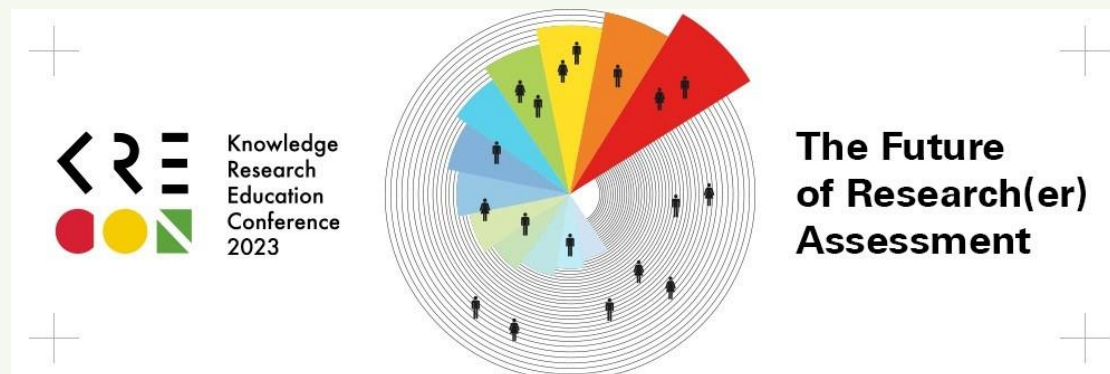


Research Productivity and Demands on PhD Researchers and Supervisors

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Questions to be answered

1. What are the roles and responsibilities of doctoral researchers?
2. What are the roles and responsibilities of supervisors?
3. Could they both be effective and efficient in the given time frame?
4. Is anything wrong in the system? If yes, what?
5. How does research assessment reform correspond with the existing doctoral education?

Questions to be answered

1. What are the roles and responsibilities of doctoral researchers?
2. What are the roles and responsibilities of supervisors?

What are the roles & responsibilities of doctoral researchers

- To manage time efficiently
- To be well organized and to meet deadlines
- To show initiatives in identifying and resolving problems
- To acquire new skills
- To maintain regular contact with the supervisor
- To follow professional and ethical standards
- To start working on thesis early enough to finish it on time
- To be engaged in different formats of academic life
- To be ready to engage in a kind of constructive dialogue with the supervisor and peers
- To be ready to work in a team
- To prepare a progress report

What are the roles & responsibilities of doctoral researchers

- **Work systematically** to complete the doctoral research and other studies within the overall target period of four years (full-time equivalent);
- **Design** and **conduct research independently** and on their own initiative, with the support of their supervisor(s) and other members of the academic community;
- **Prepare** themselves **carefully for meetings** with the supervisor(s) and respect the agreed schedules;
- Are **responsible for the progress**, quality, and reliability of their own research work and report to their supervisor(s) about the progress of their research regularly;
- Are **responsible for reporting** and **publishing the results** of their research work in forums agreed upon with the supervisor(s);

What are the roles & responsibilities of doctoral researchers

- **Familiarise** themselves with, and observe, **good ethics** and **ethical principles** of research;
- Become **acquainted with practical matters** related to academic work and other scientific activities;
- **Inform and discuss** with their supervisor(s) **about changes** affecting working conditions, progress, or the agreed schedule;
- Are **responsible for assembling a follow-up group**, with the Principal Supervisor, and for convening annual meetings with the follow-up group;
- Should assume **responsibility for applying for funding** to support their own research and thus acquire the necessary skills in finding and applying for funding; a more **detailed division of responsibility** must be agreed separately between each doctoral candidate and the Principal Supervisor.

What are the roles & responsibilities of supervisors

Why to take this role?

What is my motivation to be a supervisor?

- To develop a new researcher
- To contribute to career progression
- To gain further knowledge/research advancements
- Personal satisfaction of university teacher
- Funding opportunities

What are the roles & responsibilities of supervisors

What is the job of a supervisor?

- **SUPPORTING**

Suggesting, advising, encouraging, motivating, inspiring, listening, exchanging

- **DEVELOPING**

Endurance, positivity, imagination, creativity, risk taking, professionalism, career path

- **PROVIDING**

Freedom, immunity from bureaucracy, research integrity

- **ACCOUNTABILITY**

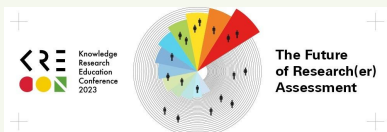
For conducting original research, generating original results and contributing to knowledge, publishing

What are the roles & responsibilities of supervisors

Is there ideal, perfect supervisor?

Some features

- Affective but know how (soft versus hard qualities)
- Mentor for life, career development)
- Enthusiastic
- Recognising and appreciating individual differences
- Respectful
- Unselfish, lack of professional jealousy
- Supporting others (outside their immediate responsibility)
- Teaching and communication skills



Lee, Denis, Campbell - Nature 447 (2007)

What are the roles & responsibilities of supervisors

Research will be very different for new generations

Doctoral candidates will work very differently from the supervisors, and there will be different challenges

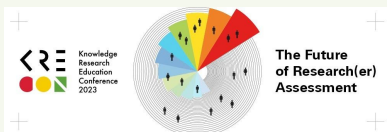
What are the roles & responsibilities of supervisors

- **Commit to the supervision** of the doctoral candidate's research and its planning throughout the whole four-year training period (full-time equivalent) and to **comply with the agreed schedules**;
- **Treat** the doctoral candidate and other supervisors **well** and provide **regular feedback** on the work;
- Develop their own **leadership** and **supervision skills** through, for example, student feedback and supervisor training;
- **Agree** with each other and with the doctoral candidate **on the responsibilities** of supervisors and, where appropriate, **on the rights** with respect to the research results (e.g. thesis publication principles, sharing of degree points and funds, and possible industrial property rights in cases of inter-institutional cooperation);
- **Give** doctoral candidates **the just merits** for their own contribution to the work;
- **Adhere to good scientific practice** and **ethical principles** of research and guide the student to adhere to them;

What are the roles & responsibilities of supervisors

- **Acquaint** themselves **with the practicalities** related to academic studies and other scientific activities and ensure that the doctoral candidate takes care of them;
- **Inform and discuss** with the doctoral candidate and other supervisors about any **significant changes** affecting the conditions under which their work is carried out;
- The Principal Supervisor is **responsible**, together with the doctoral candidate, **for assembling** the student's **follow-up group**;
- The Principal Supervisor **assists and advises** the doctoral student in **applying for research funding**, providing information about how to find funding opportunities and, when required, a recommendation letter;
- The Principal Supervisor **assesses the suitability of the doctoral thesis** manuscript for submission for pre-examination;
- **Guide** doctoral candidates **in career planning** by discussing post-graduation career options and helping to target their training to meet their career goals.

University of Oulu, <https://www.oulu.fi/uniogs/node/56039>, June, 2019



What are the roles & responsibilities of supervisors

SUPERVISOR - WHO?

- active researcher
(research area, ongoing research, publishing)
- has capacity for a new doctoral candidate
(e.g. time, research capacity)
- international exposure
- ready to adapt his/her supervision style
- respectful for differences

What are the roles & responsibilities of supervisors

SUPERVISION - WHAT?

- supervising research itself
- participating/contributing to progress planning
- participating/contributing to career planning
- respecting cultural background of the PhD candidate (and/or co-supervisor)
- supporting PhD candidate's immersion into a new cultural context

What are the roles & responsibilities of supervisors

Supervisor's skills

What a PhD student might search for

- Research expertise
- Active researcher
- Supervision experience
- Dr student experience
- Personality

What are the roles & responsibilities of supervisors

Skills that supervisor might wish to develop

Understanding PhD student expectations

- Understanding the role of supervision
 - Educational/research
 - Administrative
 - Supportive
- Soft managerial skills
 - Empathetic, sensitive
 - Flexible

What are the roles & responsibilities of supervisors

Rhetorical questions for supervisors

- Did I notice that my doctoral student might have problems?
- Do I meet and talk to my doctoral student enough?
- Did I read his/her work carefully enough?
- Do I make my doctoral students overdependent?
- Do I support his/her ideas?

What are the roles & responsibilities of supervisors

Career development

Changing career landscape

Supervisors and institutions could/should do?:

- From the beginning, inform students about professional options
- Communicate students' expectations
- Not to support unrealistic plans, wishes
- To prepare doctoral students for the range of career options
- Offer them trainings for different skills
- Encourage interdisciplinary networks
- Offering professional development of supervisors to support more diverse career paths of doctoral students

Let's talk

'What is excellent supervision and how can it be supported/developed?'

1. Individual task (5-10 minutes)

Consider the ten aspects of doctoral supervision listed below and decide which three you consider to be most important. For each note down some reasons for your choice. Use the table below to do this.

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	Aspects of Doctoral Supervision	Ranking
A.	Possesses a thorough knowledge of University policy, procedures and regulations	
B.	Is aware of funding opportunities and can advise on funding applications	
C.	Is able and willing to 'mentor' the student on pastoral issues	
D.	Challenges the student to think critically and challenge existing research	
E.	Is active in the research community at the University and introduces the student to this	
F.	Gives comprehensive and prompt feedback on work submitted	
G.	Encourages the student to become an independent researcher and prepare for the future	
H.	Shares own experiences of being a researcher with the student	
I.	Sets clear expectations and boundaries	
J.	Ensures that the student finishes on time	

‘What is excellent supervision and how can it be supported/developed?’

Supervisor’s skills

1. Individual task (5-10 minutes)

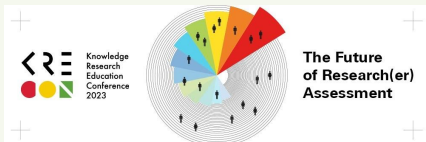
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Aspect chosen	Reasons for choice
1.	
2.	
3.	

Questions to be answered

3. Could they both be effective and efficient in the given time frame?



Effectiveness & Efficiency

Many doctoral researchers need more than three years

Relatively low percentage of completion rate

Frequent complaints about publishing requirements

Funding issues that slow down the process

Uncertainty about employment

Mental health and well-being issues

Discipline differences?

Number of papers?

Interdisciplinarity in research?

Authorship?

Is max number of papers optimal?

Why publishing is so important?

How does effectiveness and efficiency interplay
in doctoral journey?

What is the situation
at your institution?

Questions to be answered

4. Is anything wrong in the system? If yes, what?

Is anything wrong in the system?

Duration of doctoral journey?

Funding?

Support?

Publishing requirements?

Supervisor's support?

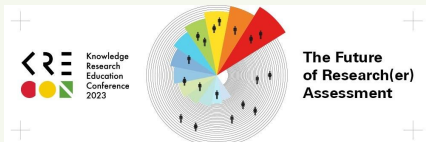
Team work / competition or rivalry?

Uncertainty?

Do you think
something is wrong?

Questions to be answered

5. How does research assessment reform correspond with the existing doctoral education?



What do researchers face?

Pressure not only to publish, but publish fast

Publish more and more

Chase the topics that are publishable

Avoid risk taking

Increases stress significantly

How the publishing is affected?

- Increased number of journals
- More and more open science publishing
- Increase the cost for publishing
- Tremendous increase of published papers
- Even respected publishers are starting 'softening' criteria
- Increase of predatory journals
- Chasing researchers to publish

Do we need a change?

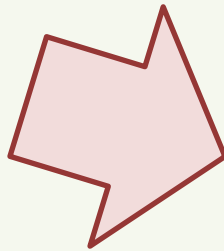
Overflow of journal and papers

Focus on quantitative indicators

High level of stress

Mental health and well-being negatively affected

Attractiveness of research and academic environments is fading



**We do need
a change!**

Will the new RA be the optimal solution?

Questions, concerns

- Do we remember why the system opted for quantitative measure a few decades ago?
- How supportive universities were of rankings?
- How much strategic thinking was devoted to quantitative indicators and ranking?
- Will the system slip in in academic corruption again?
- Who will be able to be resistant to negative tendencies?
- What kind of conditions need to be met in order not to be affected?

Will the new RA be the optimal solution?

Michael Murphy, President of the European University Association (EUA) said:

It is now time to go beyond existing declarations and define clearly what we want for the future of research assessment. Universities, researchers and all stakeholders need to choose how they want to be assessed and need to choose now.

Marc Schiltz, President of Science Europe, said:

‘Publish or perish’ and metrics have led us into a blind alley. Let’s start recognising the full breadth of value created by researchers.

What could be the impact of research assessment reform?

Less stress, more happiness in doctoral journey

More blue-sky research?

Increased efficiency and effectiveness

Financially less demanding publishing

but also

Doctoral education will lag behind all the changes

An alarm to quickly do all kinds of changes and adjustments on a national level

The same on institutional level

How those changes will affect supervisors?

Could things be repaired?



Thank you



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