

## Supervisor Enhancement Workshop (SEW) Policy

RDSC\_05 recommendation 03/2014

*All staff who supervise, or seek to be eligible to supervise, graduate research degree students are required to attend a Supervisor Enhancement Workshop (SEW) once every 4 years to maintain their supervisor registration status.*

### Preamble

Most Australian universities operate a program of supervisor workshops that is compulsory for all supervisors over some specified recurrent time interval, and seeks to ensure that they are familiar with university policies and procedures that surround candidature management (since these change from time to time), as well as provides professional development for them as supervisors. Murdoch requires newly appointed ECR academic staff to undertake a supervisor training program (the Enhancing Postgraduate Supervision course; EPS) during their probationary period, but there are no professional development requirements for other academic staff in relation to their role as supervisors.

The current Graduate Research Degree Regulations (reg. 21) state that supervisors must comply with the Australian *Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research*. Item 3.1 of that Code requires that supervisors be 'appropriately trained'. The Australian and New Zealand Deans and Directors of Graduate Studies (DDOGS) *Good Practise Principles* also identify 'appropriate supervisor development' as a normal expectation in relation to HDR supervision. On these bases, Murdoch University is introducing a half-day professional development workshop which must be completed at least once every 4 years for supervisors to maintain their registration as eligible to supervise.

The supervisor enhancement workshop (SEW) seeks to ensure best practise in supervision of graduate research degree (GRD) candidates by providing policy and procedure updates and introducing new information and ideas pertaining to GRD supervision at Murdoch University including:

- knowing the relevant policy frameworks and requirements for graduate supervision
- monitoring the quality of research in progress and facilitating timely completion
- responding to challenging situations
- assisting graduates to develop transferable skills and prepare for their careers

Staff who have completed the Enhancing Postgraduate Supervision (EPS) course as a requirement of their progression from probationary to continuing appointment will be registered for 4 years from the year of completion of EPS. There-after, they will be required to attend the SEW program once every 4 years to maintain registration as a supervisor.

The SEW program will be offered as a half-day seminar (3 hours), delivered in face-to-face mode on a number of repeat occasions each year to ensure maximum availability to staff.

As these workshops are a requirement for maintaining supervisor registration (Graduate Research Office approval to act as a Supervisor), completion will be recorded, and staff will be notified early in the year in which they are required to complete the Workshop program again.

## **Program Implementation**

Supervisor Registration will commence from March 1<sup>st</sup> 2015, with the first round of workshops to be offered in November, 2014. Given the logistical impossibility of getting all staff registered by early 2015, and the problem that this would cause in terms of all staff then falling due for renewal in the same future year, a staged approach to registration is planned:

1. All staff who are not eligible to act as a Principal Supervisor, and have not completed the EPS program, should attend the Workshop for registration covering the period 2015-2018 inclusive.
2. All staff who are eligible to act as a Principal Supervisor, but have not completed the EPS program should attend the Workshop some time in 2015 for registration covering the period 2016 - 2019 inclusive.
3. All staff who have completed the EPS program for new staff, or are currently undertaking that program, should attend the Workshop in the calendar year 4 years after completion of EPS (and every 4 years there-after). If the EPS was completed more than 4 years ago, you should attend your first refresher program before the end of 2015.
4. All new staff must complete the EPS, or if exempted from such, then must complete the SEW program during their first year at Murdoch.
5. Staff leaving the University at or before the end of 2015 are not required to complete the workshop program, but are welcome to do so.

For new staff exempted from EPS as described in 4 above – must complete SEW in the first calendar year of appointment.

\*NB: staff refers to academic and research staff who are expected as a part of their job to supervise GRD candidates. At this time it is not mandatory for external supervisors to meet the Supervisor registration requirement. However, they are welcome to attend.

### **Useful resources:**

Luca, J. & Wolski, T. (2012). Higher degree research training excellence: A good practice framework. Office for Learning and Teaching. Retrieved 28/1/2014 from;  
<http://www.olt.gov.au/project-best-practice-framework-inform-and-guide-higher-degree-research-training-excellence-australia>

Office for Learning and Teaching. (2012). *Supervision of higher degree by research students: Supervisor resource book*. Retrieved 28/1/2014  
from: <http://www.google.com.au/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&>