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GUAT

How to promote good doctoral supervision – Good practices and recommendations for universities

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German University Association of Advanced Graduate Training
www.uniwind.org

Characteristics of the supervision relationship



doctoral supervision = experienced researchers support doctoral candidates

- to become professional researchers
- to become future leaders in academia, industry and society

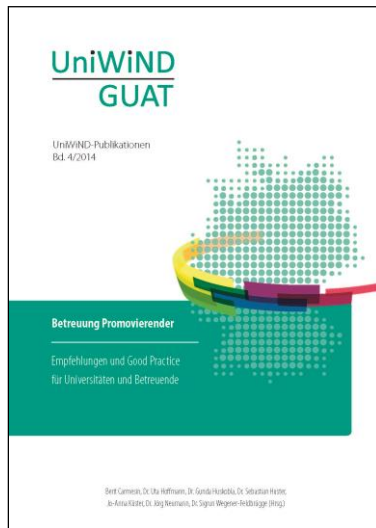
“good supervision” includes

- to cultivate the research mindset of early stage researchers
- to concentrate on high-quality research and scientific relevance
- to support the supervisee’s process of working on and submitting a dissertation thesis in a reasonable length of time
- to mentor on career opportunities
- to prepare for future tasks both within and outside academia

Responsibility for ensuring good supervision

- individual responsibility of supervisors
- institutional responsibility of the PhD awarding university
 - institutional policies and practices which aim at supporting good supervision

Recommendations for universities: How to promote good supervision?



- Guidelines for good supervision
- Monitoring and quality assurance
- Recognition of supervision
- Supervision versus assessment
- Supervisor training and networking
- Ombudsman

Guidelines for good supervision

Make use of existing guidelines	Develop own guidelines
Based on existing literature on doctorates (studies, concepts etc.)	Internal development by a working group of the university (e.g. participation of doctoral candidates, professors, postdocs)
Practically-minded guideline for both supervisors and doctoral candidates	Can result in a practical handbook for both supervisors and doctoral candidates
Need to be communicated internally	Can be discussed, revised and officially adopted by the bodies of the participating Faculties
Good practice: „Shaping a Doctorate Together“ booklet of the QualitätsZirkel Promotion (QZP)	Good practice (selection): „Guidelines for the supervision of doctoral dissertations“, BGHS at Universität Bielefeld „Principles of doctoral culture“, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin „Principles of good supervision“, Leibniz Universität Hannover

Monitoring and quality assurance

- Data should be collected on status quo and on the progress of doctorates in order to monitor supervisory relationships and create the grounds for benchmarking.

Recognition of supervision

- by accepting engagement in doctoral qualification programmes as part of the teaching obligation of lecturers
- by gratifications and awards

Example of good practice: DRS Award for Excellent Supervision

DRS AWARD FOR EXCELLENT SUPERVISION

FREIE UNIVERSITÄT BERLIN
DAHLEM RESEARCH SCHOOL

PROF. DR. SABINE SCHMIDTKE

is honored with the

DRS AWARD FOR EXCELLENT SUPERVISION
2011

in recognition of her exemplary performance as a doctoral supervisor.



Univ.-Prof. Dr. Peter-André Alt
President of Freie Universität Berlin

Berlin, 5. December 2011

Dr. Martina van de Sand
Managing Director of Dahlem Research School

Example of good practice: DRS Award for Excellent Supervision

- Structured process of nomination
- Multiple evaluation criteria
 - supervision of the doctoral thesis, research infrastructure, integration into the scientific community, career counselling
- Anonymised selection
- Public awarding ceremony

Supervision versus assessment

- In Germany: no separation of supervision and assessment of a doctoral thesis
- What should a thesis committee look like?
How much expertise is needed for evaluation?

Supervisor training and networking



- supervisor trainings or coaching programmes for supervisors
- Aims: qualification and networking
- Example of Good practice: comprehensive training concepts by Helmut Brentel (Plenary session III)

Ombudsman

- In cases of conflict between supervisor and supervisee, it is useful to have institutional mediation by a central ombudsman / liaison officer / committee.

Discussion



- What kind of experiences have you made with institutional policies and practices which aim at promoting good doctoral supervision?
- Are there other good practices that you would like to share?
- International standards vs. national recommendations