



This policy details the responsibilities of project supervisors as they relate to MD Research Project research project. This policy aligns with The University of Melbourne's current policies in relation to the supervision of research higher degree candidates. Project supervisors are strongly encouraged to make themselves familiar with these policies via the Melbourne School of Graduate Research (MSGR) website: <https://gradresearch.unimelb.edu.au/>

## **POLICY**

### **Governance structure**

Projects with supervisors internal to the University of Melbourne will be managed through their associated MD Research Project Administrative site whilst projects with supervisors from affiliated or external institutions will be co-ordinated through the Department of Medical Education, Melbourne Medical School, University of Melbourne. Further information can be found in the *MD Research Project Governance and Funding Policy*.

### **Responsibilities of a Project Supervisor – Student**

In summary, the overriding responsibility of a project supervisor is to ensure that the student completing a research project under their supervision is provided continuing support and guidance in the conduct of their project, so as to produce a piece of scholarly work that is the best the student can achieve. However, the final form and content of that scholarly work is the responsibility of the student.

It is anticipated that the majority of project supervisors involved in MD Research Project will have experience in research project supervision as either independent investigators themselves or through supervision of research higher-degree candidates.

In detail, supervisor responsibilities include, but are not limited, to the following:

- Assisting the student in selecting and defining the scope of a suitable research topic
- Monitoring the student's overall progress
- Assisting the student to develop a realistic program of study including the setting of short, medium and long-term objectives, necessitating regular contact and steady provision of relevant ideas and guidance to facilitate good progress
- Discussing and reaching agreement with the student the details of the supervisory arrangements, including a regular meeting schedule and ensuring maintenance of the meeting schedule
- Suggesting appropriate background reading and advising the student on the structure and writing of the literature review
- Inducting the student into the academic culture through participation in scholarly activities
- Undertaking primary responsibility for obtaining all necessary ethics approval
- A supervisor may enlist the assistance of a student in preparing the appropriate ethics documentation; however, final completion and submission of required documentation, as well as communication with the local ethics committee, remains the responsibility of the supervisor;
- Informing the student of any ethical clearances necessary for the planned project and that work on human subjects and animals must not be commenced before these clearances are obtained
- Ensuring the student has adequate training in the necessary procedures prior to the commencement of the main data collection phase
- Ensuring the student has access to the resources required for their work
- Assisting the student to plan research work and identify the point at which no further work is required for assessment
- Ensuring that the student is aware of, and follows, host department/institution policy on research ethics, and occupational health and safety
- Ensuring intellectual property issues are discussed. If commercial potential exists, then the project supervisor should ensure that the project is discussed with the Head of School/Centre/Institute and that agreements are signed by all interested parties if appropriate
- Ensuring that the question of credit and authorship of contributions is addressed, and agreed encouraging the student to consult with other appropriate contacts where specialist technical advice is required
- Assisting the student in planning the structure and writing of their monograph
- Reviewing drafts of monograph sections, as they are prepared, and returning them with constructive criticism in a timely manner

- Ensuring that any problems being experienced by the student which may affect their progress are addressed quickly and appropriately
- Ensuring that appropriate notice and prior arrangements are made where the nominated project supervisor expects to be absent and continuous supervision cannot be maintained
- Ensuring the completion of progress reports and other documentation as required by the university of Melbourne
- Ensuring that the student is maintaining a schedule of contact with the academic environment of the University of Melbourne.

### **Responsibilities of a Project Supervisor – Administrative**

In addition to supervision of students, project supervisors also have a responsibility to ensure they complete administrative tasks as required by the Department of Medical Education, Melbourne Medical School, The University of Melbourne. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Ensuring the student completes an induction/orientation program at their host department/institution
- Promptly notifying the MD Research Project Subject coordinator of any problems being experienced by the student which may affect their progress
- Informing the MD Research Project Subject coordinator of examiners nominated to assess their student's journal monograph **and** ensuring that assessors are aware of their responsibility
- Ensuring the project has current ethics approval. Where a project does not have current ethics approval or requires an amendment, the project supervisor must take primary responsibility for all necessary approvals. A supervisor may enlist the assistance of the student in preparing the appropriate ethics documentation; however completion, submission and communication with the local ethics committee remain the responsibility of the project supervisor
- Assisting the student to complete and return student progress reports in a timely manner
- Advise the MD Research Project Subject coordinator of any concerns regarding the professional behaviour of the student they are supervising.

Although it is not mandatory, project supervisors are strongly encouraged to undertake professional development in research supervision.