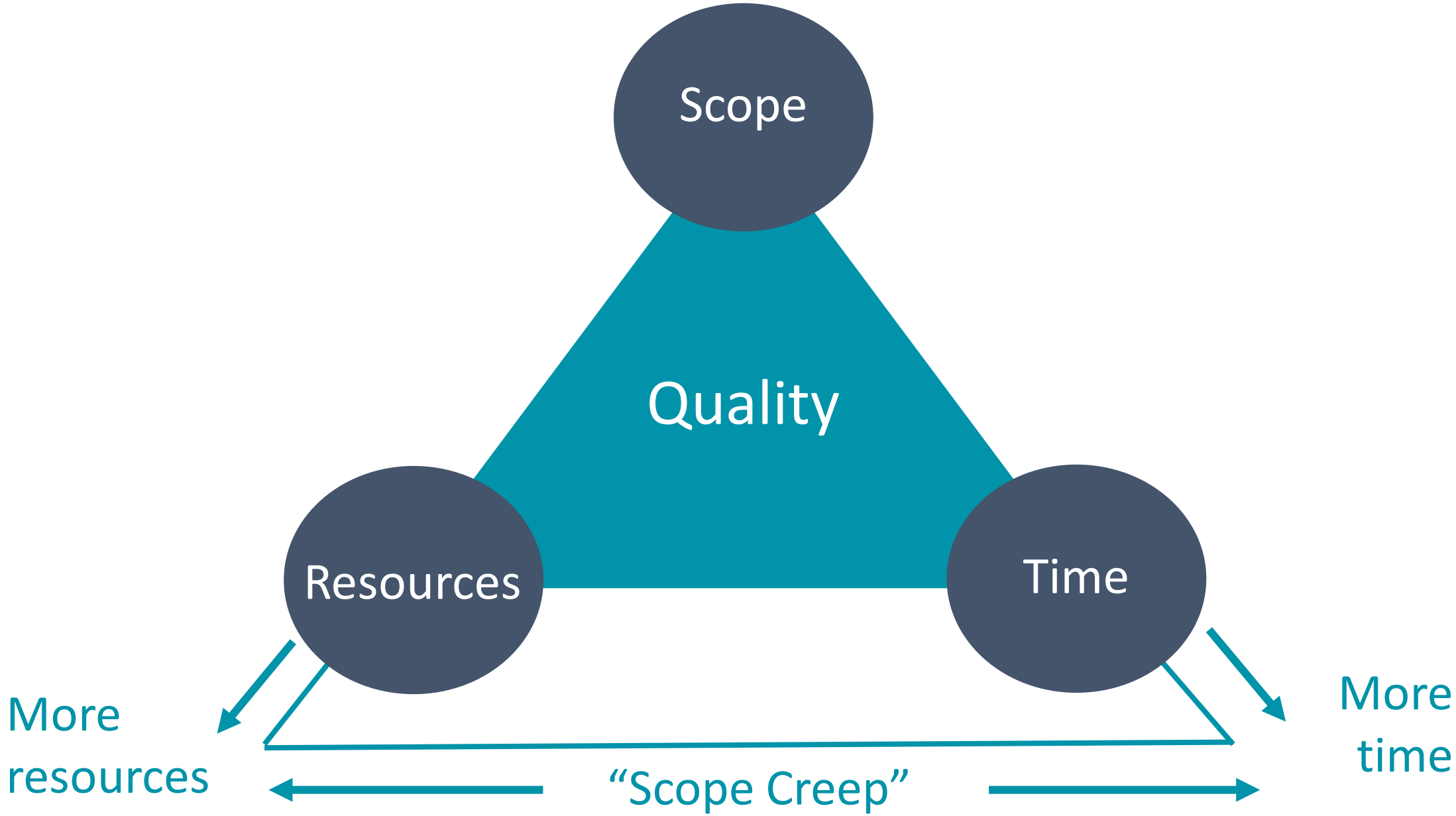
- Schedule
- Deadlines



Projects



Research


Scope
Quality
Resources
Time
More resources
More time
“Scope Creep”

Group practice sharing: Getting unstuck

- Think of an example of when a student you have supervised stalled or got stuck at some stage in their progress. Or think of a time that you yourself stalled as a doctoral student.
- Briefly share your thoughts with your group:
  - What happened/ what was the context?
  - What factors led to the student stalling in their progress?
  - What was needed to get them back on track?

Nominate someone to briefly feedback on:

- A common cause of stalling and the signs to look out for
- A suggestion for what a supervisor can do to support their student getting back on track

Resources

The performance management cycle:

Think of performance management as a cycle
help you to be effective in managing individu
performance management cycle.

THINKWELL

HOME

Free planners and guides > For PhD Supervisors >

For PhD Supervisors

These free downloadable templates will help the supervisor improve the experien
but also their PhD students. Some of the tools are for the supervisor themselves
with their students.

Sort By:

Tools for the supervisor

Downloadable tools to help you supervi

Free

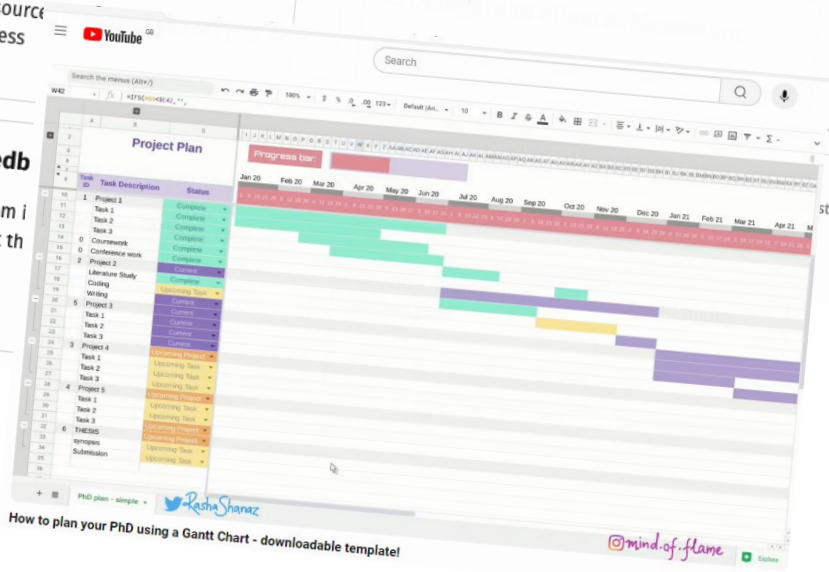
1. Agree goals

Explore resource
up for success

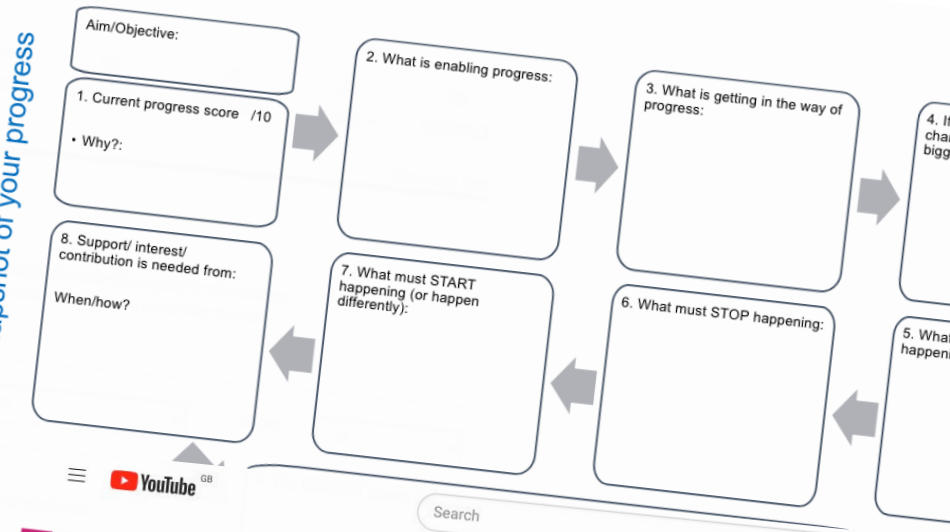
3. Give feedb

Help your team i
well and what th

student..

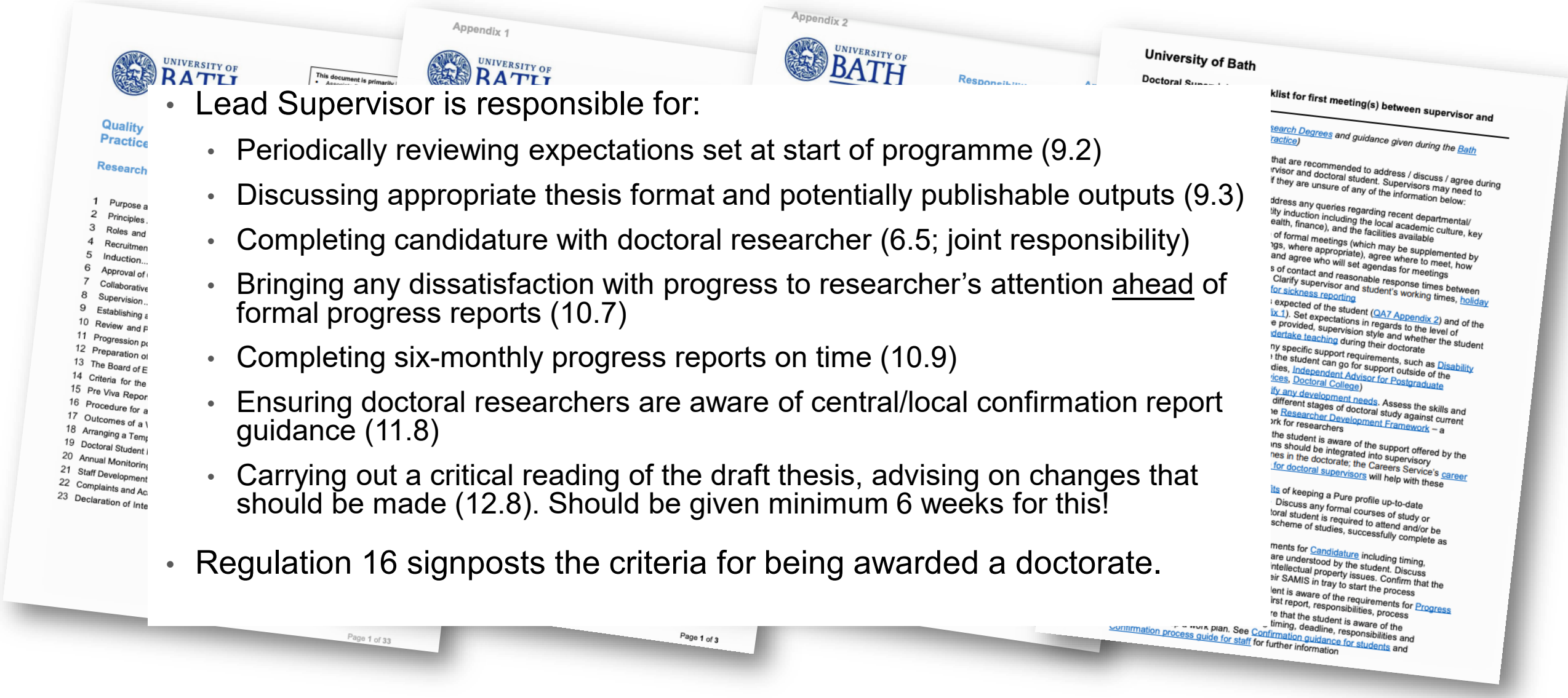


Stock take: Quick snapshot of your progress



Imperial College London

Reminders and signposting (QA7 & Reg 16)



- Lead Supervisor is responsible for:
  - Periodically reviewing expectations set at start of programme (9.2)
  - Discussing appropriate thesis format and potentially publishable outputs (9.3)
  - Completing candidature with doctoral researcher (6.5; joint responsibility)
  - Bringing any dissatisfaction with progress to researcher's attention ahead of formal progress reports (10.7)
  - Completing six-monthly progress reports on time (10.9)
  - Ensuring doctoral researchers are aware of central/local confirmation report guidance (11.8)
  - Carrying out a critical reading of the draft thesis, advising on changes that should be made (12.8). Should be given minimum 6 weeks for this!
- Regulation 16 signposts the criteria for being awarded a doctorate.

Case study part 1

In groups, discuss the scenario you are given.

You have ten minutes.

Nominate a spokesperson to briefly feedback on:

1. What is the main problem?
2. (How) could the supervisor or student have prevented the problem?
3. What could be done now to improve the situation?
4. Who else could help or offer support?

Break

3. Developing and supporting students (and relationships)

"Minimally, supervisors need to be alert to the prospect of candidates experiencing personal issues and problems, for example by regularly checking with them. When such issues, including those relating to well-being and mental health, are identified, supervisors need be sympathetic, conscious of the limits of direct involvement, and aware of the professional services to whom candidates can be referred for further support."

UKCGE Good Supervisory Practice Framework

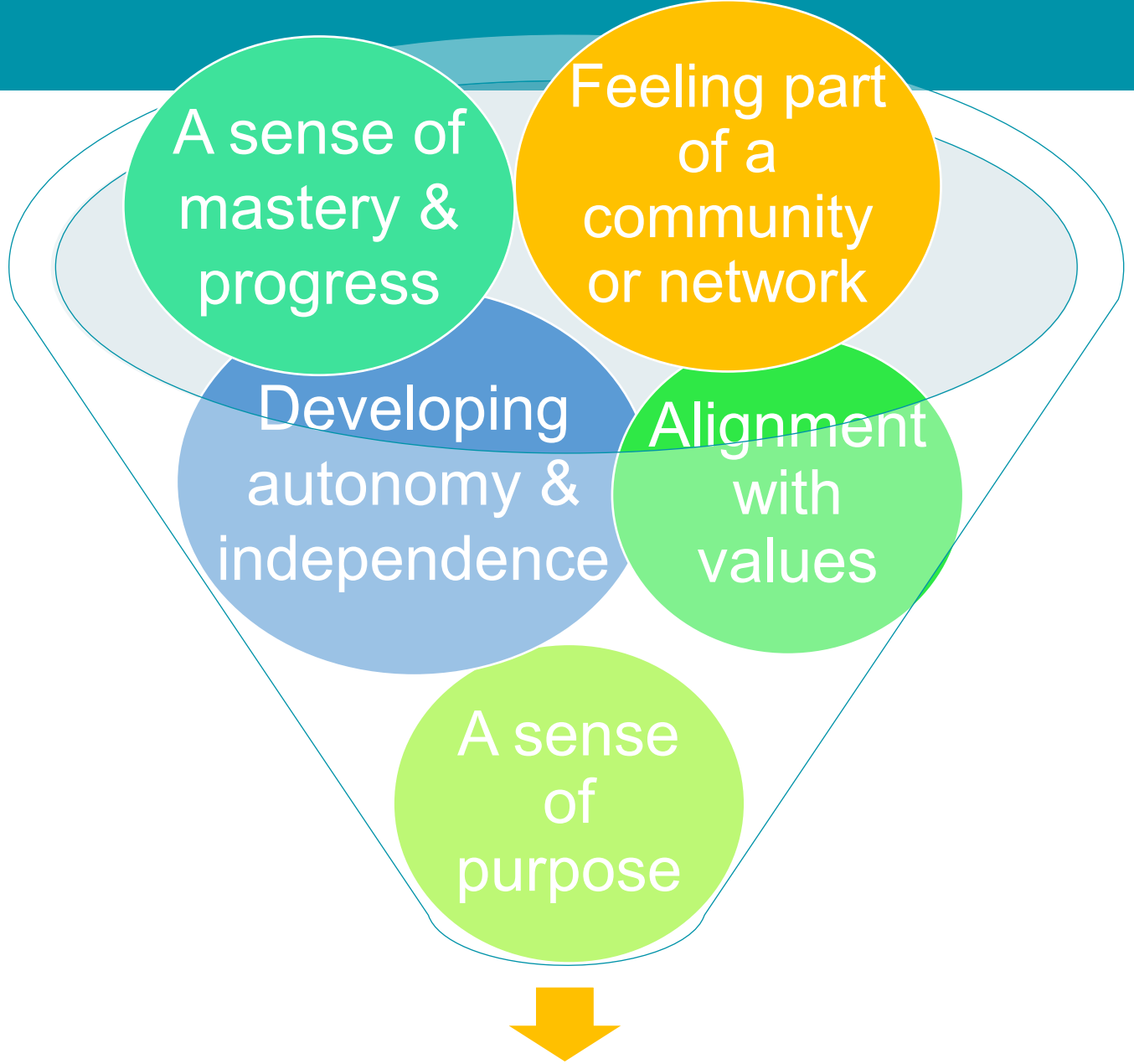
Context and targets

- Many if not most of our doctoral researchers will not remain in academia…..and many do not want to enter academia
- Our research is increasingly carried out in collaboration with industry
- Need to address PGR complaints

Summary Scale	2023 Ranking	2023 %	2021 Ranking	2021 %	2019 Ranking	2019 %
Progression	49th out of 100	78%	62nd out of 89	77%	84th out of 103	76%
Responsibilities	24th out of 100	80%	70th out of 89	77%	67th out of 103	77%
Support	13th out of 100	79%	11th out of 89	77%	-	-
Research Skills	33rd out of 100	87%	36th out of 89	86%	67th out of 103	85%
Professional Development	25th out of 100	80%	49th out of 89	75%	69th out of 103	78%

Source of data: Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (2019, 2021, 2023)

Concepts and practices to consider


A sense of mastery & progress
Feeling part of a community or network
Developing autonomy & independence
Alignment with values
A sense of purpose

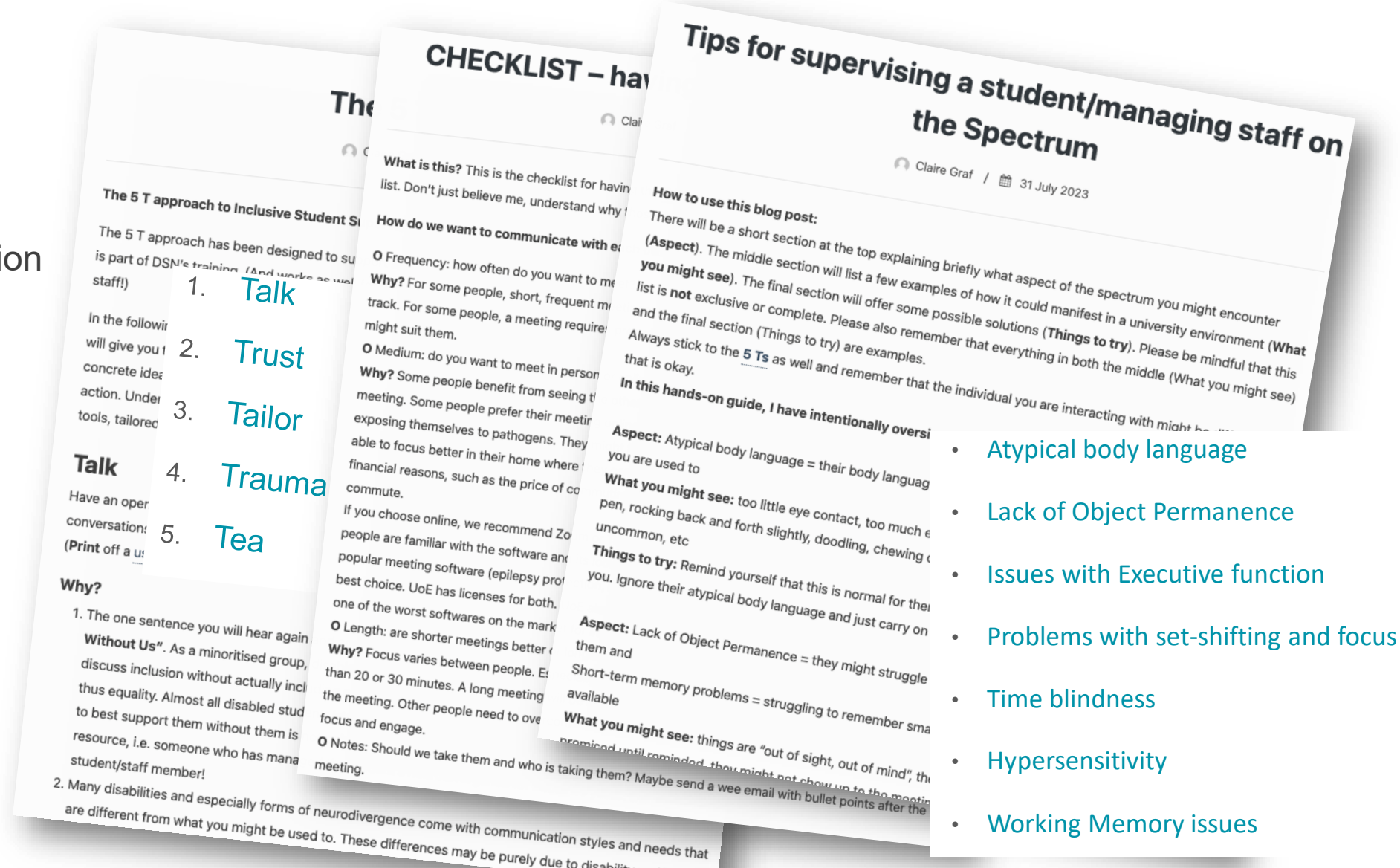
Motivation

Supporting neurodiverse or disabled students

Two guides from the University of Edinburgh:

1. The 5 T approach to Inclusive Student Supervision

2. Tips for supervising a student on the Autistic Spectrum



Professional development

Ten development activities

Regular training needs discussion

Researcher Development Framework (RDF)

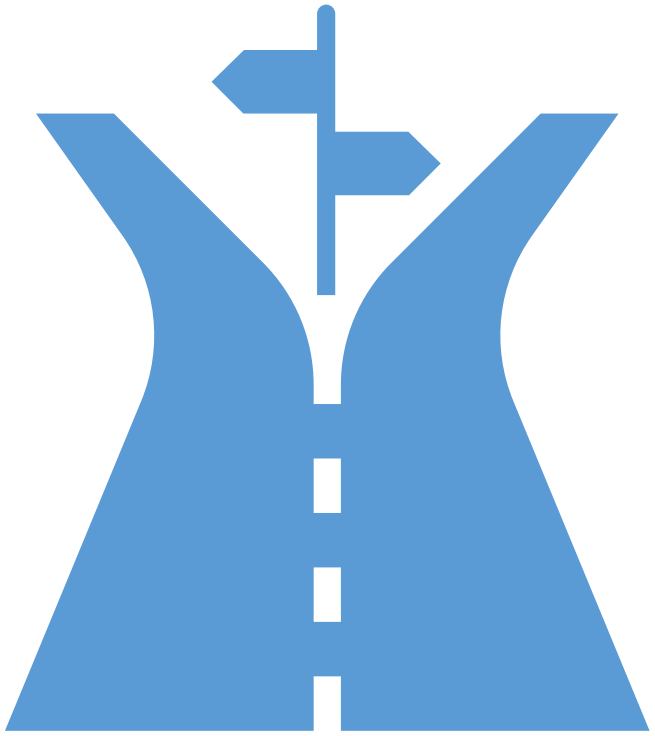
Today, for tomorrow

Development vs training

Breadth and stretch

Reflection and review

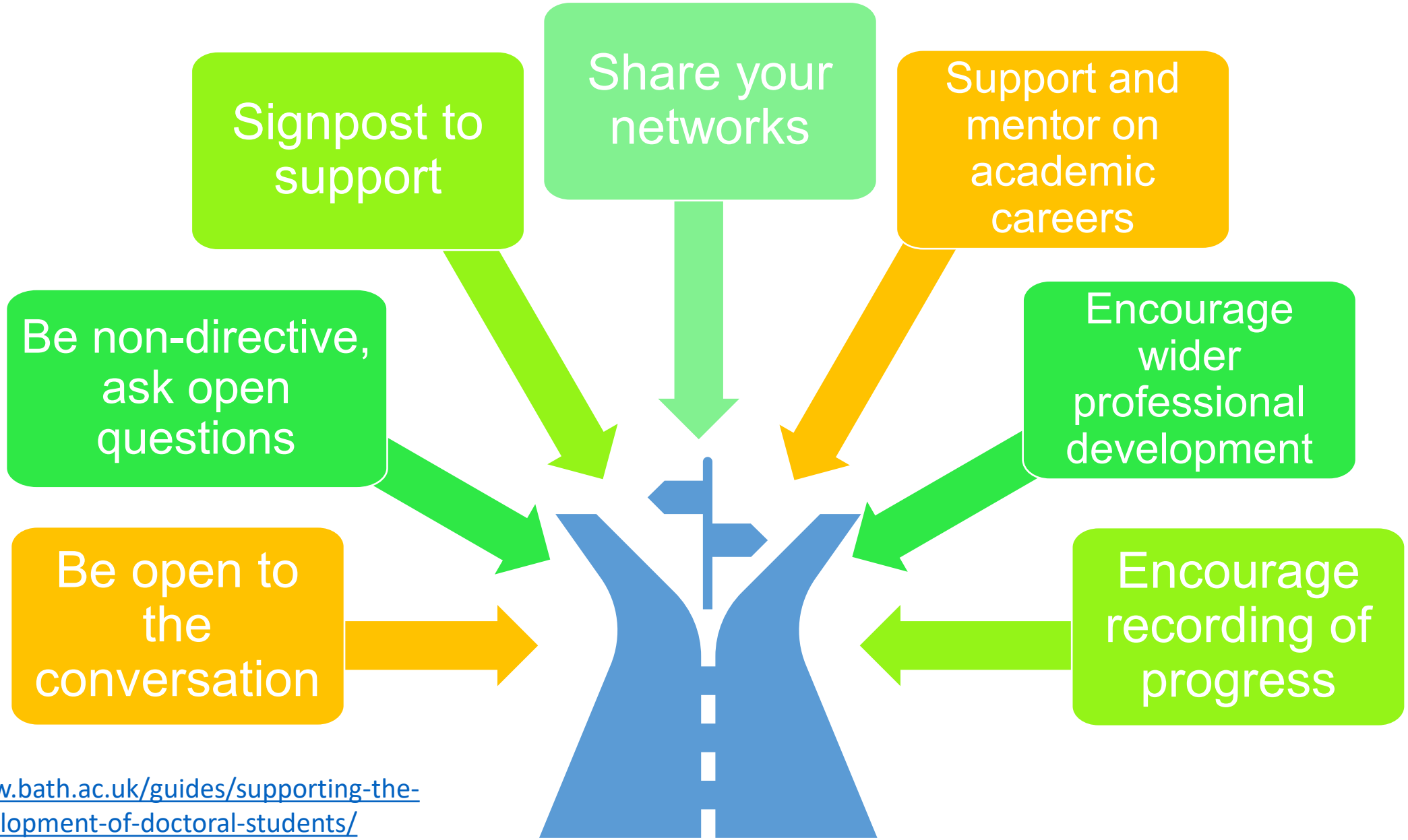
Career support



“Good-practice is [then] for supervisors to at least be prepared to discuss what is involved in an academic career, including research, teaching and supporting learning, academic administration, public service, and entrepreneurial activity.

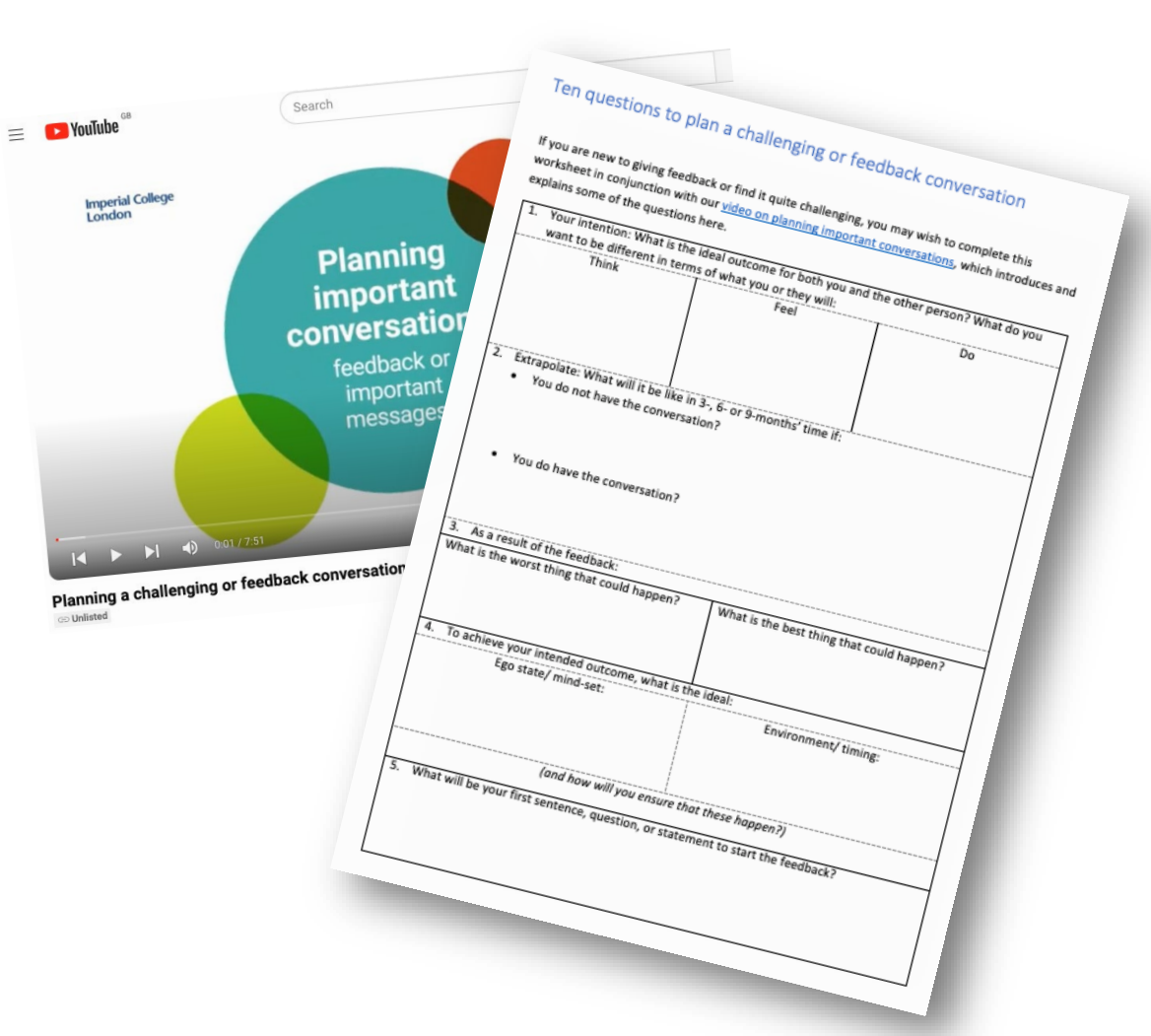
While, unless they have worked outside universities, supervisors may be unable to advise candidates seeking non-academic positions, they can support them to acquire the so-called generic or transferable skills deemed necessary to enable them compete for non-academic careers.”

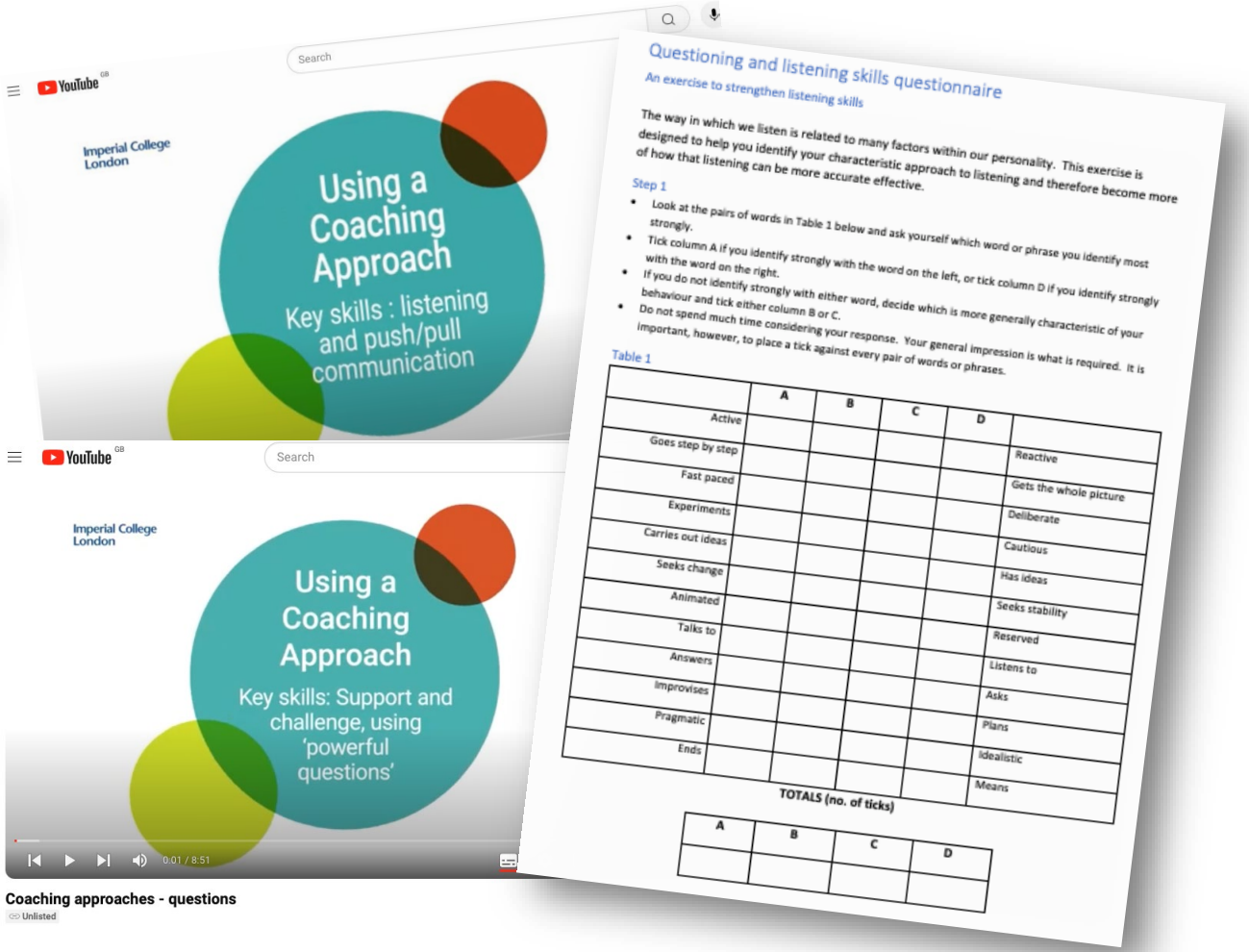
UKCGE Good Supervisory Practice Framework



https://www.bath.ac.uk/guides/supporting-the-career-development-of-doctoral-students/

Ideas to support good conversations





Group practice sharing: Relationships

- Think of an example of a conflict or breakdown in communication with a . Or think of a time from your own experience as a doctoral researcher.
- Briefly share your thoughts with your group:
  - What happened/ what was the context?
  - What factors led to the conflict/breakdown?
  - What was needed to get back on track?
  - What could have prevented it?

Nominate someone to briefly feedback on:

- A common cause of conflict and the signs to look out for
- A suggestion for what can help to get things back on track

Reminders and signposting (QA7, Section 9)

For careers:

- Put doctoral researchers in touch with their Faculty/School Careers Consultant
- Share the Employability Map as a tool to plan in bite-size careers steps
- Remind doctoral researchers that they can drop in to the Careers Centre (near Fresh) every weekday, 10-4, and access opportunities via MyDoctoral Development

Lead Supervisor is responsible for:

- Undertaking a Training Needs Analysis and Professional Development Plan (at start and at least annually)
- Signposting appropriate internal and external training opportunities
- Encouraging them to complete required research integrity training and have oversight of ethics applications

Open Research

Aims to make academic knowledge more accessible and increase transparency and trust in research. The University of Bath is committed to encouraging the adoption of open research practices amongst our researchers.

Open Research at Bath:

- Open Research landing page
- Open Research Action Plan
- Research Data Policy
- Open access mandate

Library support for Open Research:

Open Access

- Funder open access requirements
- Paying for open access
- Open access and the REF

Research Data

- Share data on Bath's Research Data Archive
- Guidance pages on managing, sharing & preserving data
- Training - online and in person

External resources:

UK Reproducibility Network (UKRN)

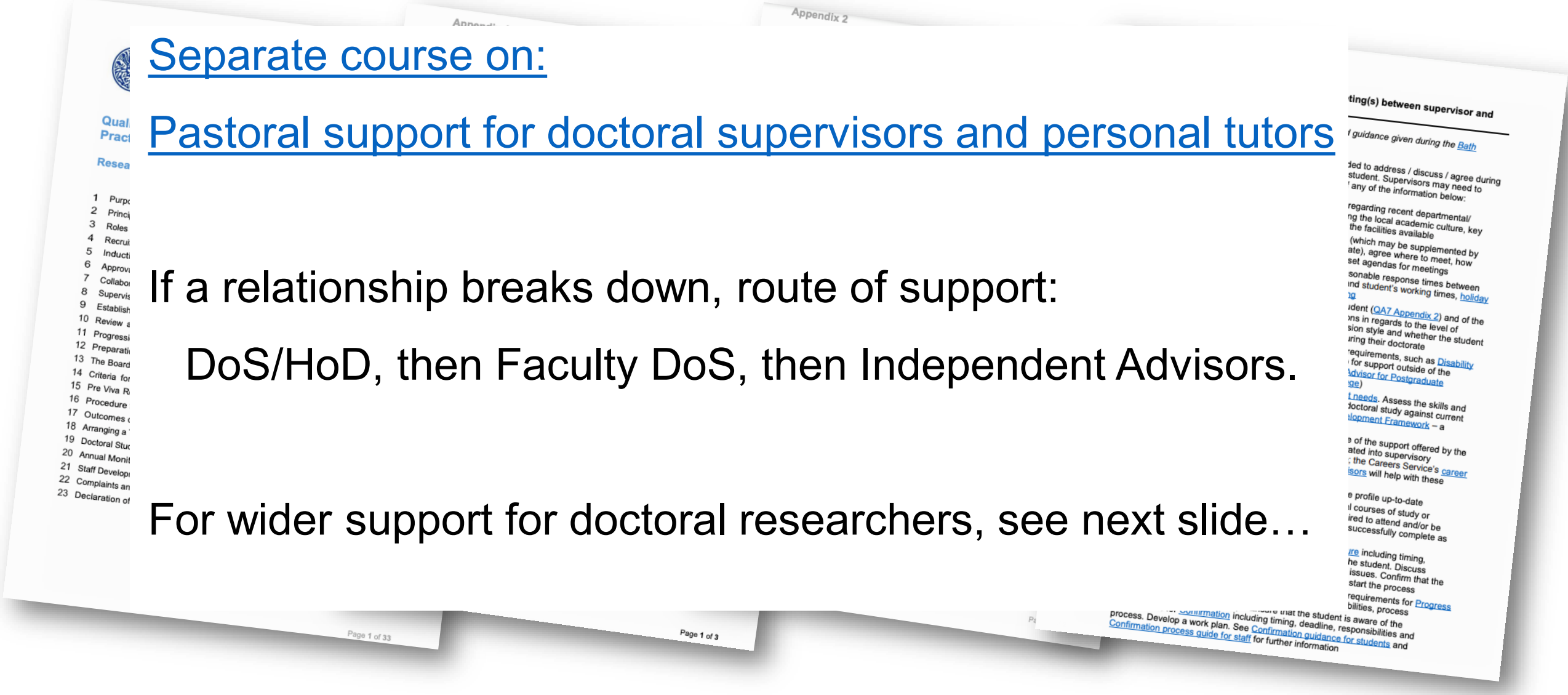
- Open Research Resources
- Primers | UKRN

Bath Open Research Group:

A PhD student group working together to share best practice, develop resources, and support openness amongst PhD student projects in all disciplines.

Please contact **Alex Maclellan** (Psychology) to find out more: akem20@bath.ac.uk

Reminders and signposting



Separate course on:

Pastoral support for doctoral supervisors and personal tutors

If a relationship breaks down, route of support:

DoS/HoD, then Faculty DoS, then Independent Advisors.

For wider support for doctoral researchers, see next slide…

Student Support

- Wellbeing
- Therapeutic services
- Mental health advice
- Student money advice
- Disability service
- Student retention

Doctoral College

- Doctoral Skills
- Programmes Administrator
- Support for PGR students

Student Union

- Advice and Support Service
- Peer support and skills training
- Student voice and student representation
- Sports, societies and volunteering

Skills Centre

- Digital and academic skills support
- English language support
- Maths and stats support

Library

- Security desk
- Study space

Independent PGR Advisors

- Advisors

Careers

- New Students
- Events and Fairs
- Soon-to-be-graduate info

Chaplaincy

- Regular weekly events
- Faith societies
- Chaplains

Supported signposting – student facing services available for PGR students

Support & Report

Support directory (bath.ac.uk)

Mental health conditions toolkit (uhi.ac.uk)

Case study part 2

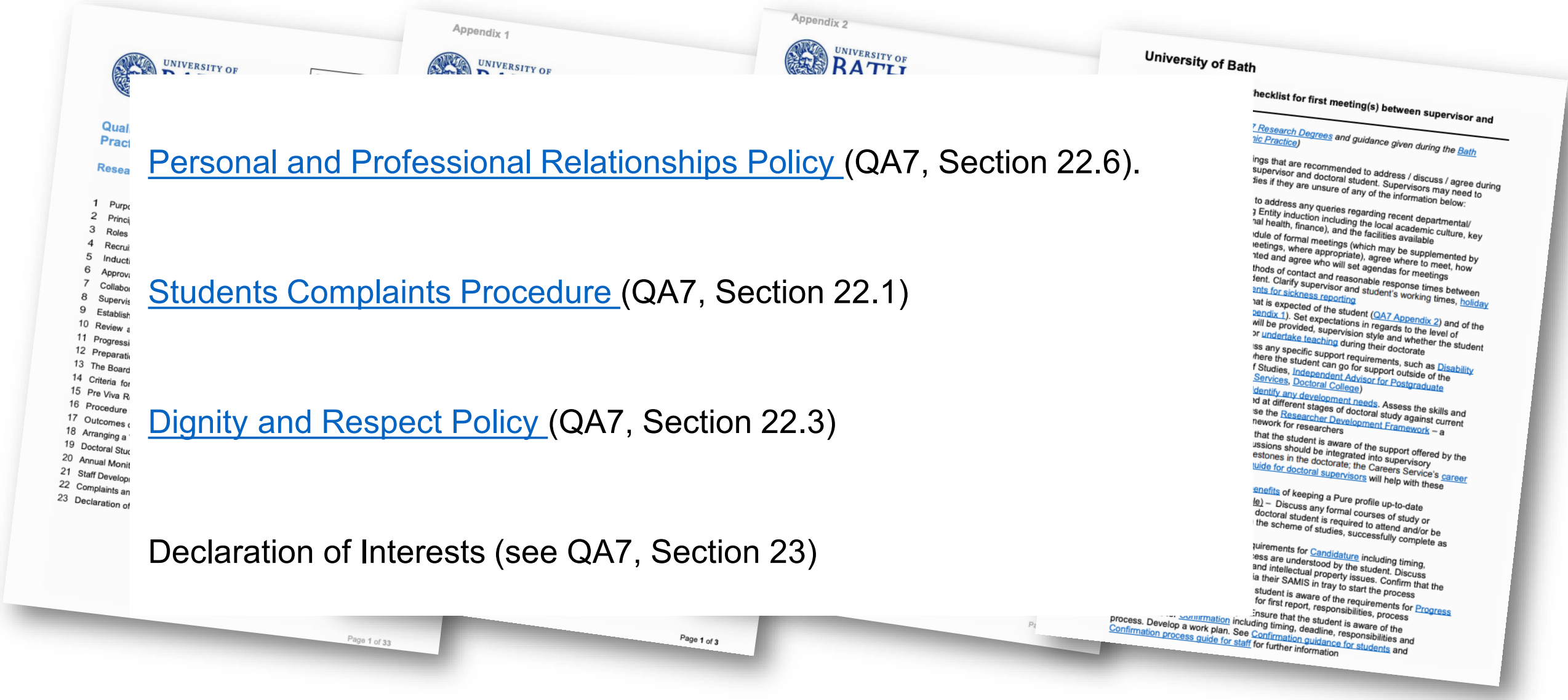
In small groups, discuss the scenario you are given.

You have ten minutes.

Nominate a spokesperson to briefly feedback on:

1. What is the main problem?
2. (How) could the supervisor or student have prevented the problem?
3. What could be done now to improve the situation?
4. Who else could help or offer support?

Reminders and signposting



Personal and Professional Relationships Policy (QA7, Section 22.6).

Students Complaints Procedure (QA7, Section 22.1)

Dignity and Respect Policy (QA7, Section 22.3)

Declaration of Interests (see QA7, Section 23)

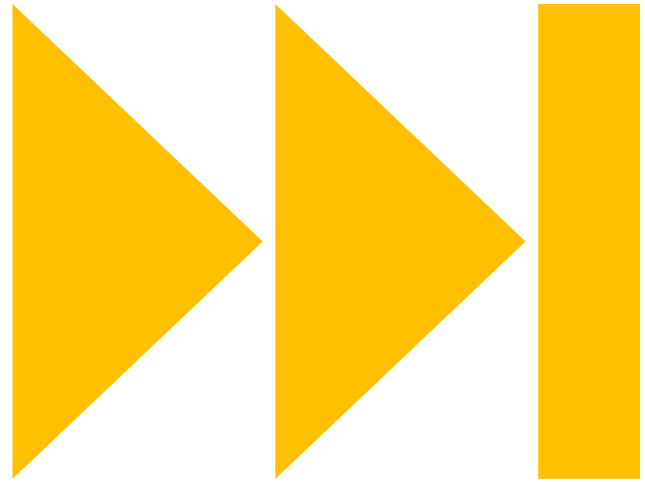
Next steps?

What one thing will you do to adapt your supervision practice to take account of the ideas and reminders discussed today?

Make a note on the handout and share with your group.

Finally

- There are opportunities to further develop supervisory skills and knowledge. See for example:
- Resource Hub for supervisors
- UKCGE Accreditation
- Next Generation Supervision Project



Thank You

Thank you for your time and attention

Slides and resources accessed via the Doctoral College website (and soon via a new Doctoral Supervisors Resources Hub).

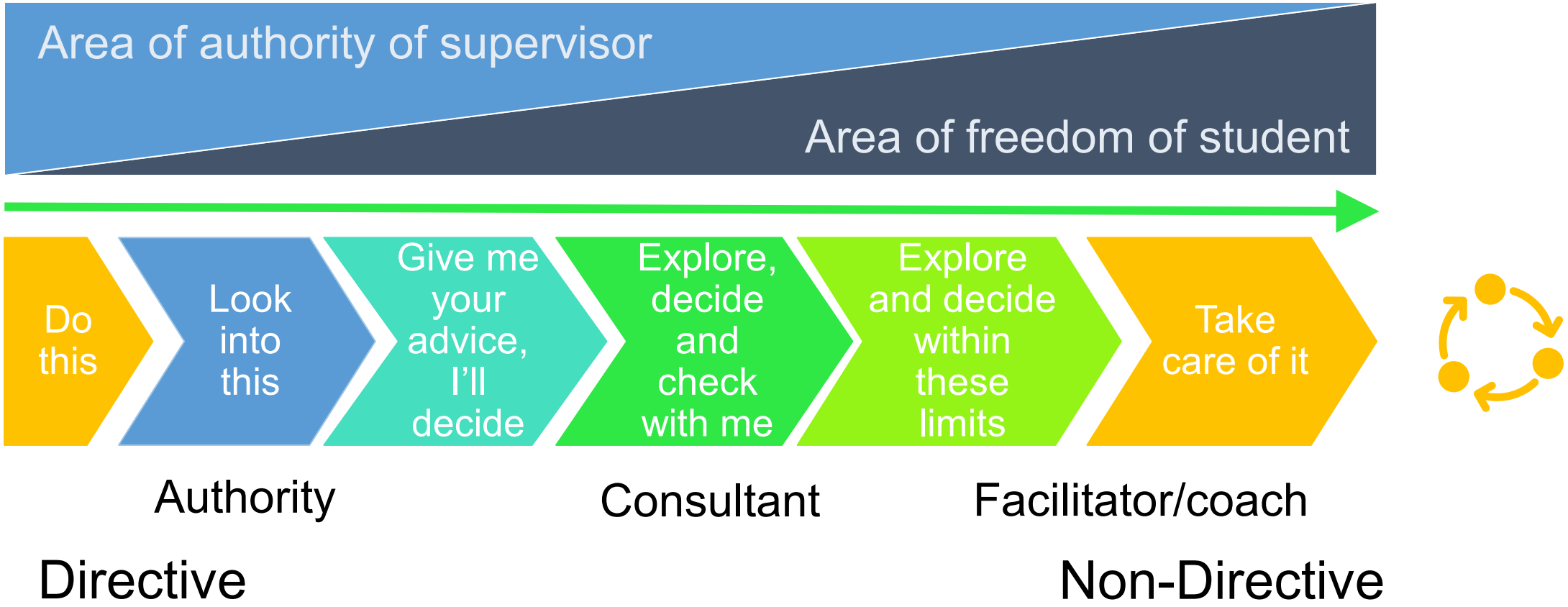
Please also take 5 minutes to complete the survey (via QR code) on this workshop to help us evaluate and improve it, ready for the refresher in 4 years time!

Please let us know if you have any questions or requests for support to enhance your supervisory practice. Any doctoral queries:

Associate-ProVC-Doctoral@bath.ac.uk

Optional model to support discussions

Developing autonomy and independence: "The Continuum of Leadership"



Adapted from Continuum of Leadership Behaviour, by Robert Tannenbaum & Warren H. Schmidt

1. What are the signs you expect to see from the student that show they are moving in the right direction?
2. What practical things can/do you do to encourage this progression to independence?
3. Right now, are you and your current student(s) where you should be? Does anything need to change?

Case Studies

A: Sam and Rowan

Doctoral researcher Sam has complained to their supervisor that Rowan, one of the senior postdocs in their research group, will be lead author on a group paper. Rowan was integral to the study's design and execution; however, Sam argues that their substantial contributions in data collection and analysis warrant primary recognition. It is not clear to the supervisor whether Sam has, in fact, done the majority of the work on the paper. When Sam's supervisor (who is also Rowan's PI) spoke to Rowan, Rowan disputed this, and made it clear that they were relying on this paper to boost their CV on a Fellowship application they are planning.

B: Lin

Lin is balancing caregiving for two children with work on their Doctorate. This has impacted on their presence on campus and their involvement in the community and in turn on their studies. Lin really should be starting to write up now, but their supervisor feels the work done to date is not yet substantial enough, or good enough quality for a doctoral thesis.

C: Morgan

Morgan is a doctoral researcher in a Doctoral Training Partnership (DTP) involving both two related, but different departments. Supervision is evenly split between the two departments.

Morgan has told their first supervisor that they are considering asking for a change in supervisory team which will remove the second supervisor from their supervisory team. Morgan feels that supervision meetings including both supervisors can become very intense due to their passion for the project, yet their differing disciplinary perspectives lead to some disagreements on project approach. This has caused Morgan to feel anxiety and frustration, leading to a decline in interest in their own doctorate.

The second supervisor has provided crucial technical input, and finding a suitable replacement with their expertise within the university is not feasible.

D: Lee

Lee excelled in the early stages of their doctorate, acing their confirmation report and viva. However, progress has stagnated since then, raising concerns about timely completion and quality. With each passing six-monthly progress report, Lee's apprehension mounts.

It is now the end of Lee's second year, and their supervisor has observed a concerning trend. Lee frequently reschedules meetings, arrives unprepared, and falls short of expected milestones. This pattern, stretching over several months, is testing the supervisor's patience and diminishing their willingness to invest time in Lee and their work.

Recently, upon entering Lee's office, their supervisor noticed that Lee seemed to have been crying but respected their privacy, opting not to intrude. In meetings, Lee often appears subdued and on the verge of tears, indicating underlying struggles.

E: Amal

Amal has gone to see their supervisor and told them about rumours they have heard from fellow students in the PhD office about another supervisor, Prof Parker. Amal is concerned that Prof Parker may be acting inappropriately towards women within their research group. Prof Parker is one of Amal's supervisor's close collaborators.

Case Studies:

Including advice from Independent Advisors

A: Sam and Rowan

Doctoral researcher Sam has complained to their supervisor that Rowan, one of the senior postdocs in the research group, will be lead author on a group paper. Rowan was integral to the study's design and execution; however, Sam argues that their substantial contributions in data collection and analysis warrant primary recognition. It is not clear to the supervisor whether Sam has, in fact, done the majority of the work on the paper. When Sam's supervisor (who is also Rowan's PI) spoke to Rowan, Rowan disputed this, and made it clear that they were relying on this paper to boost their CV on a Fellowship application they are planning.

Advice from Independent Advisors:

Do not promise first authorship too early on. Shared first authorship. Discuss authorship throughout.

How to prevent: Be aware of hierarchies. Meet with students regularly and ensure you know what they are doing. On joint projects, ensure you have team meetings, so everyone knows what they are doing.

What to do from now on: Ensure that you have the evidence for what both did on the paper. Ensure Rowan that a shared first authorship will still offer the boost they are looking for, for his CV. Depending on Rowan's seniority – could offer Rowan last authorship as an alternative as they were crucial to the studies design and execution.

Where else to get support or advice: Colleagues with more experience, director of research, Research Integrity team.

B: Lin

Lin is balancing caregiving for two children with work on their doctorate. This has impacted on their presence on campus and their involvement in the community and in turn on their studies. Lin really should be starting to write up now, but their supervisor feels the work done to date is not yet substantial enough, or good enough quality for a doctoral thesis.

Advice from Independent Advisors:

Discussion around pressures and potentially moving to PT or suspending if appropriate. Talk to Wellbeing around student wellbeing.

How to prevent: Clear ongoing discussions between student and supervisor about progress and pressures. Ensure supervisor asks about wellbeing of the student in all meetings (in a meaningful manner).

What to do from now on: Regular supervisory meetings and clear, timely and encouraging feedback to student on how to further improve work where appropriate.

Where else to get support or advice: Student Support (wellbeing), PhD mentor (if the student has one).

C: Morgan

Morgan is a doctoral researcher in a Doctoral Training Partnership (DTP) involving both two related, but different departments. Supervision is evenly split between the two departments.

Morgan has told their first supervisor that they are considering asking for a change in supervisory team which will remove the second supervisor from their supervisory team. Morgan feels that supervision meetings including both supervisors can become very intense due to their passion for the project, yet their differing disciplinary perspectives lead to some disagreements on project approach. This has caused Morgan to feel anxiety and frustration, leading to a decline in interest in their own doctorate.

The second supervisor has provided crucial technical input, and finding a suitable replacement with their expertise within the university is not feasible.

Advice from Independent Advisors:

Consider adding a third supervisor to the supervisory team. This could be helpful if managed appropriately. Also, a conversation between the supervisors but perhaps mediated e.g. by an Independent Advisor.

How to prevent: Ensure goals of doctorate and work plan are well set out. Ensure regular meetings of collaborative team, including meetings without second supervisor to discuss conflicts. Ensure student is listened to during meetings. Ask the student if they need anything different from the supervision.

What to do from now on: Meet with other supervisor, with student's permission and discuss what the student has reported. Work out how to move forward to ensure student feels more supported. Set a time frame to check back in with the student and their feeling comfortable with in the supervision.

Where else to get support or advice: Director of Studies, Doctoral College, Student Support (particularly Wellbeing).

D: Lee

Lee excelled in the early stages of their doctorate, acing their confirmation report and viva. However, progress has stagnated since then, raising concerns about timely completion and quality. With each passing six-monthly progress report, Lee's apprehension mounts.

It is now the end of Lee's second year, and their supervisor has observed a concerning trend. Lee frequently reschedules meetings, arrives unprepared, and falls short of expected milestones. This pattern, stretching over several months, is testing the supervisor's patience and diminishing their willingness to invest time in Lee and their work.

Recently, upon entering Lee's office, their supervisor noticed that Lee seemed to have been crying but respected their privacy, opting not to intrude. In meetings, Lee often appears subdued and on the verge of tears, indicating underlying struggles.

Advice from Independent Advisors:

Always include a wellbeing question in your supervisory meetings. A simple 'how are you?', is likely to build trust that a student will tell you when something is wrong in the future. Try to put your frustrations aside and see this from the student's perspective.

How to prevent: Always include a wellbeing question in your supervisory meetings. A simple how are you, is likely to build trust that a student will tell you when something is wrong in the future. Don't leave problems like this to manifest because they will generally always get worse.

What to do from now on: Direct the student to Well-being services. Work out what within the doctorate is causing the student challenges or whether it is external factors alone. If factors to do with the doctorate, work out with Lee what they might need to improve their performance – more support, training, confidence boost, challenges with team etc. If external discuss what else they need to do to get their wellbeing back on track – is suspension something they might need to consider. Be kind during discussions. If student won't talk to supervisor, direct them to other places where they might feel more neutral.

Where else to get support or advice: DoS, Wellbeing and student support, Faculty DoS, IAs.

E: Amal

Amal has gone to see their supervisor and told them about rumours they have heard from fellow students in the PhD office about another supervisor, Prof Parker. Amal is concerned that Prof Parker may be acting inappropriately towards women within their research group. Prof Parker is one of Amal's supervisor's close collaborators.

Advice from Independent Advisors:

It's important that you recognise that you have a conflict of interest. Report what you have heard to your head of department. Tell your doctoral researcher about Report and Support, and the Dignity and Respect policy of the university.

How to prevent: Ensure all university employees and students have completed D and R training. Ensure student and staff know where to report inappropriate behaviour.

What to do from now on: Remain open to your and other students coming to discuss with you. Inform your doctoral researcher that you have reported to HoD.

Where else to get support or advice: HR, Student Support (Dignity and Respect Liaison officer).

QA7 statements relating to expectations activity

How would you interpret ‘regular formal meetings’? how frequently should they take place?
[It is important that..] the student and the lead supervisor discuss and agree a schedule of regular formal meetings. (These may be supplemented where appropriate by more frequent informal meetings)

What would you expect a normal working pattern for a doctoral researcher to look like?
[It is important that..] the student and the lead supervisor discuss and agree supervisory team and student work patterns, including any planned periods of leave (e.g. sabbatical, parental)

What do you consider to be a reasonable response time when a student contacts you with a non-urgent question?
It is important that..] the student and the lead supervisor discuss and agree suitable methods of contact between them and reasonable response times;

What are the expenditure arrangements for any budget associated with your student’s research project?
QA7: where there is a budget associated with the project work, the supervisor and doctoral student should plan and agree the expenditure arrangements.

What do you hope to be the potential publishable outputs from your student’s projects?
Candidates …. should discuss potential publishable outputs, and the most appropriate thesis submission format with the supervisory team at a suitably early point in their studies

How do you prefer meetings and decisions about the research be documented?
Lead supervisors, together with the rest of the supervisory team, are also responsible for ensuring an appropriate written record is kept of meetings with the student, including advice or instructions given to them and agreed actions, and that a copy of all correspondence about academic requirements, inadequate progress etc., is kept.

How do you prefer to give feedback on a: written work? and b: the students skills?
Lead supervisors are responsible for providing regular constructive feedback Lead supervisors, together with the rest of the supervisory team, are also responsible for requesting written work as appropriate, and returns such work with appropriate feedback and constructive criticism within a reasonable time.

What are the arrangements for taking holiday? e.g. process and number of days they are entitled to?
Doc College: As a doctoral student, you are entitled to take up to 25 working days' holiday leave (for full-time students; pro rata for part-time students) from your programme in any 12-month period, in addition to days on which the University is closed (e.g. bank holidays and discretionary closure days). The timing of your leave should be negotiated with your lead supervisor. If your programme includes a formally assessed taught element, you should not normally take leave during the taught element.

What is the most important role that your co-supervisor plays?
A selection to choose from at https://www.bath.ac.uk/publications/qa7-research-degrees/attachments/qa7-appendix-1-responsibilities-of-the-supervisory-team.pdf