This is just an example of a Supervision Agreement – if you like what it offers, you will need to adapt it to fit your disciplinary and personal context. The idea is that this is just a starting point and can be co-developed by supervisors and scholars together. It serves as a starting point of an ongoing conversation and attempts to make some of the implicit ways of interacting with each other more explicit.

Process for developing Supervision Agreement Document

1. All parties read the Higher Degrees Guide and Supervision Policy
2. All parties read questions about supervision relationship below and note own answers.
3. Students arrange to meet supervisors for discussion about the issues raised in the questions.
4. Students draw up draft agreement on basis of discussion.
5. All parties get dated copy of the agreement.
6. All parties revisit agreement annually or more frequently as needed and re-negotiate issues as necessary.

Supervision Agreement

The purpose of this document is to articulate the ways in which we will work together. This is a negotiated document that initially takes the form of a set of questions to be used as the basis for a discussion. As a result of such discussion we will rework the document into a set of agreements. We will review this document every year, or more often if necessary, and make changes whenever we need to do so.

The Rhodes University Higher Degrees Guide provides important information for postgraduate scholars and needs to have been read before this Supervision Agreement is developed and signed. Most importantly, the Higher Degrees Guide includes a list of roles and responsibilities for the student and supervisor, which are attached as an appendix to this document.

Meetings

1. How often do we meet? When? Where?
2. What is the longest we should go between meetings?
3. Who sets the meeting?
4. Do meetings follow submission of written work?
5. Is a record kept of such meetings?
6. What are the expectations regarding attendance at DoC Weeks?
7. What are the expectations regarding attendance at a Research Design course?

Submission of written work

1. Does the scholar submit rough ideas or polished drafts? How are the two distinguished? How might feedback differ between these two?
2. Does the scholar submit small sections or whole chapters?
3. How frequently is written work submitted?
4. How long does the scholar have to wait for feedback?
5. What form will the feedback take?
6. To what extent will supervisor undertake surface error correction of the text? When does such correction need to be done? Who does it?

Co-supervision – If there is to be more than one supervisor, we need to discuss the following:

1. What is the role of each supervisor? Do any of the supervisors provide expertise in a particular area or take responsibility for supervising a particular aspect of the study?
2. How will we ensure that all members of the team are informed of discussions, progress and ideas etc.?
3. How will conflicting advice from the supervisors be dealt with?

Planning

1. What is the planned progress of the study? What are the interim deadlines along the way? (NB: Need to insert a planning schedule with agreed upon deadlines into the Supervision Agreement – possibly in table format.)
2. How often will we re-visit the planned deadlines?
3. How will the project management be undertaken and how will reporting on progress take place?

Publications

1. What would be good conferences to attend and what aspects of the study should be presented at them?
2. What funding might be available for conference attendance?
3. Whose names are identified on the conference programme and who presents at the conference?
4. How much assistance do the supervisors provide on the abstract and preparation of the conference presentation?
5. What publications might emerge from the PhD and when should the student focus on these?
6. What is the role of the supervisor in terms of assistance in writing the publications?
7. Who is listed as authors on the publication? When is co-authorship appropriate and when not? How is order of authors determined? What is the agreement regarding co-authorship after the PhD is complete?

Administration and Reporting

1. What are the university annual reporting requirements? Do we want any additional annual reporting?
2. What would constitute unacceptably slow progress? How should this be handled?
3. What would lead to slow progress warning letters from the Dean and what would the consequence of such letters be?
4. How could conflicts be avoided?
5. How should any conflicts be resolved?
6. Any other issues?
7. Who has copies of this document?

Any other issues?