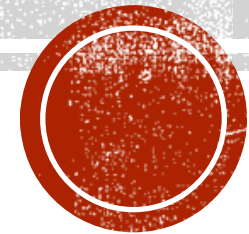




10 TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL PHD SUPERVISION

Professor Sue Franklin



MY FAVOURITE 'HOW TO' BOOK:

- Rowena Murray (2017) How to write a thesis (4th Edition). Open University Press
- Also lots of information on University Web-sites
- Check out Oxford Learning Institute (I have downloaded some documents)



1. SET CLEAR EXPECTATIONS WITH YOUR SUPERVISOR

- Many different ways to supervise
- You and your supervisor may have different ideas
- Need to agree on how it is going to work
- Not rigid – at different points in the PhD might need to meet more or less often?
- *If having difficulty might look at 'expectations in supervision' scale*



2. HAVE MORE THAN ONE SUPERVISOR

- Essential because
 - If you have problems with your supervisor
 - If your supervisor goes away
- Also may bring something different
- BUT
- Difficult if they do not agree or give you conflicting feedback



3. READ THE REGULATIONS

- Do not wait and read the regulations just before your viva!
 - Can you do thesis by publication, or only by dissertation?
 - Can you use work where you have not been the sole author?
 - What are the timelines for submission?
 - What are the progression rules?
 - If it is a structured PhD, do you want to get some exemptions (when is the deadline)?



4. KEEP A RECORD

- A PhD is a great big piece of work and you will never remember all the decisions you make along the way
- Keep a record of
 - supervisory meetings
 - how you do things



5. MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR LITERATURE REVIEW

- Publish your literature review
- Reading papers for your literature is a great education in the methodologies, analyses and writing style you are going to be using in your research



6. MAKE YOURSELF WRITE

- Just write something
- Write something everyday
- Join a writing group



7. PLAN WHEN TO GET FEEDBACK ON YOUR WRITING

- When working on a chapter or paper, you need feedback
- BUT your supervisor does not want to see the same piece of work multiple times
- So discuss content first
- Try and do a few drafts before you give it to your supervisor
- Then agree at what stages the supervisor will look at it again
- And remember your supervisor has other stuff to do!



8. GET SUPPORT FROM OTHER STUDENTS

- Some students work in teams, others on single projects
- But you need the support of other students
- Set up a group – you don't need to be working in a similar area – you have the process in common
- Be supportive not competitive



9. NEVER BE AFRAID TO NETWORK

- Even the 'top' people in your area like to be told their work has impressed you!
- Tell them so at conferences or email or tweet about a particular paper.
- If they are interested they will ask about your work and you have the beginnings of a network.
- If they are not interested – so what?



10 DO AT LEAST ONE, IF NOT TWO MOCK-VIVAS

- As for any interview, you need to practice answering questions about your work
- Your supervisor should be doing this throughout your PhD
- But you need to practice answering questions on your PhD when it is finished – it really concentrates the mind!



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