Quick Guide
Moodle Supervising Doctoral Studies resources

Why it matters...

High quality supervision is a key factor in postgraduate research student progress, timely submission, success and satisfaction.

It is important that all of our supervisors of postgraduate research (PGR) students are engaged with current best practice and able to reflect on their own supervisory practice, ensuring excellence in supervision.

The University of Essex greatly values the contribution made by PGR students to the intellectual life of the University. Doctoral students play a very important role in enhancing the research environment at the University, both in specific Departments and more widely within and across Faculties.

To ensure that we continue to properly support our research students, we agreed to be one of the first universities to take part in the development of an online set of resources by Epigeum, to enhance the practice of supervising PGR students.

In addition to the face to face training offer, the online course provides excellent guidance for those new to supervising research students and is an equally rich resource for the experienced supervisor.

We have embedded our own guidelines within this resource so that we are able to benefit from a set of resources that takes full account of what we expect to provide for our students, while at the same time drawing on insights from experienced academics across the globe.

How it works

What do I need to do?

There are three pathways through the Moodle resource and you should select the one that is most relevant to you based on your experience of supervising PGR students.

- New to supervision – choose this route if you are new to supervising PGR students
- New to supervision at Essex – choose this route if you have some training in PGR supervision or you have more experience but are new to supervising at Essex
- Experienced supervisor – choose this route to check you are up to date with the relevant rules, regulations, policies and good practice.

Contact your Graduate Director for further support. Supervising Doctoral Studies Moodle home page
Getting started

You can access the Moodle resource by following the link on the previous page or by searching Moodle for ‘supervision’.

Select the pathway that is most relevant to your experience.

Start with the Course Overview which will explain how to approach the course dependent upon your supervisory experience.

This section also contains links to a downloadable pdf booklet which contains all the material specific to Essex.

What does the course contain?

The course is divided into three sections:

1. Getting started
   • Introduction
   • Approaching supervision
   • Setting the candidate on the right course
2. Making Progress
   • Managing the candidate’s progress
   • Issues in supervision
3. Looking Forward
   • Preparing for submission
   • Attracting and selecting doctoral candidates
   • Continuing supervisory development

Each of these sections is divided into Epigeum units, Essex FAQs and external links to further relevant information.

The Epigeum units focus on developing the general skills you require to supervise effectively. The Essex FAQs have been developed solely by the University of Essex. They contain up to date information about the University’s rules, regulations and policies relating to supervising doctoral candidates. Throughout the resources the term ‘candidate’ refers specifically to PGR students.

When do I need to do it?

Those new to supervision are required to complete all of the Epigeum units and all of the Essex FAQ sections within a full academic year. You may also wish to complement the online training by booking face to face Joint Supervision training. This can be done through HROrganiser by searching for ‘supervision’.

Those new to Essex or with some supervisory experience are required to work through all of the Essex FAQ sections within your first academic year as an Essex supervisor and are free to dip into the Epigeum units as required. Again you may wish to complement the online resources with face to face training.

If you are an experienced supervisor familiar with the rules and regulations of supervision at Essex, you are only required to work your way through the refresher quiz within the next full academic year. The Epigeum and Essex FAQ sections can be utilised for a refresher if you find you are unsure of any aspects of supervision identified in the quiz.

All supervisors must ensure excellence in supervision by using the refresher quiz every three years to remain up to date with all aspects and requirements of providing effective supervision.

Each Moodle pathway also contains a forum where you can post questions and engage in discussions with your peers who have similar levels of supervisory experience.

Book face to face supervisor training through HROrganiser by searching for ‘supervision’