

TRACKING POSTGRADUATE SUPERVISION: ROLE PERCEPTION RATING SCALE (RPRS)

Read each pair of statements listed on this sheet. Each expresses a standpoint supervisors and students may take. However, you may not agree fully with either of the statements. Please estimate your position and mark it on the scale. For example, if you believe very strongly that supervisors should select the research topic you would circle '1' on scale 1; if you believe that is a student prerogative, you would circle '5'. If you think it is a shared negotiated responsibility, circle '3'. You should be particularly looking for patterns (e.g. a tendency to 1s or 5s) which indicate strong disagreement between student and supervisor. This would form the basis for negotiation. However, it is important to remember that there is no 'right' answer – these are expectations!

Student name:

Supervisor/s names:

Stage of Candidature:

Topic/course of study			
1.	It is a supervisor's responsibility to select a promising topic.	1 2 3 4 5	It is a student's responsibility to select a promising topic.
2.	In the end, it is up to the supervisor to decide the interpretation.	1 2 3 4 5	A student has a right to interpret results in a way that disagrees with their supervisor.
3.	A supervisor should direct a student in the development of an appropriate program of research and study.	1 2 3 4 5	A student should be able to work out a schedule and research program appropriate to his/her needs.
4.	A supervisor should ensure that a student has access to all necessary facilities.	1 2 3 4 5	Ultimately, the student must find the necessary facilities to complete his/her research.
5.	The supervisor should teach all required skills.	1 2 3 4 5	The student should seek new skills independently.
Contact/Involvement			
6.	Supervisor-student relationships should be purely professional.	1 2 3 4 5	Being able to talk informally with your supervisor is essential for successful supervision.
7.	A supervisor should initiate frequent meetings with a student.	1 2 3 4 5	A student should initiate meetings.

8.	A student may knock on the supervisor's door anytime.	1 2 3 4 5	A student should only ask questions during scheduled meetings with the supervisor.
9.	A supervisor should check constantly that a student is on track and working consistently.	1 2 3 4 5	Students should work independently and not have to account for how they spend their time.
10.	It is the supervisor's responsibility to ensure that the student doesn't burn out.	1 2 3 4 5	Students should work as much time as possible and manage their working hours themselves.
11.	A supervisor should help the student on the academic career path.	1 2 3 4 5	The student has to take initiative to progress on the academic career path.
12.	A supervisor should terminate the candidature if she/he thinks a student will not succeed.	1 2 3 4 5	A supervisor should support the student regardless of his/her opinion of the student's capability
The Thesis			
13.	A supervisor should ensure that the thesis is finished within the time limit.	1 2 3 4 5	As long as the student works steadily she/he can take as long as she/he needs to finish the work
14.	A supervisor has direct responsibility for the methodology and content of the thesis.	1 2 3 4 5	A student has total responsibility for ensuring that the methodology and content are appropriate to the discipline.
15.	A supervisor should assist in the actual writing of the thesis if the student has difficulties, and should ensure that the presentation is flawless.	1 2 3 4 5	A student must take full responsibility for presentation of the thesis, including grammar and spelling.
16.	A supervisor should insist on seeing drafts of every section of the thesis in order to review them in a timely fashion.	1 2 3 4 5	It is up to a student to ask for constructive criticism from a supervisor.
17.	A supervisor should decide whether to publish the thesis work.	1 2 3 4 5	It is up to a student to decide whether the work is publishable.

(Ryan & Whittle, 1995, adapted from Moses, 1985; revised after discussion during the workshop "Successful Student Supervision", organised by the Nordic Network for Early Career Researchers in Astrophysics)