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# THE ART OF SUPERVISION: STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE MENTORSHIP

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THE ART  OF SUPERVISION:  
STRATEGIES FOR  
EFFECTIVE MENTORSHIP

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The supervisory module is designed to serve solely as a guideline for supervisors, outlining key criteria that are important during the supervisory process. However, as each individual is unique, supervisors may adopt different methods and techniques that align with their personal styles, preferences, and professional judgment. This flexibility ensures that supervision remains adaptable and effective, allowing supervisors to tailor their approaches based on the specific needs of their team members and organizational objectives. Additionally, it is important to note that academic regulations and official circulars may be updated or revised from time to time; therefore, supervisors are encouraged to stay informed and adhere to the latest guidelines as issued by the relevant authorities.

## OVERVIEW

Postgraduate supervision training is designed to equip academic staff with the essential skills and knowledge to effectively mentor and guide postgraduate students through their research journey. The training focuses on developing supervision skills, enhancing communication, understanding ethical and professional responsibilities, supporting student well-being, fostering research excellence, and navigating institutional policies. Its importance lies in ensuring high-quality supervision that contributes to students' success and satisfaction, upholding research integrity, and maintaining the institution's reputation for academic excellence. By refining supervisors' abilities and understanding, the training supports the creation of a supportive and effective research environment, benefiting both students and the institution.

## AIMS:

1. To provide postgraduate supervision training to academic staff that meets the supervisory qualification requirements established in the 'Standards: Master's and Doctoral Degree | Second Edition: April 2021' by the Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA).
2. To enhance lecturers' skills and knowledge in implementing best practices in supervision and research.
3. To provide an understanding of the procedures and regulations related to supervision based on UMK's Academic Regulations.





*By Ts. Dr. Ikarastika Rahayu Binti Abdul Wahab*

# MODULE

## INTRODUCTION

### SYNOPSIS:

The module emphasizes on the supervision process as the guiding force, which is spearheaded by supervisors who play pivotal roles in shaping students' educational trajectories. The postgraduate studies that transitioning from undergraduate entails a multifaceted journey marked by several components and affected by various factors. The supervision process also needs to fulfill the academic regulations particularly the MQA standard as well as the UMK Academic Regulations of Graduate Studies that serve as the framework within which supervision practices operate, ensuring adherence to standards of academic rigor and integrity. These regulations delineate the rights and responsibilities of both supervisors and students, fostering a conducive environment for scholarly growth. In essence, the synergy between supervision and academic regulations forms the cornerstone of effective mentorship and academic progression, fostering an environment conducive to scholarly excellence and professional development.

# LEARNING OUTCOMES:

## Participants should be able to:

1. Define supervision and supervisors.
2. State components/criteria of a transition process from the undergraduate to postgraduate.
3. Apply the MQA Requirements and UMK Academic Regulations in current supervision practices.

## TOPICS:

- |     |   |     |   |
|-----|---|-----|---|
| 1.1 | Definition of supervision and supervisors               | 1.3 | The qualification requirements of a supervisor based on the MQA standard are stated in Table 1.1 - 1.4 below. |
| 1.2 | Student's Transition from Undergraduate to Postgraduate |     |   |

## ACTIVITIES:

1. Discussion.
2. Reflection.
3. Q&A.

## REFERENCES:

1. Malaysian Qualifications Agency (2021). Standards: Master's and Doctoral Degree. <https://www.mqa.gov.my/>
2. Universiti Malaysia Kelantan (2022). Academic Regulations for Graduate Studies by Research (5th ed.). Centre for Postgraduate Studies, Universiti Malaysia Kelantan.
3. Universiti Malaysia Kelantan (2017). Academic Regulations of Graduate Studies Universiti Malaysia Kelantan. Masters and Doctorate Programmes. Centre for Postgraduate Studies, Universiti Malaysia Kelantan.

## 1.1 Definition of supervision and supervisors

### Supervision:

The act of monitoring a research's students and activity and making certain that research and preparation of research reports is done correctly in time.

The act of a person(s) or the committee that supervises the research conducted by the candidates. They can be categorised as main supervisor, co-supervisor, field supervisor, industrial supervisor and a panel of supervisors of research candidates.

### Supervisor:

An appropriately qualified, trained and appointed academic staff of the University who takes responsibility for supervision of a student's research and study.

## 1.2 Student's Transition from Undergraduate to Postgraduate

Transitioning from undergraduate to postgraduate studies is a significant step that involves a shift towards specialized knowledge, independent learning, and advanced research skills. It's a period of academic and personal growth where students deepened their expertise in their chosen field and prepare for careers in academia, research, industry, or other professional sectors.

**Several key changes and considerations are:**

Academic Rigor and Depth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Depth of Study</li><li>• Specialization</li></ul>
Research Skills Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Research Emphasis</li><li>• Thesis/Dissertation</li></ul>
Independence and Self-Direction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Greater Autonomy</li><li>• Critical Thinking</li></ul>
Professional and Career Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Career Focus</li><li>• Networking</li></ul>
Time Commitment and Lifestyle Adjustments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Time Intensity</li><li>• Lifestyle Adjustments</li></ul>
Support Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Supervision and Mentorship</li><li>• Resources</li></ul>

Transitioning from undergraduate to postgraduate studies can be a significant step in a student's academic journey. **Below are some important criteria for supervisors to consider when supporting students during this transition:**

### 1.2.1 Mindset:

- How can I help students to understand
- i. Why do they want to do this research?
  - ii. Do they have the time?
  - iii. Can they afford it (financially)?
  - iv. What are their goals?
  - v. Can they work independently?

### 1.2.2 Building connection:

- How can I encourage students to be more confident in their research?
- i. Academic staff
  - ii. Non-academic staff (admin staff)
  - iii. Postgrad student groups
  - iv. Expert in the fields

### 1.2.3 Essential skills:

- Do they have these skills?
- i. Milestone and research planning
  - ii. Commitment in doing research
  - iii. Quick adapter with research ecosystem
  - iv. Technical skills

## 1.3 The qualification requirements of a supervisor based on the MQA standard are stated in Table 1.1 - 1.4 below.

Table 1.1: Qualifications for Appointment of Supervisor for Master's Degree

Research	
Principal Supervisor	Co-Supervisor
(2) A Master's Degree in the field with: (a) at least five [5] years of teaching and research experiences, and (b) co-supervising Master's candidate; <b>AND</b>	(2) A Master's Degree in the field with at least one [1] year of teaching and research experiences; <b>AND</b>
(3) Evidence of undergoing structured supervision training.	(3) Evidence of undergoing structured supervision training.

#### Note:

If necessary, External and/ or Field Supervisor shall be appointed to assist the supervision of a student's research and study. The appointment of External Supervisor shall be subject to Regulation Table 1.1, while the appointment of Field Supervisor shall meet the following criteria:

a supervisor shall have at least a Bachelor's Degree with experience in the field of not less than five (5) years.

Table 1.2: Qualifications for Appointment of Supervisor for Doctoral Degree

<b>Research</b>	
<b>Principal Supervisor</b>	<b>Co-Supervisor</b>
(1) A Doctoral Degree with: (a) at least two [2] years of teaching and research experiences, and (b) supervision of Master's or Doctoral research candidate to completion; <b>OR</b>	(1) A Doctoral Degree; <b>OR</b>
(2) A Master's Degree in the field with: (a) extensive experience in research seven [7] years or more, (b) experience in teaching for at least two [2] years, and (c) supervision of Master's or doctoral research candidate to completion; <b>AND</b>	(2) A Master's Degree with extensive experience seven [7] years or more in research; <b>AND</b>
(3) Evidence of undergoing structured supervision training.	(3) Evidence of undergoing structured supervision training.

**Note:**

If necessary, External and/ or Field Supervisor shall be appointed to assist the supervision of a student's research and study. The appointment of External Supervisor shall be subject to Regulation Table 1.2, while the appointment of Field Supervisor shall meet the following criteria:

a supervisor shall have at least a Bachelor's Degree with experience in the field of not less than ten (10) years.

**NOTES:**

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# MODULE

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF SUPERVISORS AND SUPERVISEES

### **SYNOPSIS:**

The module focuses on the roles of supervisors and supervisee while both parties try to achieve an effective relationship between the supervisor(s) and supervisee(s). The effective supervision involves a collaborative effort where each party plays a crucial role in supporting the growth and development of the supervisee, ensuring competence, and maintaining professional standards within their respective roles. A strong relationship enhances communication, learning, and professional development, leading to improved outcomes for supervisees, clients, and organizations alike. Cultivating a supportive, respectful, and collaborative relationship between supervisors and supervisees not only enhances learning and skill development but also promotes ethical practice, job satisfaction, and professional growth in supervisees.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES:

### Participants should be able to:

1. Classify supervisors in the postgraduate education.
2. Identify roles and responsibilities of supervisors and supervisee.
3. Know the effects of the supervisor-supervisee relationship.

### TOPICS:

2.1 | Roles and Responsibilities of Supervisor

2.2 | Roles and Responsibilities of Supervisees

### ACTIVITIES:

1. Discussion.
2. Reflection.
3. Q&A.

### REFERENCES:

1. Universiti Malaysia Kelantan. (2022). Academic Regulations for Graduate Studies by Research (5th ed.). Centre for Postgraduate Studies, Universiti Malaysia Kelantan.

## Types of supervisors: Principal Supervisor, Co-supervisor, Field Supervisor, External Supervisor

### 2.1 Roles and responsibilities of Supervisors:

- |                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| i) Principal Supervisor: | <p><b>Oversees the entire supervision process. Their role includes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Takes primary responsibility for supervising student's research and study,</li><li>• Introduce student to the subject area, facilities and procedures, related staff in the faculty,</li><li>• Review student's progress until completion,</li><li>• Provide advice and support in academic matters (e.g consultation, quality of research, appoint examiners for viva),</li><li>• Lead on initial and ongoing discussions/consultation with the supervisory team, and</li><li>• Give motivation and encourage students to develop transferable skills.</li></ul> |
| ii) Co-Supervisor:       | <p><b>Works alongside the Principal Supervisor, sharing responsibilities such as:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Assist in the development of supervisee goals and objectives,</li><li>• Provide additional expertise or perspective in specific areas,</li><li>• Collaborate with the Principal Supervisor to ensure consistent feedback and evaluation, and</li><li>• Serve as a secondary point of contact and support for the supervisee.</li></ul>  |
| iii) Field Supervisor:   | <p><b>Oversees the practical application of skills and knowledge in a specific field setting. Their responsibilities include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide complementary expertise, such as specialised knowledge of a particular technique, or depending on the work context, day-to-day supervision in some cases,</li><li>• Monitor the application of theoretical knowledge to practical situations,</li><li>• Report to the Principal Supervisor on the supervisee's performance and development needs.</li></ul>   |
| iv) External Supervisor: | <p><b>Brings an external perspective to supervision. Their role involves:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Involve fewer responsibilities than the Principal Supervisor, but in some cases may include closer day-to-day involvement in the student's research.</li><li>• Offer insights from a different organizational or professional context.</li><li>• Ensure standards of practice are met from an external, objective viewpoint.</li><li>• Collaborate with internal supervisors to support the supervisee's overall development.</li></ul>   |

## 2.2 Roles and responsibilities of Supervisees:

Supervisees are individuals undergoing supervision to enhance their professional skills and knowledge. Their responsibilities include:

- setting goals and objectives in collaboration with supervisors,
- be knowledgeable and remain updated on University regulations and Policies,
- have knowledge of the UMK (Research Management Innovation Centre) and procedures associated with research integrity. Students also have a responsibility to follow the Malaysian code of responsible **Conduct in Research**,
- ensure research complies with Ethics Review procedures as defined by the UMK Research Management Innovation Centre,
- familiarize with the offices, services and research facilities on campus as well as the organization of offices/individuals involved in the administration,
- have knowledge of and meet all appropriate deadlines and regulations associated with registration, fee payment, award applications and graduation requirements, as specified by the department, Faculty and University,
- be responsible for developing a sound research plan with achievable timelines and milestones. Students should seek the advice of and coordinate with their supervisor during the planning process and throughout its execution. A students' timeline may include the completion dates of milestones in master's and doctoral programs,
- keep a systematic and accessible record of their research work and results and be able to report to their supervisor and advisory committee (where applicable) on their progress. Student researchers are fully accountable for demonstrating authenticity of research findings at any time. Documentation of the research findings must be carried out through responsible means for the relevant discipline/field,
- coordinate with their supervisor and advisory committee (as applicable) to receive feedback on all stakeholders' perception of the student's progress.  
Establish mutual expectations with their supervisors and advisory committee (as appropriate) on anticipated review times for students' written submissions including theses, major research papers, draft journal articles and other research output. A timeframe of two to three weeks depending on the complexity of the document is commonly applied,
- communicate to their supervisor and/or advisory committee about important dates and university deadlines,
- reflecting on their own practice and seeking continuous improvement,
- have knowledge of the definitions of enrolment status (e.g. full-time to part-time, part-time to full-time, extension, deferment) and the processes by which changes to their status can be made,
- be familiar with the resources and options available to them when challenges arise with their current supervisor,

These may include:

- seeking the advice and intervention of departmental representatives,
- communicating with and requesting the support of the Deputy dean of research and postgraduates, and
- being aware that there is a provision for changing supervisors.

**NOTES:**



# 3

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## MODULE

### GOOD PRACTICES IN SUPERVISION

#### **SYNOPSIS:**

Good practices in postgraduate supervision are crucial for supporting students through their advanced academic journey and preparing them for their professional careers. Supervisors have a job which begins even before they meet the supervisees and will not end when the supervisees receive their doctorates. Given the many hours spent in consultation, working together towards a common goal, the role may turn into that of a co-writer and/or a friend and advisor. However, for most supervisors, supervision is a job entrusted to them by the institution they work in and it is essential that they understand their role in a professional way. The supervisor and the supervisee are interconnected in a complex, contractual system of rights and responsibilities which highlight the centrality of accountability and quality assurance.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES:

### Participants should be able to:

1. Describe general responsibilities of supervisors in professional contexts.
2. Discuss expectations in enhancing supervisory effectiveness.
3. Demonstrate characteristics of an ideal supervisor in supporting personal and professional well-being.

### TOPICS:

3.1 | General Responsibilities and Activities in Supervision

3.2 | Supervisor – Supervisee Expectations

3.3 | The Ideal Supervisor

3.4 | Supervision Expectations

### ACTIVITIES:

1. Discussion.
2. Reflection.
3. Q&A.

### REFERENCES:

1. Vijay Kumar, Bujang B.K. Huat. (Eds.). A handbook for postgraduate supervision. Ministry of Higher Education, 2011. ISBN 978-967-0334-13-4

### 3.1 General Responsibilities and Activities in Supervision

- Giving guidance and advice. Supervision is teaching – do not expect the student to know everything. Be transparent and communicate with the students to understand their concerns. Treat the student as a future colleague/emerging scholar.
- Monitoring the progress of the research – this includes submitting progress reports based on institutional requirements. Supervisor(s) can set monthly/semester goals to ensure that these progress reports are matched with goals that have been agreed upon.
- Initiating regular contact - meet the student at least once a month. Supervisor(s) may need to meet the students more often during the initial period of candidature.
- Being aware of the supervisee's developmental needs – this includes the supervisee's need to be provided with academic and emotional support and also the need to provide guidance in the initial stages of the research.
- Giving both oral and written feedback on the supervisee's work. Feedback should encourage and not demotivate the student.
- Ensuring ethical and professional conduct for supervising mature students. Treat students with respect.
- Advising on workplace safety, equal opportunities, and career development.
- Ensuring that the supervisee is fulfilling his/her part of the supervisory contract by meeting deadlines and meeting the supervisor(s) regularly
- Keeping a written record of progress and recommending taught courses.
- Determining when to submit a thesis for examination. If articles have been published in refereed journals, it may be an indication that the thesis has met standards accepted by the discipline.
- Dealing with serious personal or institutional problems. Be there for the students. Get help if you are unable to assist.
- Structuring meetings. Start supervisory meetings by praising the student for work that has been completed. Following this, provide well directed feedback so that they will know what to do next. Finally, ask the student to list down all that has to be done before the next meeting.
- Reporting meetings. Ask the student to write out the main points of supervisory meetings and email the minutes to you.
- Preparing for supervisory meetings. Read drafts prior to meetings. Check the content. Refer to the references that have been quoted and check if the student has understood correctly. Provide additional references if necessary. If students have problems with academic writing, provide guidance or ask them to seek assistance. Encourage reflection when providing feedback.
- Encouraging the formation of peer support groups.
- Understanding cultural norms. Some students may not be comfortable meeting supervisors alone (e.g. female students meeting male supervisors). If this is the case, arrange for joint supervision or meet in a common room.
- It is the responsibility of the supervisor to ensure that the student is supervised until completion. If the supervisor(s) are planning to go on sabbatical leave, discuss this with the student before taking him/her as the potential student. Inform students in case of an extended absence and make alternative arrangements for regular supervision.
- Producing an MSc or a PhD graduate is an on-going process requiring frequent meetings and guidance. A supervisor's role changes during the course of the programme. It is a kind of apprenticeship. The ultimate aim is to produce an independent researcher.

## 3.2 Supervisor – Supervisee Expectations

There is normally a need to resolve rights and responsibility on the following issues:

- Identifying/ finalizing the topic of research.
- Describing research issues.
- Deciding on the theoretical framework.
- Helping or facilitating the preparation of a research proposal.
- Helping with oral presentations.
- Familiarising students with the appropriate services and facilities of the department and the university.
- Obtaining reading materials.
- Helping in reading, understanding and critically evaluating the reading material.
- Facilitating funding.
- Helping to find part-time employment if necessary.
- Helping with networking.
- Encouraging conferencing and publishing.
- Developing a schedule of research/study.
- Ensuring that the candidate adheres to the schedule.
- Assisting in the writing of the thesis.
- Deciding on the standard or quality of the thesis.
- Helping to prepare for the viva voce.
- Providing emotional, social and other kinds of non-academic support.

Supervisors' expectations of students are to:

- have a clear idea of what they would like to research on.
- be self-motivated.
- work consistently.
- keep to appointments for meetings.
- take responsibility for keeping notes of meetings.
- work on the feedback given to them.
- complete on time.
- take ultimate responsibility for their own work.
- be independent
- be proficient in the language.
- do their own or outsource editing and proof-reading.

Students' expectations of supervisors are to:

- read drafts before supervisory meetings.
- be readily available when there is a need.
- be collegial, open-minded and supportive.
- provide constructive feedback.
- have a clear understanding of the research area.
- facilitate supervisory meetings that enable exchange of ideas.
- Tshow keen interest in the research that is being conducted.
- be sufficiently involved in their success to help them get jobs.
- be punctual for supervisory meetings.

### 3.3 The Ideal Supervisor

Research on views of students on what they consider to be the ideal supervisor indicate that the following are the most important qualities of the ideal supervisor:

- Support
- Availability
- Interest and enthusiasm
- Knowledge and expertise in the field
- Interest in the student's career
- Good communication
- Constructive feedback
- Direction and structure
- Approachability and rapport
- Experience and interest in supervision
- Encouraging a reliable and punctual at meetings
- Responds to student as an adult
- Advocates a peer-to-peer model of supervision

Among the most substantial qualities which students do not like in a supervisor are:

- Too busy to be effective
- Poor feedback
- Lack of commitment and interest
- Tensions/conflict within the supervisory team
- Poor communication skills
- Conflicting/unrealistic expectations
- Selfishness and disrespectfulness
- Supervisor not up to date in the field
- Lack of experience as a supervisor
- Personality clashes
- Advocates a master-slave relationship

### 3.4 Supervision Expectation

A tool that has been developed to clarify and resolve the expectations of supervisors and students is the supervision expectation rating scale (Appendix A). Supervisors can use this tool at the onset of supervision to ensure expectations are clear and agreed upon. It is necessary to review these expectations from time to time and accommodate changes in expectations, if any, based on a structured time-frame. Even if there are no changes it is useful to refresh the expectations that have been initially agreed by both parties. Supervisor-supervisee also are suggested to implement the Memorandum of Understanding (Appendix B).

## APPENDIX A

### Example: Supervision Expectations

Read each pair of statements below and then estimate your position on each. For example with statement 1, if you believe very strongly that it is the supervisor's responsibility to select a good topic you should put a ring round '1'. If you think that both the supervisor and student should be equally involved, you put a ring round '3' and if you think it is definitely the student's responsibility to select a topic, put a ring round '5'.

1. It is the supervisor's responsibility to select a research topic	1   2   3   4   5	The student is responsible for selecting her/his own topic
2. The supervisor should insist on regular meetings with the student	1   2   3   4   5	The student should decide when she/he wants to meet with the supervisor
3. It is the supervisor who decides which theoretical framework is most appropriate	1   2   3   4   5	Students should decide which theoretical framework they wish to use.
4. The supervisor should check regularly that the student is working consistently and on task	1   2   3   4   5	The student should not have to account for how and where they spend their time.
5. The supervisor should develop an appropriate program and timetable of research and study for the student.	1   2   3   4   5	The supervisor should leave the development of the program of study to the student
6. The supervisor is responsible for providing emotional support & encouragement to the student.	1   2   3   4   5	Students should have their own support networks and this is not the responsibility of the supervisor
7. The supervisor is responsible for ensuring that the student is introduced to the appropriate services and facilities of the department and University.	1   2   3   4   5	It is the student's responsibility to ensure that she/he has located and accessed all relevant services and facilities for research
8. The supervisor should insist on seeing all drafts of work to ensure that the student is on the right track	1   2   3   4   5	Students should submit drafts of work only when they want constructive criticism from the supervisor
9. Supervisors should only accept students when they have specific knowledge of the student's chosen topic	1   2   3   4   5	Supervisors should feel free to accept students, even if they do not have specific knowledge of the student's topic

10. The supervisor should take over the final writing-up of the thesis if the student is having difficulty	<u>1</u> 2 3 4 5	The writing of the thesis should only ever be the student's own work
11. A warm, friendly relationship between supervisor and student is critical for successful candidature	1 <u>2</u> 3 4 5	A warm, friendly relationship is inadvisable because it may obstruct objectivity for both student and supervisor during candidature
12. The supervisor is responsible for decisions regarding the standard of the thesis	1 2 <u>3</u> 4 5	The student is responsible for decisions concerning the standard of the thesis

Adopted by Margaret Kiley & Kate Cadman from work by Brown, G & Atkins, M. (1988). *Effective teaching in higher education*, London. pp.146-147

Figure 3.1: An example of a rating scale used to clarify and resolve the expectations of supervisors and students.

## APPENDIX B

### Example: Memorandum of Understanding

Student :  
Supervisor(s) : i)  
ii)  
iii)  
Course :  
Department :  
Title of Research :  
Brief Description of the Research :

#### Memorandum of understanding for supervision:

1. We will meet fortnightly in Dr. X's room on Fridays 10 – 11 am.
2. The frequencies of the meetings will be arranged based on the progress of the project.
3. All supervisory meetings will include both supervisors. Exceptions will be made if any of the supervisors is away.
4. When Dr. X is off campus for an extended period of time, Dr. Y will provide supervision.
5. If either the supervisee or supervisor is unable to attend the meeting, they must give notice by email and arrange another suitable time for that meeting. Allowance will be made in exceptional circumstances.
6. Written work will be submitted a week in advance of the meeting.
7. Feedback will be given within 2 weeks of submitting written work (either at the supervision meeting or via email).
8. The supervisee is expected to prepare a timeline/milestone within 2 weeks of this agreement.
9. The supervisors will enforce deadlines set.
10. The supervisee will carry out requested tasks (non-written) within weeks of meeting.
11. The supervisor agrees to provide academic guidance and practical support, including honest advice and critique, for the duration of the candidacy.
12. The student will be receptive to advice and critique from the supervisor will respond accordingly.
13. The supervisor will open and maintain a file for the filing of relevant documentation related to the thesis and the supervisory relationship.
14. The supervisee will demonstrate commitment and personal initiative, and understands that s/he is responsible for the conduct and progress of the research.
15. The supervisee will produce self-review documents as part of a quarterly reporting process. This will be e-mailed to the supervisor at least 5 days in advance of a meeting to discuss the report.
16. The expected submission date is .....
17. The supervisee will present an open seminar on his/her research before ..... (date) and thereafter as suggested by the supervisors.
18. The supervisee is expected to present at least once at an international conference during candidature.
19. The supervisee is expected to publish the results of this research during candidature. The supervisee will be the first author and the intellectual contributions of the supervisors will be taken

into consideration for joint authorship. However, the decision as to who the first author is can be negotiated based on contributions to a paper.

20. All communication is to be through emails and the candidate is expected to check emails daily and to acknowledge/respond promptly.
21. All consultations are by appointment. After every meeting, the supervisee is required to list the main points of the discussion and email it to the supervisor within 2 days of the meeting. In addition to the main points discussed, the supervisee should include information on how s/he is going to address issues that were discussed. A timeline should be included with the minutes.
22. The supervisee is responsible for the editing and proof –reading of submitted written drafts.

Signature : .....

(Name of the Supervisor)

.....

(Name of the Supervisor)

.....

(Name of the Supervisor)

Signature : .....

(Name of the Student)

Signature : .....

(Head of Department)

Date :

Figure 3.2: An example of a Memorandum of Understanding between the supervisee and supervisor.

**NOTES:**

*By Ts. Dr. Ikarastika Rahayu Binti Abdul Wahab*

# MODULE

## ACADEMIC REGULATIONS - SUPERVISION AND PUBLICATION REQUIREMENT

### **SYNOPSIS:**

An appointment of a supervisor(s) and publication are critical components in academic regulations. The appointment of supervisor regulation aims to establish a supportive and structured framework for academic mentorship, fostering a collaborative environment conducive to scholarly growth, research productivity, and successful completion of academic milestones within the institution. In addition, graduate students must demonstrate their scholarly contribution to their field through publications in recognized academic journals or conferences. This requirement aims to ensure that students engage actively in scholarly research, contribute to the advancement of knowledge in their discipline, and prepare themselves for careers in academia or professional practice. Overall, the publication requirement serves as a benchmark of academic excellence and research proficiency, encouraging students to produce high-quality scholarly work and contribute meaningfully to their academic field. It aligns with the mission of academic institutions to promote research and innovation while preparing students for successful careers in academia and beyond.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES:

1. Describe processes in appointing supervisor(s) based on their qualifications.
2. Outline processes in changing supervisor(s).
3. Explain the publication requirements to graduate by Degree.

### TOPICS:

4.1 | Appointment of Supervisor

4.2 | Consultation with Supervisor

4.3 | Change and Appointment of Supervisor

### ACTIVITIES:

1. Discussion.
2. Reflection.
3. Q&A.

### REFERENCES:

1. Universiti Malaysia Kelantan. (2022). Academic Regulations for Graduate Studies by Research (5th ed.). Centre for Postgraduate Studies, Universiti Malaysia Kelantan.

## 4.1 Appointment of Supervisor

1. A student shall be assigned a Principal Supervisor from an academic entity of his study and at least one (1) Co-Supervisor from the same or different academic entity of the University.
2. An academic staff who has qualifications as in Table 4.1 for Master's student and as in Table 4.2 for Doctoral student shall be appointed as Supervisor by an academic entity and notified to the student and Centre for Postgraduate Studies.

Table 4.1: Qualifications for Appointment of Supervisor for Master's Degree

Principal Supervisor	Co-Supervisor
(1) A Doctoral Degree, <b>or</b>	(1) A Doctoral Degree, <b>or</b>
(2) A Master's Degree in the field with: (a) at least five [5] years of teaching and research experiences, <b>and</b>  (b) co-supervising Master's candidate; <b>and</b>	(2) A Master's Degree in the field with at least one [1] year of teaching and research experience; <b>and</b>
(3) Evidence of undergoing structured supervision training.	(3) Evidence of undergoing structured supervision training.

If necessary, External and/or Field Supervisor shall be appointed to assist the supervision of a student's research and study. The appointment of External Supervisor shall be subject to Regulation Table 4.1, while the Field Supervisor shall have at least a Bachelor's Degree with experience in the field of not less than five (5) years.

Table 4.2: Qualifications for Appointment of Supervisor for Doctoral Degree

Principal Supervisor	Co-Supervisor
(1) A Doctoral Degree with: (a) at least two years of teaching and research experiences, and (b) supervision of Master's or Doctoral research candidate to completion; <b>or</b>	(1) A Doctoral Degree; <b>or</b>
(2) A Master's Degree in the field with: (a) extensive experience in research [7 years or more],  (b) experience in teaching at least two [2] years, <b>and</b>  (c) supervision of Master's or doctoral research candidate to completion; <b>and</b>	(2) A Master's Degree with extensive experience [7 years or more] in research; <b>and</b>
(3) Evidence of undergoing structured supervision training.	(3) Evidence of undergoing structured supervision training.

- If necessary, External and/or Field Supervisor shall be appointed to assist the supervision of a student's research and study. The appointment of External Supervisor shall be subject to Regulation Table 4.2, while the Field Supervisor shall have at least a Bachelor's Degree with experience in the field of not less than ten (10) years.

#### 4.2 Consultation with Supervisor

- A student shall consult their supervisor, particularly Principal Supervisor physically and/or virtually at least thrice (3 times) for full-time student and twice (2 times) for part-time student for each semester, failing which, the student shall be granted "Unsatisfactory" result.
- Each consultation shall be recorded and updated by student and supervisor using a specified mechanism.
- Supervision-related matters (including costs of supervisor's visits) for Joint/ Dual/ Double Degree Programme shall abide by the regulations of the Authorised Body and/ or shall be agreed upon by collaborating Higher Education Providers and is stated in agreement.

#### 4.3 Change and Appointment of Supervisor

- A student is discouraged to change their supervisor. However, with strong justification, they shall apply to change supervisor by using a specified mechanism.
- Change of supervisor shall be considered for approval by academic entity and is notified to the student and Centre for Postgraduate Studies, should:
  - i) justification of a student's application is reasonable and strong;
  - ii) a Principal Supervisor is no longer with the University, but he could be appointed as Co-Supervisor;
  - iii) a Co-Supervisor is no longer with the University and their student has not sat for Pre Viva Voce [Peraturan 7.4]; or
  - iv) academic entity has any other strong justifications.
- A supervisor who left the University shall not be considered for appointment as External Supervisor or Field Supervisor within three (3) years from the date of their departure.

Table 4.3 Publication Requirements by Degree

Particular	Master's Degree	Doctoral Degree
Science and Technology/ Social Science	At least one (1) form of writing published or accepted to be published in Scopus/ WOS/ MyCite-indexed publications.	At least two (2) forms of writing published or accepted to be published in Scopus/ WOS/ MyCite-indexed publications.
Authorship	To be the first author or corresponding author and together with supervisor(s).	
Topic of publication	Accepted publications are related and conforming to the candidate's current thesis research.	
Affiliation	Articles accepted or published shall carry the University's name.	
Blacklisted journals	Publications in the following journals are NOT accepted: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) List of blacklisted journal publishers by the Authorised Body.</li> <li>ii) Beall's List of Predatory Publishers.</li> </ol>	

## NOTES



# 5

*By Dr. Nazahatul Anis Binti Amaludin*

## MODULE

### ISSUES IN SUPERVISION

#### **SYNOPSIS:**

This module aims to provide academic staff with a comprehensive understanding of the various challenges that can arise in the supervision of postgraduate students. Effective supervision is crucial for the success and development of both students and supervisors. This module will cover key issues, explore underlying causes, and provide solutions to overcome these challenges.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Participants should be able to:

1. Identify the common issues in supervision.
2. Discuss possible solutions to solve the identified issues.

### TOPICS:

5.1 | Communication  
and Feedback

5.3 | Training and  
Development of  
Supervisory Skills

5.2 | Balancing  
Commitment and  
Time Management

### ACTIVITIES:

1. Discussion.
2. Reflection.
3. Q&A.

### REFERENCES:

1. Universiti Malaysia Kelantan (2022). Academic Regulations for Graduate Studies by Research (5th ed.). Centre for Postgraduate Studies, Universiti Malaysia Kelantan.
2. Universiti Malaysia Kelantan (2017). Academic Regulations of Graduate Studies Universiti Malaysia Kelantan. Masters and Doctorate Programmes. Centre for Postgraduate Studies, Universiti Malaysia Kelantan.

## 5.1 Communication and Feedback

a) Effective communication is the cornerstone of a productive supervisor-student relationship. Lack of communication or miscommunication often leads to misunderstandings about expectations, progress, and requirements.

i. **Key Issues:**

- **Unclear Expectations:** Supervisors and students may not clearly articulate their expectations, leading to confusion about roles, responsibilities, and deliverables.
- **Vague Feedback:** Feedback that lacks specificity or actionable steps leaves students uncertain about how to improve their work.
- **Infrequent Communication:** Irregular meetings and delayed responses hinder progress and demotivate students.

ii. **Solutions:**

- Establish regular meetings with clear agendas.
- Provide detailed and constructive feedback.
- Use written communication to document important instructions and feedback.

b) Providing and receiving feedback is a critical part of supervision, but challenges in this area often lead to dissatisfaction and hindered progress.

i. **Key Issues:**

- **Delayed Feedback:** Supervisors may take too long to review and return drafts, causing bottlenecks in the research process.
- **Overly Critical Feedback:** Feedback that focuses solely on flaws without recognizing strengths can demotivate students.
- **Overwhelming Feedback:** Excessive or unstructured feedback can confuse students about where to start improving.

ii. **Solutions:**

- Agree on realistic timelines for feedback delivery.
- Use a balanced approach to feedback, highlighting both strengths and areas for improvement.
- Break feedback into manageable portions, prioritizing critical issues first.

## 5.2 Balancing Commitment and Time Management

Effective supervision requires both supervisors and students to balance their commitments and manage time efficiently. Supervisors often cope with multiple responsibilities, such as teaching, research, and administrative duties, while students navigate coursework, research, and personal obligations. Poor time management can hinder research progress, create stress, and strain the supervisory relationship.

i. **Key Issues:**

- **Overcommitment by Supervisors:** Supervisors may take on excessive responsibilities, leading to delayed meetings, feedback, or reduced availability for students. This may lead to students experience delays in their work, reduced guidance, and feelings of neglect.

- **Lack of Planning:** Both supervisors and students may fail to set clear timelines for milestones or prioritize tasks effectively. This may impact to unstructure supervision leads to miss deadlines and inefficient use of time.
- **Unrealistic Expectations:** Supervisors may expect students to progress faster than feasible, or students may underestimate the time required for tasks. This may reduce the quality of work, stress and frustration on the task given.
- **Procrastination:** Students or supervisors may delay important tasks, such as drafting chapters or providing feedback. The common impact such bottlenecks in research progress and increased last-minute stress.
- **Conflicts with Personal Commitments:** Balancing personal obligations (e.g., family, health condition) with academic responsibilities can be challenging for both parties. It can reduce the productivity, burnout, and strained relationships.

## ii. Solutions:

- **Establish Clear Timelines:** Both supervisor and student are agreed to develop a supervision schedule that outlines key milestones, deliverables, and meeting frequencies. For example, create Gantt chart or monitor progress for the research project. This may provide structure and ensure accountability for both parties.
- **Prioritize Tasks:** Identify and focus on high-priority tasks, such as thesis chapters or critical experiments. The simple way creates a to-do lists to prioritize tasks by urgency to avoid wasting time on less critical tasks. Utilize time management tools such Google Calendar or Trello to schedule, set reminders and track progress.
- **Improve Meeting Efficiency:** Hold regular, focused meetings with a pre-set agenda every time meeting or progress discussion. Allocate 30 minutes to discuss specific issues and review progress. This will ensure the key topics are addressed. Before meeting, students must know previous discussed progress are take into action or list out all the action taken.
- **Set Realistic Expectations:** Discuss and agree upon achievable goals for both the short and long term. Set the time and plan for buffer periods in the timeline. This can reduce stress and foster mutual understanding.
- **Self-Care and Work-Life Balance:** Encourage breaks and balance academic commitments with personal well-being. Respect both personal time and plan manageable workloads that may reduce burnout and enhance long-term productivity.

### 5.3 Training and Development of Supervisory Skills

Supervisory skills encompass communication, leadership, mentoring, conflict resolution, and the ability to provide constructive feedback. Training and development of these skills are critical to fostering a productive supervisor-student relationship, ensuring research quality, and enhancing the academic experience for both parties.

i. **Key Issues:**

- **Skill Development:** Insufficient focus on developing the student's research skills, writing abilities, and professional competencies. Lack of support in career planning and professional networking opportunities.
- **Ethical and Academic Integrity Issues:** Ensuring that students understand and adhere to academic integrity standards.
- **Supervisory Styles:** A mismatch between the supervisory style of the supervisor and the learning style of the student can lead to conflicts and inefficiency. The ability of the supervisor to adapt their style to meet the needs of different students.
- **Cultural and Language Barriers:** Differences in cultural background may impact communication styles and expectations. Language barriers also can complicate communication and understanding of complex concepts during discussion.

ii. **Solutions:**

- **Enhances Supervisory Effectiveness:** Improves the quality of research outcomes. Well-trained supervisors can better support their students and provide tailored guidance.
- **Reduces Common Supervision Challenges:** Training equips supervisors with strategies to handle issues like mismatched expectations, communication breakdowns, and time management problems.
- **Improves Student Satisfaction and Performance:** A competent supervisor fosters a positive and supportive academic environment, enhancing student motivation and productivity.
- **Ensures Compliance with Institutional Standards:** Supervisors trained in policies and regulations help students navigate academic requirements effectively. For example, it can comply with regulation set up by MQA or any standards.

Addressing these potential issues requires clear communication, setting realistic and mutually agreed-upon expectations, providing adequate support and resources, and fostering a positive and respectful working relationship. By the end of this module, academic staff will have a deeper understanding of the complexities of supervision and be equipped with practical tools and strategies to enhance their supervisory practices. This will ultimately contribute to the success and well-being of both students and supervisors, fostering a positive and productive academic environment.

## NOTES

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# MODULE

## RESEARCH PROCESS AND RESEARCH DESIGN PLANNING

### **SYNOPSIS:**

Research design always determines the kinds of analysis that are to be done to get the desired results. It articulates what data is required, what methods are going to be used to collect and analyze the data and how it is going to answer the research questions. In line with this, Jongbo (2014) pinpoints that if a researcher collects data before thinking through the research design matters and what information is required to answer the research questions, the conclusions drawn will most likely be weak and unconvincing hence in the end fail to obtain the research objective. The research design must contain a strategy for interpreting the analysed data to provide adequate findings and conclusions from the research which will allow the researcher make recommendations or implications based on the study. Research design is divided into three groups: quantitative; qualitative and mixed method research design. The researcher has to decide the most appropriate design which benefits the type of research work.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Participants should be able to:

1. Differentiate between research process and research design planning
2. Discuss the different types of research design

### TOPICS:

6.1 | Research  
Design

6.2 | Research  
Planning

### ACTIVITIES:

1. Discussion.
2. Reflection.
3. Q&A.

### REFERENCES:

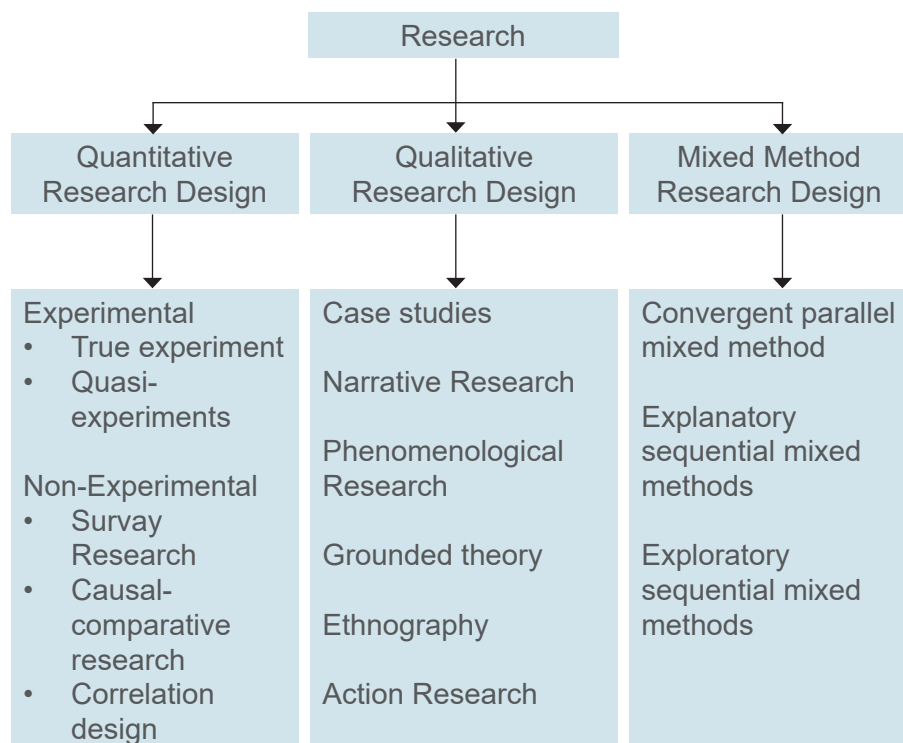
1. Bostley Muyembe Asenahabi, 2019. International Journal of Contemporary Applied Researches ISSN: 2308-1365. Vol. 6 (5). 2019.
2. Jongbo, O. C. 2014. The role of research design in a purpose driven enquiry. Review of Public Administration and Management, 3(6), 87 - 94.

## 6.1 Research Design

Research design refers to the overall strategy and structure of a research project. It outlines how data will be collected, analysed, and interpreted. Research design is divided into three groups: quantitative; qualitative and mixed method research design. The researcher has to decide the most appropriate design which befits the type of research work.

### i. Types of Research Design

- **Descriptive:** Describes characteristics or phenomena. Example: surveys or observational studies.
- **Correlational:** Examines the relationship between two or more variables. Example: statistical analysis of data sets.
- **Experimental:** Tests hypotheses through controlled experiments. Example: lab experiments with control and experimental groups.
- **Quasi-Experimental:** Similar to experimental but lacks random assignment. Example: field experiments.
- **Exploratory:** Investigates new areas where little is known. Example: pilot studies or qualitative research.
- **Explanatory:** Seeks to explain the causes and effects of phenomena. Example: longitudinal studies.



### ii. Elements of Research Design

- **Research Questions/Hypotheses:** Clearly defined questions or hypotheses the study aims to address.
- **Variables:** Identification of independent, dependent, and control variables.
- **Population and Sample:** Defining the target population and sampling methods.
- **Data Collection Methods:** Techniques for gathering data (e.g., surveys, interviews, experiments).

### iii. Ethical Considerations

- **Data Analysis:** Methods for analyzing the data (e.g., statistical analysis, thematic analysis).
- **Validity and Reliability:** Ensuring the research findings are credible and can be replicated.
- **Informed Consent:** Participants must be fully informed about the study and consent to participate.
- **Confidentiality:** Ensuring the privacy of participants and their data.
- **Ethical Approval:** Obtaining approval from relevant ethics committees or institutional review boards.

## 6.2 Research Planning

**Research planning** involves the detailed steps and timeline needed to carry out the research design. It ensures the research project is organized and progresses smoothly.

1. **Defining Objectives and Scope**
  - Clearly articulate the aims and objectives of the research.
  - Define the scope to set boundaries and focus.
2. **Literature Review**
  - Conduct a comprehensive review of existing literature to identify gaps and provide context.
  - Develop a theoretical framework based on the literature.
3. **Methodology**
  - Select appropriate research methods aligned with the research design.
  - Develop detailed protocols for data collection and analysis.
4. **Timeline and Milestones**
  - Create a timeline with key milestones and deadlines.
  - Allocate time for each phase of the research (e.g., literature review, data collection, analysis, writing).
5. **Budget and Resources**
  - Prepare a budget outlining the financial requirements of the research.
  - Identify and allocate necessary resources (e.g., funding, equipment, software).
6. **Risk Management**
  - Identify potential risks and challenges.
  - Develop contingency plans to address these risks.
7. **Data Management**
  - Plan for data storage, organization, and management.
  - Ensure compliance with data protection regulations.
8. **Reporting and Dissemination**
  - Plan for writing and publishing the research findings.
  - Identify appropriate journals, conferences, and other platforms for dissemination.
9. **Monitoring and Evaluation**
  - Establish mechanisms for monitoring progress.
  - Evaluate the research process and outcomes against the initial objectives.

Here is an example of research planning based on phase, activities and timeline as Table 6.1.

Table 6.1: Example of research planning based on activities and proposed timeline

Phase	Activities	Timeline
Preparation	Define objectives, conduct literature review	Month 1-2
Design	Develop research design and methodology	Month 3
Ethical Approval	Submit and obtain ethical approval	Month 4-5
Data Collection	Collect data as per the methodology	Month 6-8
Data Analysis	Analyze collected data	Month 9-10
Writing	Draft the research report and prepare publications	Month 11-12
Dissemination	Publish findings, present at conferences	Month 13 onwards

Effective research design and planning are important for ensuring the validity, reliability, and success of a research project. By carefully considering each component and creating a detailed plan, researchers can navigate the complexities of the research process and achieve the research objectives (Table 6.2).

Table 6.2: Comparison between research design and research planning

Criteria	Research Design	Research Planning
<b>1. Definition</b>	Research design refers to the overall strategy and framework that guides the collection, measurement, and analysis of data in a research study. It outlines how to conduct the research systematically to answer specific research questions.	Research planning involves the detailed preparation and organization of the steps and resources needed to carry out the research project. It includes the logistical aspects and timeline for completing the study.
<b>2. Components</b>	Research design includes elements such as the type of research (e.g., qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods), sampling methods, data collection techniques, data analysis procedures, and the overall structure of the study.	Research planning includes defining the research objectives, developing a timeline, budgeting, identifying required resources, obtaining necessary approvals (e.g., ethical clearance), and setting milestones and deadlines.
<b>3. Purpose</b>	The primary purpose of research design is to ensure that the study is methodologically sound, coherent, and capable of addressing the research questions effectively. It provides a blueprint for conducting the research.	The main purpose of research planning is to ensure that the research project is feasible, well-organized, and can be completed within the available resources and time frame. It helps to foresee potential challenges and prepare for them.

<b>4. Types/ Activities</b>	Common types of research designs include experimental, correlational, descriptive, case study, longitudinal, and cross-sectional designs. Each type has its specific methods and applications based on the nature of the research questions.	Key activities in research planning include literature review, formulating research questions, designing the methodology, securing funding, recruiting participants, and planning for data management and analysis.
<b>5. Examples</b>	An experimental research design might involve randomly assigning participants to different groups to test a hypothesis, while a descriptive research design might involve observing and documenting behaviours without manipulating any variables.	Research planning might involve creating a detailed project schedule, securing funding and resources, obtaining ethical approvals, and setting up data collection protocols.

## NOTES



*By Dr. Nazahatul Anis Binti Amaludin*

# MODULE

## PREPARATION FOR PROPOSAL DEFENSE, PRE-VIVA VOCE AND VIVA VOCE

### **SYNOPSIS:**

This module is designed to equip academic staff with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively guide and prepare their postgraduate students for the critical milestones of proposal defence, pre-viva voce, and viva voce. These stages are pivotal in a student's research journey, requiring thorough preparation and strategic planning.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Participants will be able to:

1. Provide knowledge to prepare the documents as preparation before proposal defence, pre-viva voce and viva voce
2. Enhance the overall quality of postgraduate supervision and contribute to the academic success of students.

### TOPICS:

7.1 | Understanding the Proposal Defense

7.3 | Viva Voce Preparation

7.2 | Pre-Viva Voce Preparation

### ACTIVITIES:

1. Discussion.
2. Reflection.
3. Q&A.

### REFERENCES:

1. Thesis Guideline 2nd Edition. Guideline for Preparation and Submission of Graduate Thesis Second Edition
2. Universiti Malaysia Kelantan (2022). Academic Regulations for Graduate Studies by Research (5th ed.). Centre for Postgraduate Studies, Universiti Malaysia Kelantan.
3. Guideline for The Preparation of Research Report for Postgraduate Studies 3rd Edition 2022
4. Research Report Draft Review Form For Pre Viva Voce (<https://cps.umk.edu.my/repository-forms.cfm>)
5. Proposal Defense Report Form (<https://cps.umk.edu.my/repository-forms.cfm>)

## 7.1 Understanding the Proposal Defence:

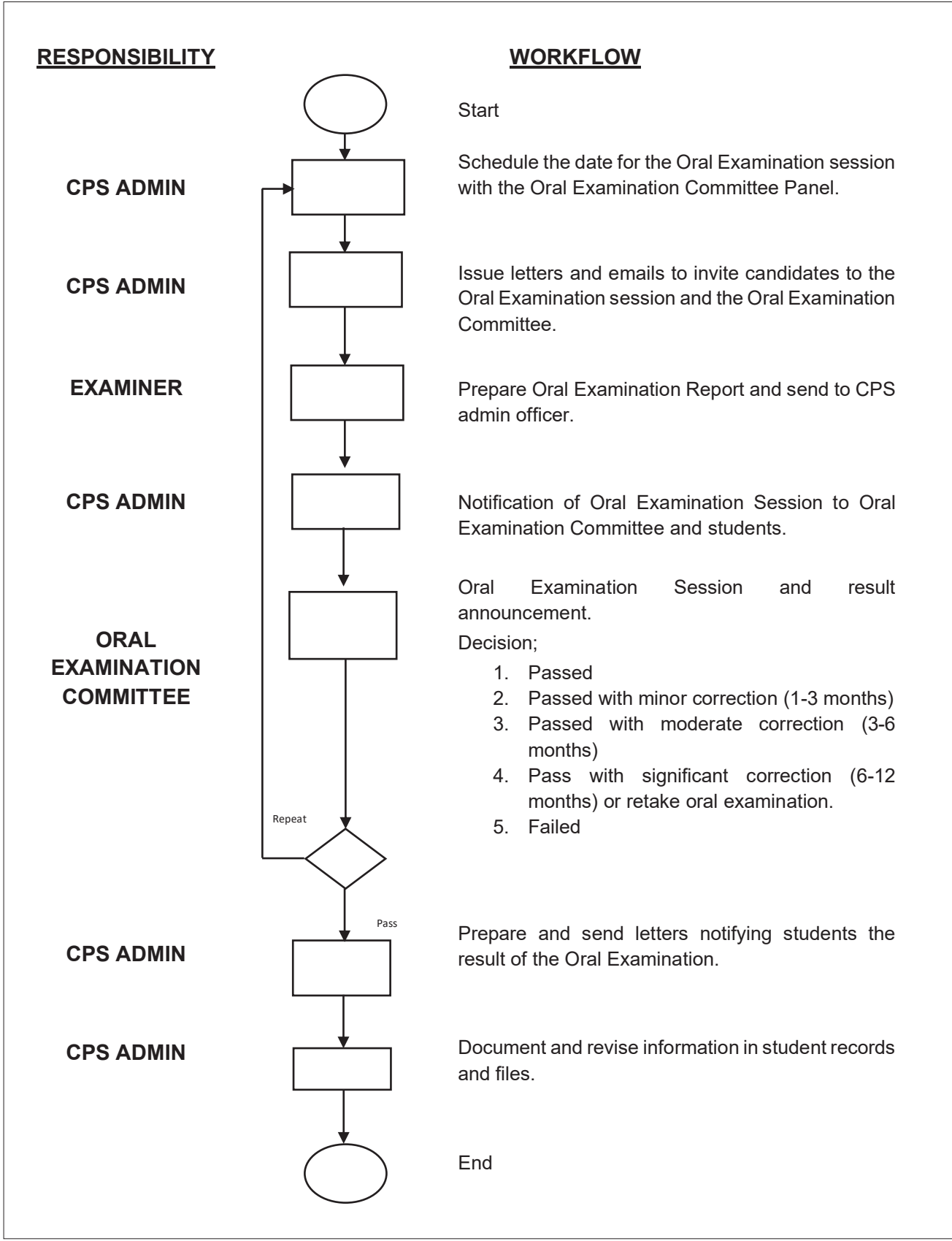
- Purpose and significance of the proposal defence in the research process.
- Common formats and expectations of a proposal defence.
- Strategies for helping students develop a compelling and well-structured research proposal.
- Techniques for anticipating and addressing potential questions and concerns from the defence committee.

## 7.2 Pre-Viva Voce Preparation:

- Overview of the pre-viva voce process and its role in the final assessment of a student's research.
- Methods for reviewing and providing feedback on the dissertation or thesis.
- Tips for conducting mock defences to help students practice and refine their presentation skills.
- Guidance on the types of questions typically asked during the pre-viva voce and how to prepare students to respond effectively.

## 7.3 Viva Voce Preparation:

- Detailed explanation of the viva voce process, including its objectives and evaluation criteria.
- Best practices for supporting students in organizing and presenting their research findings confidently.
- Techniques for managing stress and anxiety associated with the viva voce.
- Strategies for helping students engage with examiners and defend their research findings with clarity and rigour.



Work flow Viva Voce (Source: CPS, UMK)

## NOTES







THE ART  OF SUPERVISION:  
STRATEGIES FOR  
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