



# Guidelines for PhD student and supervisor

The supervisor, possibly supported by one or more co-supervisors<sup>1</sup>, and the Doctoral Board are the people responsible for supervising and supporting the PhD student. The guidelines for the PhD student and the supervisor outline the role of the (co)supervisor and the PhD student in the doctoral process. It outlines the mutual expectations and responsibilities of (co)supervisors and PhD students. The aspects of the collaboration between the (co)supervisors and the PhD students are covered by the national and internal regulations<sup>2</sup>.

## The profile of a good PhD student

Setting up research and acquiring the necessary skills in problem solving and communication is in the first place the responsibility of the PhD student. The PhD student is also expected to take responsibility for cultivating his/her talents and developing his/her career, within or outside academia, and for fulfilling the commitments linked to the funding of his/her doctoral research.

**A good PhD student possesses and acquires the qualities necessary to mature into an independent researcher:**

- The attendance of a PhD programme involves an **exclusive and full-time commitment**. A specific discipline is provided for civil servants (Article 12, paragraph 4 DM 45/2013<sup>3</sup>), for the industrial doctorate (Article 11 DM 45/2013<sup>6</sup>) and for medical specialization schools (Article 7 DM 45/2013<sup>6</sup>). Any activity carried out by the PhD student outside the doctoral programme must be previously authorized by the Doctoral Board.
- The PhD student is **proactive** and makes the necessary efforts to ensure good progress in his/her doctoral research project. The PhD student:
  - actively engages in setting up the research questions that are addressed in the doctoral project
  - is responsible for developing the research methodology that will be used to address the research questions
  - is responsible for planning, implementing and where necessary modifying the research
  - is responsible for interpreting and analysing the research results obtained
  - puts the research in a broader context
  - reflects critically on the research process undertaken

The PhD student can rely on close supervision from the (co)supervisor. The active contribution made by the PhD student in the research planning, and the interpretation and analysis of the results increases as the doctoral research progresses resulting in an **independent researcher** who can design, develop, implement and adapt an extensive research process.

- The PhD student takes advantage of the opportunities offered by the (co)supervisor and others to be part of suitable **research networks** and builds up networks of his/her own where

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<sup>1</sup> The supervisor and co-supervisor(s) are jointly responsible for setting the right context and providing support for the PhD student and adhere to the “profile of a good supervisor”. The formal tasks and qualifications of the supervisor and co-supervisor are laid down in art. 8 of the “Internal Regulations for PhD Courses” at the University of Udine<sup>1</sup>

<sup>2</sup> [PhD Regulations](#)

<sup>3</sup> [DM 45/2013](#)



- possible and recommended (e.g. by actively participating in conferences, working at another research institution etc.).
- The PhD student together with the (co)supervisor ensures that the doctoral research results in **publications and/or other academic and professional achievements**, taking into account the common practices within the discipline. The PhD student prepares the publications and can rely on the support of the (co)supervisor.
  - The PhD student is aware of and adheres to the generally accepted norms of **fair and honest scientific conduct**<sup>4</sup>.
  - The PhD student ensures that **data** generated during the research is always available on request. In this matter the PhD student abides by the principles of correct data management according to the current methods in the research unit and of the University of Udine policy concerning research data management. The PhD student respects the intellectual property rights relating to concepts and findings of the University of Udine and takes proper care of materials and equipment<sup>5</sup>.
  - During the PhD programme, attention is focused on activities and training for doctoral research on the one hand, and the acquisition of various competences that advance the quality and efficiency of the doctoral research and prepare the PhD student for a professional career within or outside the university after the doctoral degree, on the other. In detail, the doctoral programme consists of:
    - developing an individual research programme referring to a specific disciplinary area among those in which the course is focused, under the guidance of the (co)supervisor;
    - training activities at doctoral level complementary to the research:
      - disciplinary and interdisciplinary activities, organized by single courses or in common with several PhD schools;
      - activities to develop various academic and research skills, organized by the PhD Office (Area Servizi per la Ricerca - Ufficio Formazione per la Ricerca).

The PhD student ensures that the activities in the context of the doctoral programme are completed within the deadlines.

- The PhD student is responsible for the **efficient progress** of the doctoral process and endeavours to finalise his/her doctoral thesis within the timeline.
- To the best of his/her ability the PhD student **integrates** in the research group and respects the cooperation agreements made in this respect.
- The PhD student brings to light any **problems and challenges** as quickly as possible, first informing the (co)supervisor and the Doctoral Board.

## **The profile of a good (co)supervisor**

The (co)supervisor takes care of the physical and intellectual environment in which the PhD student develops and carries out his/her research project. He/she plays a stimulating, coordinating and evaluating role for the entire duration of the doctoral process. In addition, the (co)supervisor makes sure that during his/her training the PhD student can also acquire other essential skills that will enable

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<sup>4</sup> [Ethical Code](#) (Italian language)

<sup>5</sup> [Open Access Policy](#) (Italian language)



him/her to move on to another job, within or outside of academia, after the completion of the doctoral programme.

**A good (co)supervisor has the qualities necessary to ensure the correct context and support for each of his/her PhD students:**

- The (co)supervisor is an **active researcher** and has built up a **solid reputation**. Depending on the length of the academic career and the research area, this can be deduced from scientific publications, citations, invitations to contribute at conferences and successful bids for research funding, amongst other things.
- The (co)supervisor has built up his/her reputation in a **research area** that is sufficiently related to the area in which the PhD student is carrying out his/her research, so as to be able to give the necessary supervision.
- The (co)supervisor ensures close **supervision**. The supervision includes ample opportunity for the PhD student to discuss planning, implementation and results of the research with qualified researchers. Regular formal and informal contact between the PhD student, the (co)supervisor and/or the Doctoral Board are at the heart of good supervision. The concrete tasks of the (co)supervisor and/or the Doctoral Board are:
  - to help the PhD student plan, implement and if necessary adjust the research
  - to help the PhD student place the research in a broader context
  - to help the PhD student interpret and analyse the research results obtained
  - to encourage the PhD student to present his/her work, to be present on these occasions on a regular basis and to give the PhD student feedback on his/her performance
  - to challenge the PhD student to think critically about his/her own research work
  - to introduce the PhD student to the world of research by involving him/her in research that is being carried out in the research group and by bringing him/her into contact with other researchers within the research area and international network, by for example encouraging him/her to take an active part in conferences and to work at another research institution
  - to encourage the PhD student to publish his/her work, to point out publication opportunities and to help him/her prepare for publication
- As a team leader the supervisor ensures that the PhD student is monitored and coached as a member of the team. This includes, amongst other things, regular performance and career reviews.
- The (co)supervisor creates a research environment in which **fair and honest scientific conduct** (e.g. good data management, responsible authorship, avoiding conflict of interest) are the norm<sup>6</sup>. In addition, the (co)supervisor provides clarity concerning the nature of dishonest conduct within the context of the scientific domain. In the event of any problems the (co)supervisor can take suitable action.
- The (co)supervisor makes the PhD student aware of any interesting opportunities in the area of training or education within and outside the University of Udine.
- The (co)supervisor takes care of the **efficient progress** of the doctoral process. The (co)supervisor encourages the PhD student to complete his/her thesis within the time frame.
- The supervisor gives the PhD student ample notice about any **career opportunities** after the doctoral degree has been obtained, or refers him/her to the relevant services in this respect.

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<sup>6</sup> [Ethical Code](#) (Italian language)



- The (co)supervisor takes care of creating a **pleasant professional** work environment and for the integration of the PhD student into the research group. This includes taking into account any personal matters that may have an impact on the research.

**The following entities are responsible for monitoring the qualities and proper functioning of (co)supervisors and PhD students:**

- The Doctoral Board organise the doctoral programme and monitor the completion rate.
- The Doctoral Board are responsible, in conjunction with the (co)supervisor, for monitoring the progress of the doctoral research and the doctoral programme, as well as for taking adequate action in order to solve any problems that may arise between the students and his/her (co)supervisor.
- The Doctoral Board make sure that the doctoral process is being correctly followed and that the supervisory and examination committees contain the right mix of individuals. The Doctoral Board also authorize any activity outside the PhD programme (teaching, job collaborations, ...).

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HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

The adoption of the *Guidelines for PhD Student and Supervisor* is part of the actions aimed at implementing the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R).