

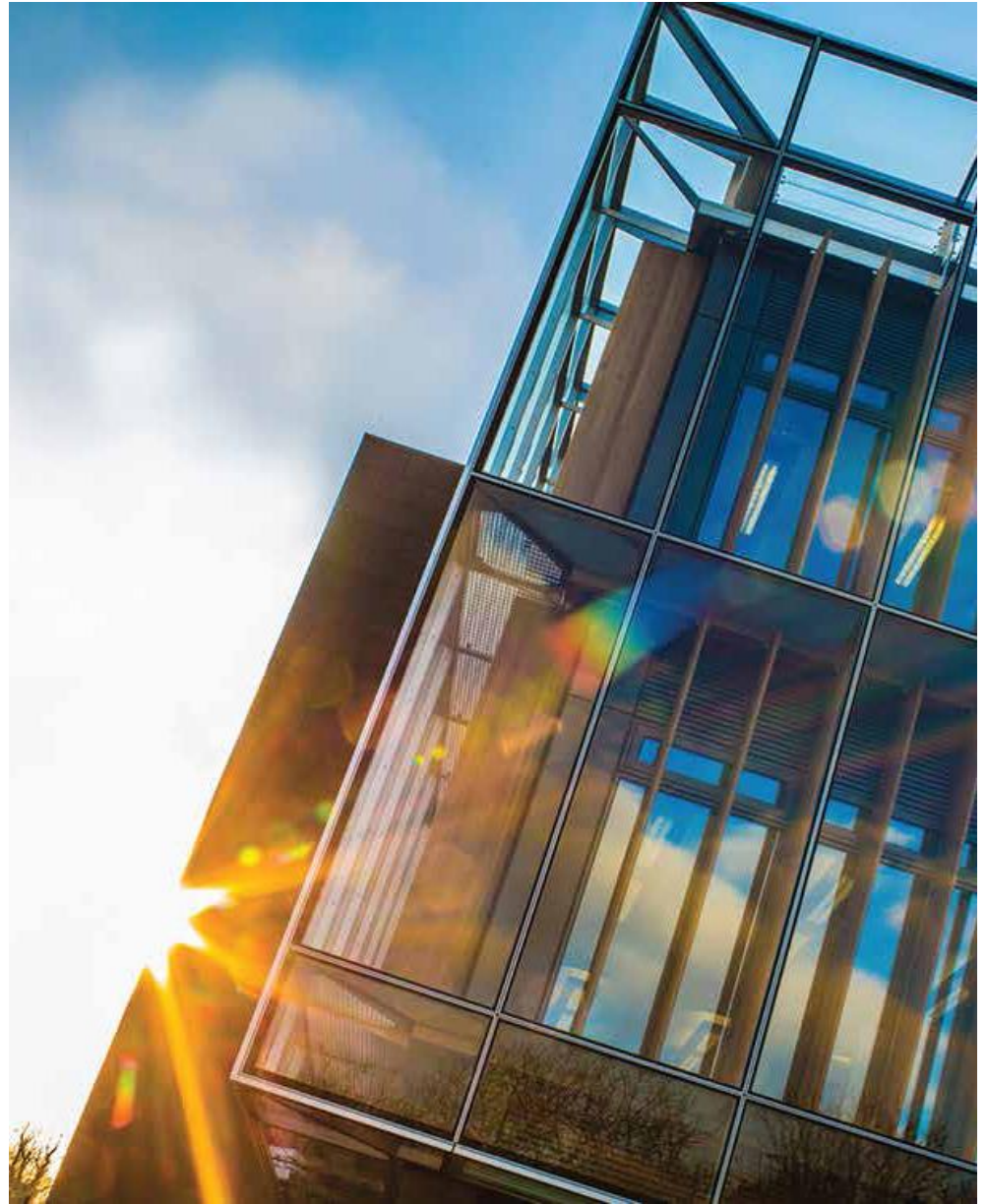


**Maynooth
University**
National University
of Ireland Maynooth

Workshop 3

Making Progress

Graduate Studies Office



Timetable

Making Progress: Policy and Regulations 10.00 – 10.30 am

- *Facilitated by Dean of Graduate Studies, staff from the Graduate Studies*

Clarification of the roles, responsibilities and expectations of the student and the supervisor 10.30 -11.00 am

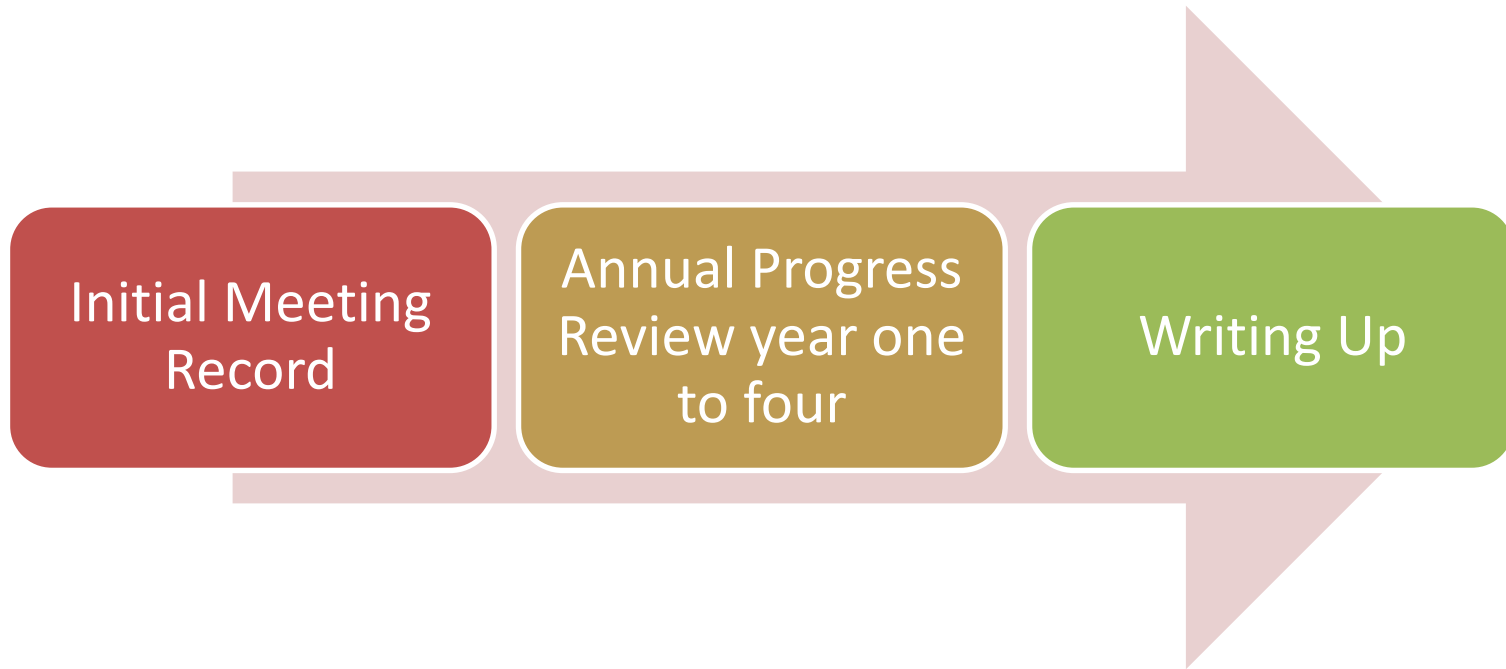
- *In attendance: Professor Sharon Todd*

Providing Feedback 11.00 – 11.30 am

- *In attendance: Professor Sharon Todd*

Recap of Previous Sessions

Stages of the PhD Journey in MU

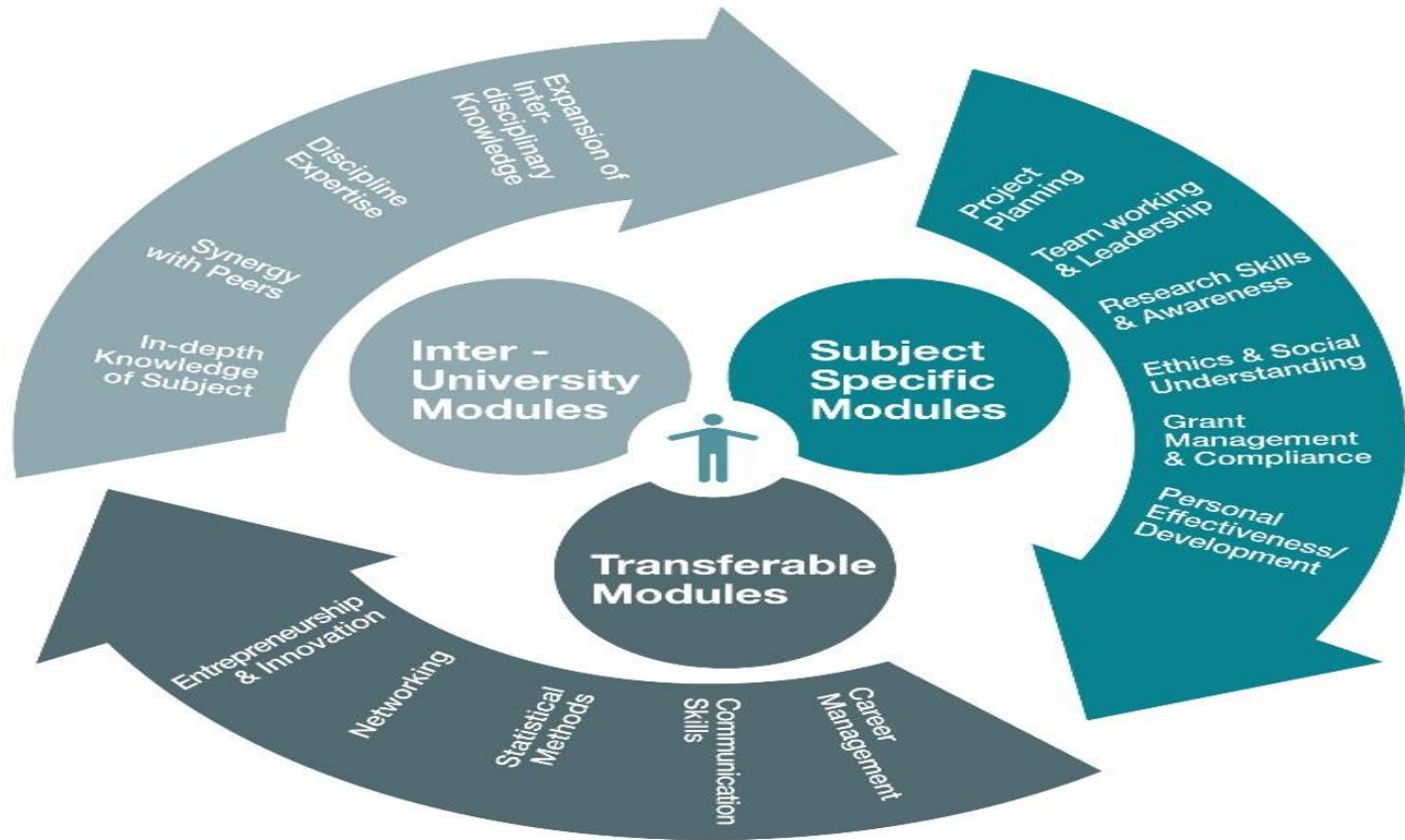


Credits Required

Structured PhD: Taught Credits Required

	Minimum Credits
4 Year Undergraduate Programme	30 (15 Transferable & 15 Subject Specific)
3 Year Undergraduate Programme and Taught Masters	30 (15 Transferable & 15 Subject Specific)
3 Year Undergraduate Programme	60 (at least 15 Transferable & 15 Subject Specific)

In brief... The Programme



Supervisory arrangements in MU

- Sole supervisor
- Co-supervision
- Supervision by a primary and secondary supervisor
- Supervision by a supervisory team

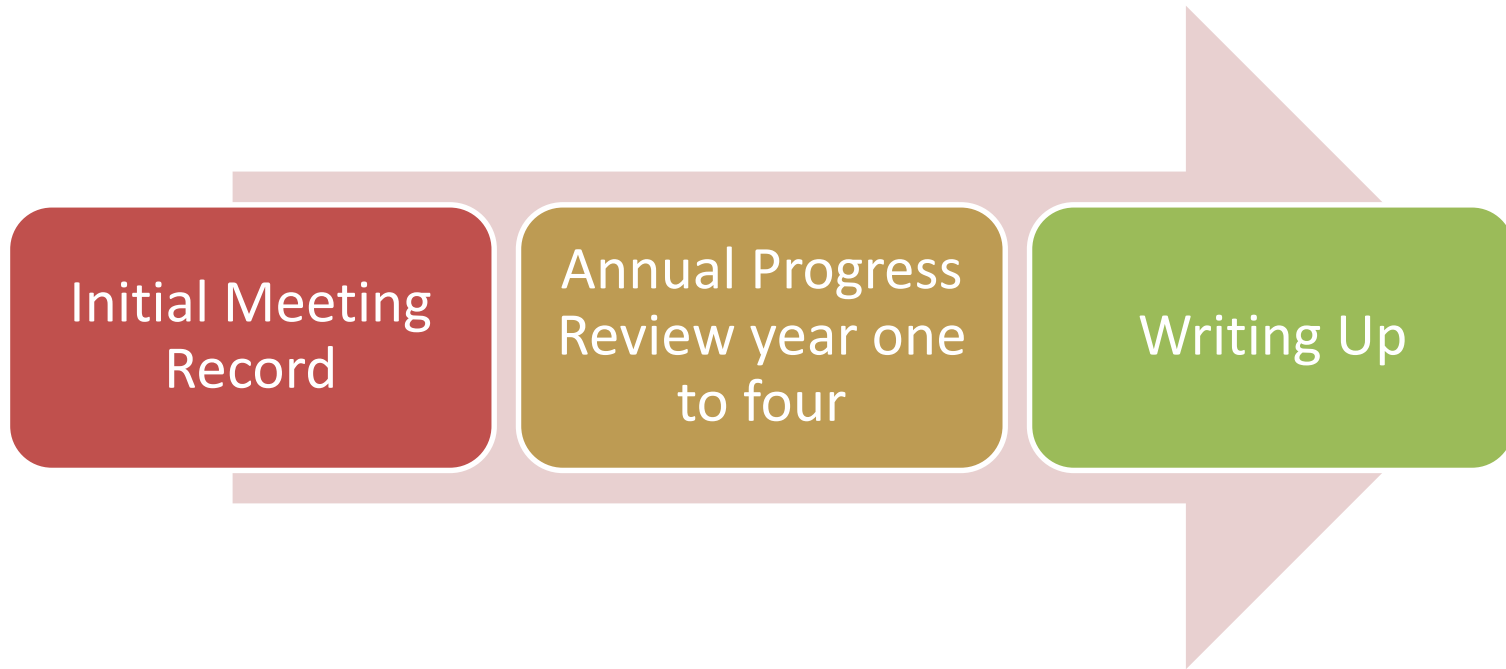
- Joint supervision across departments in Maynooth University
- [Regulations governing supervisory arrangements](#)

Role of the Initial Meeting Record

- Opportunity to design unique programme for student
- Identify modules that will enhance the student's research programme
- Identify modules that students will take in year one
- Agree Calendar of Meetings
- Records the attendance on the Induction Programme
- Ensures that the candidate is aware of University regulations and policies
- Programme is approved by the Departmental Research Progress Committee (DRSPC)

Making Progress: Policy and Regulations

Stages of the PhD Journey in MU



Why ?

- It is essential that a standard of quality be maintained to ensure that the student is making satisfactory progress in pursuit of the aims and objectives of their research as agreed in the IMR.
- However, the mode of assessment for the annual review will be determined at departmental level to ensure that academic diversity and different types of research undertaken within doctoral programmes are accommodated as appropriate.

Aim of the Annual Progress Review

- Assess progression and grant permission to progress based on an assessment of the quality of research output to date;
- Give students the opportunity to indicate their satisfaction or lack thereof with their supervisory arrangements;
- Discuss and record any changes to the student's individualised program
- Ensure that students have passed their required modules before thesis submission and, where appropriate, that waivers have been ratified by the DRSPC

Mode of Assessment

The following will form the basis of the decision of the DRSPC:

- Annual progress review form Part A, which includes a statement of progress and research plan from the student, the expected time to completion and the number of credits taken to date;
- Annual progress review form Part B with the student's feedback on supervisory and departmental support;

Interview (optional), which can be requested by the DRSPC or the student

Assessment outcomes

- Progress
- Not progress
- Change of registration from Masters by Research to PhD or vice versa.



Student's progress deemed unsatisfactory

If the progress of a student is deemed unsatisfactory, the DRPSC may make the following recommendations:

- Progress the student into the next academic year, outlining clear objectives the student must meet before the next annual review.
- Record a result of no progress at the summer examination board. Students, with the support of their supervisor, may or may not be permitted to re-submit work for assessment prior the start of the academic year

Suspending/Withdrawal

Suspensions should be requested in advance, one year at a time. *Student should:*

- Complete suspension form
- Registrar assesses request, S.R.O. suspends study
- **No retrospective suspensions**
- **If registration lapsed, apply via Registrar's Office to re-register**

Withdrawals: If a student leaves their programme of study and ends all activity with department before they have completed the PhD, a withdrawal form must be completed

Policies/Regulations Relating to Making Progress

- [PhD regulations \(Sept 2016\)](#)
- [PhD by publication \(Sept 2016\)](#)
- [Roles and responsibilities](#)
- Research Ethics and Integrity
 - Modules
- [Freedom of Information Act and Data Protection](#)
- [Inventions and Patent Policy](#)
- [University Safety Policy - Health and Safety Office](#)

Clarification of the roles, responsibilities and expectations of the student and the supervisor

5 Minute Task: Complete Questionnaire: Identify tasks which lie with the student or the supervisor



Table 4: Clarification of the roles, responsibilities and expectations of the student and the supervisor

Instructress: 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 equally be involved you put a ring round "3" and if you think it's definitely the student's responsibility to select a topic, put a ring round "5"

*Original from: Taylor, 2005, Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australia. Adapted by Margaret Kiley and Aine Cahalan, 2002, Centre for Learning & Teaching, University of Technology, Sydney.

Student-Supervisor roles, responsibilities and expectations		
It is the supervisor's responsibility to select a research topic	1 2 3 4 5	The student is responsible for selecting his/her own topic
The supervisor decides which theoretical framework or methodology is most appropriate	1 2 3 4 5	The student should decide which methodology or theoretical framework they wish to use
The supervisor should develop an appropriate programme and timetable of research and study for the student	1 2 3 4 5	The supervisor should leave the development of the programme of study to the student
The supervisor is responsible for ensuring that the student is introduced to the appropriate services and facilities in the department and the University/HI	1 2 3 4 5	It is the student's responsibility to ensure that he/she has located and accessed all relevant services and facilities for research
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
A warm, supportive relationship between supervisor and student is important for successful candidature	1 2 3 4 5	A personal, supportive relationship is invaluable because it may obstruct objectivity for both student and supervisor during the candidature
The supervisor should insist on regular meetings with the student	1 2 3 4 5	The student should decide when he/she wants to meet with the supervisor
The supervisor should check regularly that the student is working consistently and on task	1 2 3 4 5	The student should work independently and not have to account for how and where time is spent

Cont'd >



The supervisor is responsible for providing emotional support and encouragement to the student	1 2 3 4 5	Personal counselling and support are not the responsibility of the supervisor - students should look elsewhere
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
The supervisor should assist in the writing of the thesis if necessary	1 2 3 4 5	The writing of the thesis should only ever be the student's own work
The supervisor is responsible for decisions regarding the standard of the thesis	1 2 3 4 5	The student is responsible for decisions concerning the standard of the thesis

mapping tool). A final useful discussion point in this regard concerns the extent to which a staff member's approach to supervision is influenced by the manner in which they themselves were supervised when completing their doctorate.

who can show examples of these, could be very useful, as this approach is not widespread, but may be of interest for use by staff who had not previously thought of their use with research student projects.

- Ethics, Safety and Intellectual Property. While the institutional policies and procedures on ethics, safety and intellectual property may be summarised in an overview presentation, specific sessions on these aspects of supervision may be of benefit, given their specialised nature. These sessions can be provided by the relevant officer/manager in the institute. Introducing supervisors to key staff and local procedures in the area of technology transfer and intellectual property is increasingly important as industry-funded or -linked PhD projects (or the industrial PhD model) become increasingly common.
- Where relevant to a specific institution, a specific presentation could be made on Supervising a Professional Doctorate or Performance-Based Doctorate.
- Case studies or examples (anonymous) could be provided by experienced supervisors in the institution or alternatively from the NAIRTL set of case study resources. Case studies by supervisors who use particular project management tools (e.g., GANTT charts) with their students, and

Questionnaire

Instructions: 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 "3" and if you think it's definitely the student's responsibility to select a topic, put a ring round "5"

Questionnaire

The supervisor is responsible for providing emotional support and encouragement to the student	1 2 3 4 5	Personal counselling and support are not the responsibility of the supervisor - students should look elsewhere
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
The supervisor should assist in the writing of the thesis if necessary	1 2 3 4 5	The writing of the thesis should only ever be the student's own work
The supervisor is responsible for decisions regarding the standard of the thesis	1 2 3 4 5	The student is responsible for decisions concerning the
It is the supervisor's responsibility to select a research topic	1 2 3 4 5	The student is responsible for selecting his/her own topic

Questionnaire cont

The supervisor decides which theoretical framework or methodology is most appropriate	1 2 3 4 5	The student should decide which methodology or theoretical framework they wish to use
The supervisor should develop an appropriate programme and timetable of research and study for the student	1 2 3 4 5	The supervisor should leave the development of the programme of study to the student
The supervisor is responsible for ensuring that the student is introduced to the appropriate services and facilities in the department and the University/HEI	1 2 3 4 5	It is the student's responsibility to ensure that he/she has located and accessed all relevant services and facilities for research
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
The supervisor decides which theoretical framework or methodology is most appropriate	1 2 3 4 5	The student should decide which methodology or theoretical framework they wish to use

Questionnaire cont.

A warm, supportive relationship between supervisor and student is important for successful candidature	1 2 3 4 5	A personal, supportive relationship is inadvisable because it may obstruct objectivity for both student and supervisor during the candidature
The supervisor should insist on regular meetings with the student	1 2 3 4 5	The student should decide when he/she wants to meet with the supervisor
The supervisor should check regularly that the student is working consistently and on task	1 2 3 4 5	The student should work independently and not have to account for how and where time is spent

Providing Feedback

Feedback

Discussion around the key issue of feedback and how supervisors can best achieve a constructive dialogue with students about their work. (by Prof Hugh Kearns, Flinders University, Australia)

It is challenging to give feedback



Key Questions?

1. What type of feedback does the student want?
2. Feedback can be positive
3. Feedback for the Stages
4. The Person v The Thesis
5. Timeliness
6. Can you be more specific?
7. Conclusion



"I'm coordinating five different R&D projects,
but SURE, I can spare a minute."

What type of feedback does the student want?

Here's just a sample of the types of feedback a supervisor could provide:

- Spell checking and proof-reading
- Checking facts and references for accuracy
- Commenting on argument and logic
- Level of critical thinking
- Structure and flow
- Style
- What's missing

When a supervisor gives feedback, are they doing all of the above at once? Or do they separate them out? How?

Feedback can be positive

Academics and researchers are trained to be critical, to look for the flaws in arguments; to find inconsistencies. However, this leads to a tendency to assume that feedback must be negative. The reality of course is that people can learn just as much from positive feedback, for example, telling a student “The way you expressed that idea is really good” or “I like the way you’ve structured your argument here”. The good news is that as well as being effective, people like getting good feedback!

How much positive feedback do participant supervisors give?

Feedback for the Stages

Supervisors often treat PhD students as though they were fully formed right from the start, but doing a PhD is a learning process. So the type of feedback a supervisor gives at the start needs to be different from the feedback they'll give to the final thesis.

How do participants think their feedback will vary over the stages?

The Person v The Thesis

When a supervisor writes “This isn’t good enough”, they may think they are commenting on the thesis. What do they think the student sees when they look at that feedback? “I am not good enough”. Supervisors must always remember there is a person behind the words (to help empathise, participants should remember the last rejection letter they got from a journal!).

How do they react to negative feedback?

Timeliness

Feedback that comes three months after a student has written something is too late. In most cases, their head has moved on. To be most effective, feedback needs to be close to when the work is done.

What is a reasonable turnaround time?

Can you be more specific?

Comments like

- “This needs work” or
- “Not at the standard” or
- “A bit unclear”

don't help students very much. In fact, they probably lead to confusion. So, what type of work is needed, where is the standard, which piece is unclear and why.

How do supervisors avoid spoon-feeding while still being specific?

Conclusion

- The next time a student asks their supervisor for feedback, a key point is to remember to ask them what type of feedback they want.