



APPOINTMENT OF RESEARCH SUPERVISORS POLICY

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1 Introduction

The Da Vinci Institute is an accredited private higher distance education provider offering qualifications on NQF levels five to ten, which are registered on the Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework (HEQSF). This policy forms part of the institutional Integrated Quality Management System and details the principles for ensuring that programme offerings adhere to academic standards and empower students to contribute to the transformation of their communities, society and the economy of the future. This approach is underpinned by the Business-driven Action Learning discourse on the co-creation and distribution of relevant knowledge.

The Da Vinci Institute is committed to the ideal of distinguished scholarship and the provision of credible and innovative research supervision that contributes to findings that carry international recognition, as well as national credibility and legitimacy.

Central to the realisation of the Institute's vision is the support required by qualified and committed research supervisors. The relationship between the supervisor(s) and student is an integral part of the holistic research experience, as the student develops and is guided towards mastery of the research process, the relevant disciplines and knowledge generation.

2 Definitions

Term	Definition
Interaction	Interaction includes communication or interpersonal contact between the researcher and the participant
Collaboration	To work together, especially in a joint intellectual effort. To work with another person or group in order to achieve or do something
Inherent requirements	The mandatory, non-negotiable components specific to a position of employment or educational program to be undertaken by a person.

3 Regulatory Framework

This policy is benchmarked against, and should be read in the context of the relevant legislation underpinning the principles against which institutional policies, processes and standard operational procedures are developed, implemented and maintained. These include:

A. Regulatory legislation:

- I. Constitution of the Republic of South Africa: 1996
 - II. Higher Education Act (Act 101 of 1997)
 - III. Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) Criteria for Programme Accreditation, CHE, November, 2004
 - IV. SAQA: National Policy and Criteria for Designing and Implementing Assessment for NQF Qualifications and Part Qualifications and Professional Designations in South Africa
 - V. CHE: The Council on Higher Education's Distance Higher Education Programmes in a Digital Era: Good Practice Guide, 2014
- B. Applicable Da Vinci documents:
- I. D1: Nomination and Appointment of Examiners
 - II. D6: Appointment, Management and Development of Faculty
 - III. D9: The Da Vinci Institute Research Framework
 - IV. D12: Students-Supervisor Relationships
 - V. D15: Conducting Ethical Research
 - VI. Research Policy Guidelines: External examiners of dissertations and theses
Research Policy Guidelines: Supervisor and student roles and responsibilities.

4 Scope

This policy outlines criteria for the identification, nomination and appointment of research supervisors to ensure effective management of the postgraduate student's research supervision process.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the general rules governing the relationship between students and/or the conditions of contracting or employing research supervisors. The policy extends and does not replace any other agreements between the Institute and its students or employees and applies to the Postgraduate Research Office in respect of the identification, invitation and support of supervisors.

5 Aim

The purpose of this policy is to:

- 5.1. Outline ways to identify, nominate and appoint research supervisors
- 5.2. Provide a clear and concise outline of what is expected of the research supervisor
- 5.3. Serve as a point of departure in the resolution of any research related disputes between the student and supervisor.

6 Principles

Research supervisors must be experienced scholars, academically able, collegial and proficient communicators. It is highly recommended that research supervisors have a

variety of academic expertise and experiences inter alia, research and publication, postgraduate supervision and examination, multi-disciplinary knowledge, etc. This enables them to bring different perspectives and skills to the role and ensures a balance in the group of supervisors.

Research supervisors will have a qualification which is one level higher than the qualification for which the student is being supervised, or equivalent in the case of a Doctorate. Depending on the student's research topic, a co-supervisor may be appointed based on his/her technical expertise as a co-supervisor. In this case, the supervisor will have the requisite one up qualification and the co-supervisor may not.

Supervisors must have credibility with The Institute and the students that they supervise. They should be able to demonstrate ongoing professional development in their business and academic domains.

- 6.1. All students must work under the guidance of a research supervisor appointed by The Institute
- 6.2. Under certain circumstances, a student may request a supervisor as an expert of the field, with the consent and agreement of the research supervisor
- 6.3. High standards and quality of supervision should be ensured under all conditions
- 6.4. An ideal ratio of 1:10 supervisor to students is recommended. Factors including, but not limited to, the workloads of the faculty concerned, the submission and completion rates of the supervisor's previous students, progress reporting, as well as the progress of students and other demands on the supervisor's time may be taken into consideration
- 6.5. If necessary, advertisements for academic supervision will be displayed on the website and other media
- 6.6. Research supervisors are required to attend supervisor on boarding and at least one continuous professional development workshop per annum
- 6.7. Research supervisors are responsible for their personal disciplinary and other professional development
- 6.8. The Institute will develop potential supervisors through a co-supervision process
- 6.9. The Institute may appoint an industry expert as a field or co-supervisor should this be necessary in instances where the nature of the research problem is of a technical nature and/or is not entirely located in a traditional discipline. In such instances, the supervisor or academic supervisor, as is sometimes referred to, will provide academic guidance to ensure that the dissertation or thesis meets academic standards.

7 High Level Processes



Figure 1: Appointment of Research Supervisors

This policy should be read in conjunction with other related Institutional policies.

8 Responsibilities

All **supervisors** are responsible to exercise the following responsibilities:

- 8.1. Upon appointment, the supervisor has to discuss the proposal with the student and agree on a work schedule. The copy of the work schedule has to be sent to the Programme Convener within a month after the first meeting.
- 8.2. Research co-supervisors are required to cooperate with each other and with The Institute, to ensure that the student is provided with the infrastructure and necessary resources to undertake the research
- 8.3. Research supervisors are required to liaise regularly with each other in order to clarify, on an on-going basis, roles and responsibilities in regard to research supervision
- 8.4. Research supervisors must administer and manage matters associated with the student's studies in accordance with the requirements and guidelines of the Institute
- 8.5. He/she must ensure that the Programme Coordinators and Research Office are furnished with all relevant documentation at the relevant time
- 8.6. He/she must provide academic guidance to the student to ensure the development of research skills and mastery of the research discipline and the field of specialisation, and that these competencies are demonstrated in the relevant dissertation or thesis
- 8.7. He/she and/or the co-supervisor must meet (communicate) with the student regularly (at least once a quarter), to provide guidance, monitor progress and recommend corrective measures if necessary
- 8.8. The research supervisor must keep a written record of progress and output, and provide timely feedback
- 8.9. He/she must provide progress reports which must be co-signed by the student, as required by the Institute
- 8.10. He/she must oversee and approve any changes recommended by the examiners and/or moderators and sign off the correction of errors report

8.11. Supervisors must adhere to all general academic and research ethics with regard to academic Integrity and plagiarism, and the ethics requirements of research work.

9 Review of this Policy

Regular review and amendment of this policy will be done in line with the approved institutional policies and regulatory requirements. This will take place in consultation with the relevant quality assurance structures at departmental and institutional level, under the auspices of the official custodian of this policy, namely the Executive Dean: Research and Institutional Partnerships.