**Queen’s University Belfast**

# Further Guidance on the Composition of Supervisory Teams

This table should be read in conjunction with the [Study Regulations for Research Degree Programmes (5.1 Supervision)](https://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/AcademicStudentAffairs/AcademicAffairs/GeneralRegulations/StudyRegulations/StudyRegulationsforResearchDegreeProgrammes/#d.en.717767).

Every member of the supervisory team must meet the criteria for appointment set out in [regulation 5.1.3](https://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/AcademicStudentAffairs/AcademicAffairs/GeneralRegulations/StudyRegulations/StudyRegulationsforResearchDegreeProgrammes/#d.en.717767). A team must comprise two supervisors: a principal supervisor and a second or co-supervisor.

Eligibility for **principal supervisor** is set out in [regulation 5.1.7](https://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/AcademicStudentAffairs/AcademicAffairs/GeneralRegulations/Academic/StudyRegulations/StudyRegulationsforResearchDegreeProgrammes/#d.en.3013786). All students must have a named principal supervisor, even if they have a co-supervisor.

Eligibility for **second or co-supervisors** is set out in [regulation 5.1.12](https://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/AcademicStudentAffairs/AcademicAffairs/GeneralRegulations/Academic/StudyRegulations/StudyRegulationsforResearchDegreeProgrammes/#d.en.3013786). The second or co-supervisor may, if appropriate, be from a different School (or external institution, for recognised supervisors) to the one in which the student is carrying out the research.

A **third** supervisor who may be internal or external to the University, may be appointed where a student’s research is interdisciplinary or would benefit from external input. A concession request is not required for this appointment.

Students should not have more than three supervisors at any one time, unless necessary to meet the requirements of an approved collaborative research degree agreement.

The Head of School (or nominee) is responsible for staff within the School and will normally appoint the supervisory team to a particular student upon their acceptance of a place on the RDP. The School will consider and appoint the most appropriate supervisory team to supervise the research project.

## Table 1: Composition of Supervisory Teams

| **Supervisor 1 (mandatory)** | **Supervisor 2 (mandatory)** | **Supervisor 3 (optional\*)** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Principal Supervisor | Second Supervisor |  |
| Principal Supervisor | Co-Supervisor |  |
| Principal Supervisor | Second/Co-Supervisor | Third internal supervisor |
| Principal Supervisor | Second/Co-Supervisor | Third external supervisor |
| Principal Supervisor (partner of Second/Co-Supervisor) | Second/Co-Supervisor (partner of Principal Supervisor) | \*Third internal supervisor (a senior academic with significant RDP experience whose role will specifically be to facilitate project progression and appropriate supervision. See Code of Practice for RDPs, Supervision.) |
| Principal Supervisor (on probation)  | Second or co-supervisor (senior academic (at senior lecturer level or above) with experience of successfully supervising at least two doctoral students through to completion as principal supervisor) |  |
| Principal Supervisor | Honorary Title holder |  |
| Principal Supervisor | Recognised Supervisor under an approved collaborative research degree agreement |  |
| Principal Supervisor (on probation)  | Second or co-supervisor (senior academic (at senior lecturer level or above) with experience of successfully supervising at least two doctoral students through to completion as principal supervisor) | Recognised Supervisor under an approved collaborative research degree agreement |

\*Third supervisor is mandatory in this type of team composition

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Internal member of QUB staff  |
|  | Persons external to QUB |

**Second Supervisors External to Queen’s**

As per Table 1, persons external to Queen’s may only be appointed as a second supervisor if:

* They are an [Honorary Title holder](https://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/AcademicStudentAffairs/AcademicAffairs/HonoraryTitles/HonoraryTitlesCategories/), or;
* They are a [Recognised Supervisor](https://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/AcademicStudentAffairs/AcademicAffairs/CollaborativeArrangements/RecognisedTeachersSupervisors/) under an approved collaborative research degree (i.e. a formal arrangement of joint supervision, at PhD level, by a Queen’s academic and a member of staff from another partner organisation).

**Appointment of Other External Supervisors**

Any other persons external to Queen’s may be considered for appointment as a third, external supervisor, providing they meet the criteria for appointment set out in [regulation 5.1.3](https://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/AcademicStudentAffairs/AcademicAffairs/GeneralRegulations/StudyRegulations/StudyRegulationsforResearchDegreeProgrammes/#d.en.717767).

The appointment of external supervisors is managed at School-level. They may be approved by the Head of School or the SPRC, providing they meet the criteria for appointment ([regulation 5.1.3](https://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/AcademicStudentAffairs/AcademicAffairs/GeneralRegulations/StudyRegulations/StudyRegulationsforResearchDegreeProgrammes/#d.en.717767)).

The following steps are advised once an external supervisor is appointed:

* A formal communication should be sent to the external supervisor to confirm the appointment, provide an overview of their anticipated role in the project (will vary) and a link to the University’s regulations and any relevant School documentation.
* External supervisors should be attached to the student’s record on the Research Student Lifecycle (RSL). To do this, they should be added to the Additional Persons Database (APD) as an External Researcher. QSIS Support should be advised of the external supervisor’s ID number from the APD to add them to the QSIS database. Once they have been added to QSIS, the School can attach the external supervisor to the student’s record.
* External supervisors may also complete University’s training course for supervisors. The School should email the Graduate School to let them know if training is required.