**FASS Checklist for Working Relationship between Thesis Advisor(s) and Research Student**

This Checklist is to facilitate a clear written document on the respective roles, duties and obligations of thesis advisors and research students, so as to avoid misunderstanding or a mismatch of expectations between the parties concerned. The document is to be worked out and agreed to by the thesis advisor/joint thesis advisors and the student from the inception of the supervisory relationship. The initial meeting between the student and the thesis advisor(s) should be arranged as soon as possible upon the assignment of the student to the thesis advisor.

The original written document duly signed between the thesis advisor/joint thesis advisors and student has to be deposited with the relevant departmental administrator, with the thesis advisor(s) and student each given a copy. It is the responsibility of the thesis advisor, or primary thesis advisor in the case of joint supervision, to arrange for the original and copies of the document to be given to the respective parties.

1. **Appointment of Thesis advisor(s)**

**Broad Outline of Research Topic**

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**Student: I am agreeable to the appointment of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ as thesis advisor for the topic listed above and understand that any request for change of thesis advisor must be addressed through the department graduate coordinator(s) to the Head of Department, and must be accompanied by explanatory reasons.**

**Thesis advisor: I agree to supervise \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ as a candidate for the degree of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ on the topic listed above and understand that any request for change of thesis advisor must be addressed through the department graduate coordinator(s) to the Head of Department, and must be accompanied by explanatory reasons.**

It is the responsibility of the department to allocate supervision responsibilities. Where appropriate and feasible, the allocation process should be guided by the principle of freedom of choice, and of willing participants to the thesis advisor-student relationship.

Thesis advisors are appointed by the Head of Department, on advice from department graduate coordinator(s), taking into account factors such as research expertise, willingness to supervise, and work-load considerations.

1. **Supervision Contact Session**

**We agree to meet for a minimum of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ sessions over each semester until the submission of the thesis.**

Departments may wish to specify the minimum number of hours that full-time/part-time students are normally expected to meet with their thesis advisors every week during the term, until the submission deadline.

These expectations indicate the overall amounts of guidance and interaction that thesis advisors should expect to offer and that students should expect to receive in the course of the thesis research.

Students are advised to work out the details of supervision arrangements with their thesis advisor(s). In the interests of mutual courtesy and respect, students should keep in mind that members of staff supervise several students concurrently, in addition to their teaching, research, and administrative commitments.

1. **Duties and Responsibilities in the Writing of Theses**

**Student: I agree that it is my responsibility to write the thesis, maintain regular contact with the thesis advisor(s) and ensure that my research work keeps to the agreed schedule of work.**

**Thesis advisor: I agree that it is my responsibility to offer adequate supervision and guidance in the research topic and to provide timely feedback on any written work submitted by the candidate at each point of the agreed schedule.**

Example of an Agreed Schedule of Work (to be tailored according to specific discipline’s requirements)

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **S/N.** | **Work to be done** | **Tentative dates of completion of work** |
| **1.**  | **Review of Literature** |  |
| **2.**  | **Data collection/ Field work** |  |
| **3.**  | **Analysis of results/Writing** |  |
| **4.**  | **Completed first draft** |  |
| **5.**  | **Submission of final draft** |  |

Students are advised to prepare a realistic time-line in consultation with her/him, and ensure that research work keeps to the schedule agreed upon between thesis advisor and student. Students are expected to work on a regular basis, and should not expect the thesis advisor(s) to accommodate last minute reading of drafts or discussions. Thesis advisors will provide academic guidance; warn about weaknesses in design, shaky arguments, poor organization and expression, and so on. However, it is not the responsibility of the thesis advisor to do extensive or elaborate correction, keep track of deadlines, or ensure timely work on the student’s part. Ensuring these is the responsibility of the student.

1. **Academic Integrity and Plagiarism**

**Student: I have read the Faculty guidelines and warning on plagiarism and agree that it is unethical to submit a thesis which contains plagiarized materials. The thesis is expected to reflect my true competence in every way and that the duties of the thesis advisor do not extend to the rewriting (for style, language or otherwise) of my thesis.**

**(Where applicable) I have also read the department’s ethical guidelines for research involving human subjects.**

**Thesis advisor: I confirm that the student has been given a copy and has read the Faculty guidelines and warning on plagiarism and undertake to inform and explain to the student on what constitutes plagiarism. (Where applicable) I have also given the student a copy of the department’s ethical guidelines for research involving human subjects.**

Integrity in research is expected of each graduate student. The Thesis advisor should ensure that each graduate student is given a copy of the guidelines and warning on academic plagiarism. It is the duty of students to carefully read the guidelines on plagiarism. Thesis advisors are expected to apprise their students of what the Department regards as academic plagiarism, and how to avoid it

1. **Work Obligations and Part-time Employment of Research Students**

**Student: I agree to abide by current Faculty procedures and guidelines concerning work obligations and part-time employment.**

**Thesis advisor: I have read and confirm that the student has been given a copy of the Faculty procedures and guidelines concerning work obligations and part-time employment.**

Departments should make known to students and thesis advisors, the Faculty’s policy and guidelines on work obligations and part-time employment by research scholars and other graduate students.

1. **Research Publication Credit and Order of Attribution**

**Thesis advisor & Student: We agree that the rule of proportionality should be applied in determining the order of authorship credit in joint publications so that the party responsible for undertaking the greater part of the work should be listed first**.

In generalcredit for joint authorship between thesis advisor and student should follow ordinary notions of fairness, and should always reflect the relative weight of the contribution of the authors**.** Thesis advisors should not be entitled to claim first authorship merely by virtue of their having pioneered a particular field of research.

1. **Resolution of Conflicts**

**Thesis advisor & Student: We are aware of the avenues opened for resolution of conflicts in the department and will undertake to follow the procedures laid down.**

Departments must have clear written guidelines on the proper procedure to follow in the event of a dispute. Full information should be provided to students as to where they may seek advice, help or counseling. In general, any difficulties encountered by student’s in getting adequate supervision should be referred in the first instance, to the department graduate coordinator(s), and then to the Head of Department. Any warnings, anxieties, or problems concerning research work that a thesis advisor may have about specific aspects of a student’s research work, or issues of academic integrity, should be also made known as early as possible to the graduate coordinator. It is expected that any problem encountered in the thesis advisor-student relation will be addressed by all parties concerned in a mature, temperate and civilized manner.

**Name of Thesis advisor(s) Signature and Date**

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**Name of Student Signature and Date**

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