

COSSEE: Student-Supervisor Agreement

The purpose of this template is to provide a framework for candidates and supervisors to discuss their mutual expectations for the supervisory relationship and agree on how they will work together throughout the supervision. It also provides a record of that agreement for the candidate, the supervisor(s), and the Graduate Student Service. The agreement represents statements of intent only and is not legally binding; the implied obligations are only what a candidate and supervisor(s) could reasonably be expected to meet under normal circumstances.

It is important to clarify responsibilities and expectations at the start of the supervisory relationship; it is also important to recognise that the relationship will change over time, perhaps to the extent that it may be necessary to re-negotiate the supervision arrangements. Occasionally, either party to the relationship may need to use the problem-solving mechanisms available in the Department/School or Centre, or in the wider University: an awareness of these safety nets is important in supporting a successful supervisory relationship.

Part A: Candidate, supervisor, and thesis details

1. **Candidate's name:** _____ **Student ID number:** _____

2. **Primary supervisor's name:** _____

3. **Other supervisors, advisors, the Departmental Advisory Committee, and their respective roles**
(add more lines to the table as needed).

Name	Capacity of contribution (e.g., co-supervisor, advisor)	Role (e.g., advice on topic, method or overall progress etc.)

If any external supervisor is part of the team, has a memorandum of understanding been completed?

Yes No N/A

4. **Commencement Date:** _____

5. **Working title of research:**

 6. **International candidates.** Candidates are familiar with the support and services provided by the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies and are aware of the student visa conditions relevant to their own enrolment. See <https://www.ualberta.ca/en/graduate-studies/admissions-programs/apply/international-academic-requirements/index.html>

 7. **Scholarship.** Candidates are aware of the restrictions on hours of employment (up to 10 hours of employment per week, per annum). See <https://www.ualberta.ca/en/graduate-studies/fees-funding/scholarships-awards/index.html>

 8. **Academic integrity.** Candidates have discussed and are aware of the Student Academic Integrity Policy. See <https://www.ualberta.ca/en/alfresco/uappol/academic/student-academic-integrity/policy/student-academic-integrity-policy.pdf>
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Part B: Supervision expectations

The candidate and at least the primary supervisor should independently complete the attached “Supervision expectations” sheet and then compare and discuss their expectations. Please note below any outcomes from this discussion:

Part C: Terms of supervision agreement

We agree that the following conditions govern the relationship between the primary supervisor/supervisors (amend as appropriate) and the candidate in relation to the thesis research subject to this application. Please check the boxes as each item is discussed:

- 9. Regular supervision meetings**, to take stock of progress, will occur at intervals of:

It is expected that these meetings occur weekly or fortnightly with the primary supervisor, although this may vary during candidature. The primary supervisor and candidate should maintain their own written records of these meetings. Also, discuss how often the candidate will meet with the co-supervisors.

- 10. For formal progress report meetings**, PhD candidates should check this instruction document to understand the stages and procedures of progress reporting:
https://www.ualberta.ca/en/ophthalmology/media-library/graduate-program/faqs_-progress-report-and-student-supervisor-guidelines-.pdf
- 11. The candidate will endeavour to** work independently and meet deadlines for ongoing work.
- 12. The primary supervisor undertakes** to provide expert opinion on progress, and to indicate what needs to be done if progress is inadequate. The timing and nature of supervisors' feedback should be

discussed. Note that feedback on written work is expected to occur within at least three weeks. Key points from this discussion are:

13. The primary supervisor and candidate will become familiar with the regulations governing the degree for which the candidate is enrolled, including deadlines (see details at: <https://calendar.ualberta.ca/content.php?catoid=56&navoid=17859>).

14. The workload expectations for completing this thesis have been clarified. It is helpful for the candidate to have clarity over the expected hours per week. Consider full-time and part-time status. Also discuss holidays (students should take 3 weeks a year). See: <https://sites.google.com/ualberta.ca/graduatestudentprogrammanual/vacation>

15. Funding for this project has been considered. Give relevant details here:

16. The following aspects have been discussed:

Ethics approval, check: <https://www.ualberta.ca/en/research/services/research-ethics/do-i-need-research-ethics-approval.html>

Indigenous Programming and Research, check:

<https://www.ualberta.ca/en/provost/portfolio/indigenous-initiatives/index.html>

Intellectual property, check: [https://www.ualberta.ca/en/graduate-studies/media-](https://www.ualberta.ca/en/graduate-studies/media-library/about/gpm-supporting-documents/intellectual-property-guidelines-2004-latest-version.pdf)

[library/about/gpm-supporting-documents/intellectual-property-guidelines-2004-latest-version.pdf](https://www.ualberta.ca/en/graduate-studies/media-library/about/gpm-supporting-documents/intellectual-property-guidelines-2004-latest-version.pdf)

Training requirements (software; equipment related, research skills, writing, etc.)

Other (specify):

Elaborate on any processes to be followed:

17. **To be confirmed as a PhD candidate**, you are expected to meet the following targets [insert here]:

Refer to the Supervision and Examinations guide of the University of Alberta for details of candidacy confirmation:

https://calendar.ualberta.ca/content.php?catoid=56&navoid=17368&_gl=1*r7lzud*_gcl_au*MTQzNTc2MzMyMC4xNzY4NDA0MTA1*_ga*NjA1NDk2MjQzLjE3NTkyNTc0ODg.*_ga_21TWH2P5G7*czE3Njg1Nzc3NjYkbzIwJGcxJHQxNzY4NTgwNzEzJGoyNSRsMCRoMjkzNTM3NDQ5

18. The primary supervisor will provide the candidate with **information about relevant departmental/school handbooks, guides, websites about postgraduate studies, resources, etc.**, and the candidate undertakes to read the information provided in such documents or on the website.
19. **Responsibility for the correct format and technical writing** aspects of the thesis rests with the candidate.
20. The candidate will fulfil **departmental/school obligations by contributing to annual departmental/school conferences or research seminars**. Provide any relevant details here:
21. In the event of the **primary supervisor being on prolonged or permanent absence**, the department/school will take all reasonable steps to ensure continuity of supervision, having consulted the candidate regarding the arrangements made.
22. The candidate has the right to request **alternative supervision** if they believe the project is being inadequately supervised. Any request should be made to the Postgraduate Coordinator or Head of Department (HoD), or, if the HoD is the concerned supervisor, to the Associate Dean responsible for postgraduate matters, and all reasonable steps will be taken to find an alternative supervisor. Note that it is not always possible to provide alternative supervision, such as in circumstances where particular expertise is required, or where the research is part of a larger project. Please refer to this document for more details: <https://www.ualberta.ca/en/graduate-studies/media-library/current-students/doctoral/guidelines-rewarding-student-supervisor-experience.pdf#page=3.50>
23. A student who receives two (2) consecutive evaluations of “in need of improvement” or one (1) “unsatisfactory” rating will normally be required to withdraw from their program and GPS on the

recommendation of the Associate Chair (grad) within their academic department and/or the Department Chair to the Dean of GPS. See: <https://www.ualberta.ca/en/physics/media-library/graduate-program/supervision-and-examinations-gps-2024-2025.pdf>

24. The candidate and the primary supervisor should reach an agreement on **authorship of any published results** of the research work. Matters to be considered include whether the supervisors are to be co-authors, and under what circumstances (such as failure of the candidate to publish work), the supervisors may publish any of the work, with the candidate as co-author (see tools such as: <https://www.icmje.org/recommendations/browse/roles-and-responsibilities/defining-the-role-of-authors-and-contributors.html> or CRediT: <https://credit.niso.org/> or Dragon Kill Points: <https://ecoevorxiv.org/repository/view/8770/>). See also the guidelines regarding the format of the thesis – especially the inclusion of published papers (<https://www.ualberta.ca/en/graduate-studies/resources/graduate-students/thesis-preparation-requirements-deadlines/index.html>). Provide details of your discussion here:

This agreement should be reviewed regularly as part of the formal progress reporting process.

Candidate:		
Primary Supervisor:		
Co-supervisors:		
Manager:		Date:

This agreement must be signed above by the primary supervisor, the candidate, and COSSEE’s research manager. The candidate and the primary supervisor should be provided with copies.

Note that the form must be sent to COSSEE’s research manager (esantos2@ualberta.ca) for record-keeping and processing.

SUPERVISION EXPECTATIONS

Read each pair of statements below and then estimate your position on each. For example, with statement 2, if you believe very strongly that it is the supervisor's responsibility to select a good topic, then circle '1'. If you think that both the supervisor and candidate should equally be involved, then circle '3', and if you think it is definitely the candidate's responsibility to select a topic, then circle '5'. If either the candidate or the supervisor cannot decide on a single number, then a consecutive range of two or more numbers can be circled.

START UP

1	Supervisors should only accept candidates when they have specific knowledge of the candidate's chosen topic	1 2 3 4 5	Supervisors should feel free to accept candidates, even if they do not have specific knowledge of the candidate's topic
2	It is the supervisor's responsibility to develop a research topic	1 2 3 4 5	The candidate is responsible for developing their own topic
3	The supervisor decides which theoretical framework or methodology is most appropriate	1 2 3 4 5	Candidates should decide which theoretical framework or methodology they wish to use
4	The supervisor should develop an appropriate program and timetable of research and study for the candidate	1 2 3 4 5	The supervisor should leave developing the program of study to the candidate
5	The university or supervisor, as representative of the university is responsible for ensuring that the candidate is introduced to relevant services and facilities of the department and University	1 2 3 4 5	It is the candidate's responsibility to ensure that they have located and accessed all relevant services and facilities for research

MID-CANDIDATURE

6	The supervisor should insist on regular meetings with the candidate	1 2 3 4 5	The candidate should decide when they want to meet with the supervisor
7	The supervisor should check regularly that the candidate is working consistently and on task	1 2 3 4 5	The candidate should work independently and not have to account for how and where time is spent
8	It is down to the supervisor to ensure that the candidate's thesis research is disseminated in journals and conferences	1 2 3 4 5	The candidate is responsible for ensuring the dissemination of their research in journals and conferences
9	The supervisor is always the lead journal article author and presents any conference papers relating to the thesis, regardless of who actually wrote the material	1 2 3 4 5	Any journal article or conference paper is from the candidate's own thesis research; therefore the candidate should be the lead author or presenter
10	The supervisor is responsible for arranging ethical approval and / or Indigenous consultation to support the thesis	1 2 3 4 5	It is the responsibility of the candidate to arrange ethical approval and / or Indigenous consultation to support the thesis
11	The supervisor and the lab are the data owners and are solely responsible for data management during and after the student graduates	1 2 3 4 5	The student is the sole data owner and is solely responsible for data management during and after graduation
12	Acquiring resources to support the thesis, such as scholarships, equipment or funding for conferences, is the responsibility of the supervisor	1 2 3 4 5	The candidate is responsible for acquiring any resources to support the thesis, including scholarships, equipment and conference funding
13	The supervisor should enrol the candidate on courses that develop the candidate's ability to enhance their thesis (e.g. academic writing, presentation)	1 2 3 4 5	It is the responsibility of the candidate to enrol on courses that develops their ability to enhance their thesis (e.g. academic writing, presentation)
14	A supportive relationship between supervisor and candidate is important for successful candidature	1 2 3 4 5	A supportive relationship is inadvisable, as it may obstruct objectivity for both candidate and supervisor during candidature
15	The supervisor should suggest career development options and regularly discuss long-range career planning with the candidate	1 2 3 4 5	It is the candidate's responsibility to develop and plan for their own career

THE FINAL STAGE

16	The supervisor should insist on seeing all drafts of work to ensure that the candidate is on the right track	1 2 3 4 5	Candidates should submit good drafts of work only when they want constructive criticism from the supervisor
17	The supervisor is responsible for decisions regarding the standard of the thesis and when it is ready for submission	1 2 3 4 5	The candidate is responsible for decisions concerning the standard of the thesis and when it is ready for submission

18 The supervisor should have total control in arranging the examination.	1 2 3 4 5	The candidate should have a role in arranging the examination, within university guidelines
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