Gathering of Evidence and Development of a European Supervision and Training Charter

Edited by Tim Brown

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Summary

This report intends to summarise the activity of the Eurodoc Supervision and Training workgroup since its inception through to September 2004 so that it can be a used as a public reference of information from the perspective of early stage researchers across Europe. The report has two main stages in terms of what information has been gathered by delegates and other contacts of Eurodoc but also the development of an early stage researchers charter. The intention of this charter is to present to appropriate bodies within the European Research Area and Human Resources and Mobility the needs and interests of early stage researchers in order to move towards setting minimum expectations of supervision and training. A number of individuals within Eurodoc have provided summaries or translations of national standards for research degrees that exist within their own countries. The individuals who have provided such information are acknowledged.

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Gathering of Evidence

Between 2002 and 2004, the Supervision and Training group of Eurodoc has held workshop meetings at the 2002, 2003 and 2004 conferences. Further to this it has set up an email list, eurodoc-supervision-training@yahoogroups.com, through which its contacts have been exchanging information. The email list currently holds over 30 members with around 15 countries represented. Through much discussion over the email list, from 2003 information has been gradually gathered over time through exchange of information but also from the annual Eurodoc questionnaires that are completed by delegates and observers from their respective countries. The majority of these representatives are active early stage researchers.

The ultimate aim of the workgroup to its present date has been to draw together a consensus on supervision and training standards in higher education. A presentation given by May-May Meijer from the Dutch representative body of Early Stage Researchers, *Promovendi Netwerk Nederland*, presented an article in 2003, "Nourish Talent!" [1]. This presentation expressed the increasing pressure on Dutch early stage researchers that were delaying their progress and there was little opportunity to speak against the problems due to the expectation that supervisors are professionals who should not have their integrity questioned. Apostolis Dimitropolous, from the Greek Ministry of Education presented in 2004 in a personal capacity regarding supervision and training. The main focus of his presentation was the need for a transition in the delivery of doctoral programmes in terms of cultural expectations, funding available, staff to ESR ratio in order to allow accountability in how things operate to improve completion rates. Facilitating this will come from more expanded graduate schools, training and seminars and peer review. There is a call for research to assess the effects of research training, which can be disseminated Europe wide and evaluated to justify funding. In conclusion, Apostolis saw a need to problematise, by finding the needs and difficulties which arise that will change policy and set the challenge to make radical change. There is little recognition across Europe for introducing standards that can be recognised universally to enable researchers to relate to the practices of supervisors and academic institutions or industry wherever they are mobilised to. Therefore the supervision and training workgroup undertook to investigate what standards exist in individual countries as well as what the expectations of researchers were within those countries. The intention beyond that was then to produce a charter to identify common standards across Europe. Appendix 1 and 2 help to identify the information gathered and also the subsequent charter that was produced which the next section will comment on further.

Commentary of the Results

By analysis of the results in appendix 1, there are a number of individual points to compare including completion rates, the perceptions of supervisors within different countries and also the key issues arising from points raised by members and contacts within Eurodoc. Information has been obtained for 20 countries through responses to questionnaires taken to conferences and available publications such as Science Nextwave Eurodoc Exchange [2]. The individual aspects of information obtained are dealt with one by one.

Completion Rates

In the majority of cases, the information claims that PhDs are allocated 3 or 4 years in terms of funding or registration although it is usually the case that most are completed up to a year beyond the deadline. There are, however, exceptions such as the case of The Netherlands where a PhD is seen as a "lifelong project" where it is taking in the region of as many as 10 years. It is evident that successful completion within the allocated time is limited and the duration in a number of cases is unnecessarily long.

Perception of Supervisors

By looking at column 2, following much discussion around the subject, it was found that in different European languages the literal meaning of their word for "supervisor" had a wide range of meanings. They could be a promoter, director, guide, instructor or "Dr Father", while other meanings were a relator or mentor. In these different meanings, they can have some significant impact on what the actual role of the supervisor is seen or expected to be. In some instances it could be that they are actively guiding the early stage researcher through their research, while other meanings could imply they are there to only advise when they are called upon. Few of them adopt the idea that the supervisor has a role in identifying what training needs the early stage researcher has and how they can ensure they are met. This has some significant impact in terms of imposing expectations on supervisors to assist in training and developing their early stage researchers. There is little doubt, however, that a supervisor will be expected to have expertise in the subject area and be seen as an expert from which an early stage researcher can draw supporting information.

National Regulations

As can be seen in appendix 1, some countries have supplied summaries or translations of their national regulations for research degree programmes, where references to or links to some national regulations are provided. By analysing national regulations from countries it is evident that there is only a focus on the standard of a doctoral degree, the examination process, admissions procedures and the need for a supervisor should there be any regulations.

Only the UK and France appear to have produced any regulations with further details regarding the standard of supervision or the training of early stage researchers. In the UK there is a code of practice for research degree programmes with much detail and attention to supervision and training. In

France there is a researchers charter that gives detail to both issues with the supervisor playing an important role in developing the career of the early stage researcher.

It is quite clear from standards in both the UK and France that the supervisor is expected to have expertise in the given field and provide an appropriate analytical critique of progress made by the early stage researcher. At the same time the early stage researcher has the role of setting the agenda for their research and initiating further ideas in the project under the guidance of their supervisor.

In both countries, the supervisor and early stage researcher should discuss the training needs of the early stage researcher and ensure that the appropriate training is an integral part of the early stage researcher's progress.

Early Stage Researcher Needs

The early stage researcher needs put lack of contact time with the supervisor as a high priority with supervisor workload often preventing access to the regular meetings they require. There are some such as France who see the requirements set by the charter as helpful to ensure the early stage researcher has a safeguard by which they can demand the expectation of a minimum number of contact hours. The other most popular aspect from a number of countries was the status as employees and their importance in contributing to the research while having the appropriate rights that experienced researchers also get as employed researchers.

Other aspects included intellectual property rights, variable quality of supervision between different supervisors and also the workload on early stage researchers having to carry out side tasks irrelevant to their research.

Training

A number of countries expressed the lack of availability of training as well as the need to make any training on offer more suited to the needs and interests of an early stage researcher. A strong response was also expressed by many that the supervisor should also receive training through which they would be able to ensure the training needs of early stage researchers are met.

Admissions

In some cases there was rigid legislation on admissions to ensure early stage researchers were not led onto unsuitable programmes while others have extremely ad hoc internal procedures.

Complaints and Feedback Mechanisms

In some countries these were often internal with no guidelines where as others do have guidelines on complaints and feedback. However, there may not be a great deal of advice on resolutions of complaints, which can often lead to a dead end in many circumstances. Others further expressed the problem of supervision being difficult to complain about because there is not the provision of someone impartial who is able to assist in dealing with matters between the early stage researcher and the supervisor where any conflict arises.

Review Procedure

Many of the review procedures concentrate on departmental review or regular progress reports often implemented on an internal basis. The feeling generally was that the review methods did not provide any assistance in identifying progress or monitoring the training of the early stage researcher but created much unnecessary paperwork.

Development of the Charter

Having collected information regarding the needs of early stage researchers a charter was drafted and put together for discussion at the 2004 Eurodoc conference as well as over the supervision and training group email list where several revisions were brought out before the final version.

The important aspect of the charter is that it is setting the standards on as abstract a level as possible to bring in appropriate minimum expectations that can be appropriately implemented into each country's structure of governance and academic activity. This will vary depending on how the early stage researcher is funded or within what environment they are carrying out their research be it academia or industry.

At the foundation of the charter, the role of the supervisor and the early stage researcher is defined, where the supervisor is there to guide and direct as an expert in the field where as the early stage researcher will carry out the research and pursue their own initiatives to agree on their progress regularly with their supervisor. One aspect where both the early stage researcher and the supervisor play an important role is to discuss the training needs of the early stage researcher and ensure that appropriate training provision is made with regular update on its effectiveness.

For the supervisor and early stage researcher to fulfil those roles, the need for training of supervisors, balanced workload with regular contact time, appropriate appointment of supervisors and formal planning will all be integral into that process. In addition to this, the need for ensuring the early stage researcher was not overburdened with other workload and had provision of the necessary equipment where applicable was of vital importance.

To support both supervision and training, regular review was seen as important not only to ensure good communication was happening but also to reflect on the training needs of the early stage researcher and give evidence of progress throughout. Also where things go wrong, the need for structured feedback and the right to complain to an impartial person who can resolve disputes early on between the supervisor and early stage researcher is essential.

Finally the training has been listed as complimentary training so that it is not confused with the scientific training that takes place in some countries. This includes training in undertaking research, teaching along with a number of other skills a researcher will need to acquire while undertaking their research. At the same time other broader generic skills suited to their employability beyond their doctorate are of vital importance so that they are able to apply what they have achieved and gain breadth in their abilities. It is important however, that it is noted training is closely monitored between the supervisor and early stage researcher so that they are undertaking the training that will benefit them at their current stage and that they are able to demonstrate competence in skills they have attained.

References

1. M. Meijer, "Nourish Talent!", 5th April 2002, *Science Nextwave Magazine*, http://nextwave.sciencemag.org/cgi/content/full/2002/04/04/4?
2. Eurodoc Exchange, *Science Nextwave*, http://nextwave.sciencemag.org/feature/eurodocexchange.shtml

Appendix 1 – Investigation of Supervision and Training Standards in Europe

In the following table, information has been brought together from national associations and other contacts who are within countries currently affiliated to or linked with Eurodoc activity. The chart aims to compare what standards for supervision and training exist (with further notes below of any translations or summaries of national standards), the literal meaning of a supervisor (which contrasts between different countries). Blank spaces have been left where the information is not known. As well as information, information has also been conveyed from Eurodoc's contacts regarding key issues around supervision, training, progress review and complaints mechanisms.

Country	Average Completion Years/Allocated Time	Supervisor Role – literal meaning	Regulations	Early Stage Researcher needs	Training	Admissions	Complaints Procedure / Feedback Mechanisms	Review Methods
Belgium	5.5 / 4	Director (French) Promoter (Flemish)	No national level charter, but some institutions have charter implemented [8]					
Denmark	3-3.5 or 4-4.5 / 3 or 4	Show/guide the way/direction.	Standard on supervisory teams, to ensure transparency. Requirements to undertake training courses, research abroad and teaching duties [9]. Summary attached – see note 1.		Already has some significant training programmes and supervisor training.		Often set up internally but no guidelines.	Regular reports on progress kept mid way and also every 6 months.
Estonia	4.6 / 4	Instructor / Guide	Informal regulations, at the discretion of the institution	Need status of employee, no supervision with enough research active academics	Little or no training available or suitable guidelines	Admission standards very departmental.	Procedures do formally exist, but not necessarily with resolutions.	Reviewed at departmental level, presentation and progress report.
France	4 / 3	Director	Charter has been	The charter	Training	Standards	Charter	Progress

			produced [1] for rights and responsibility of student and supervisor, also has been implemented largely [2]. Translated version attached – see note 2.	has helped to gain rights needed. Need for balance of ESRs per supervisor and contact time.	courses Pre-PhD for those into academic work and also those business led. Has limited availability and they need to meet the needs of ESRs more directly.	and expectations are outlined	contains a conciliation procedure in section 6 [1].	review comes under section 3 of the charter [1].
Germany	4 / 3	"Doctor Father", exam leader	Very informal, great freedom with work	Need a status defined as students. Structured PhDs not so popular with institutions	Need improved mentoring	Very informal		
Greece	3-6 / 3	Supervisor	No prescriptive rules, great deal of autonomy apart from some minor points [3]	Need for better supervision standards	Need for training in research methods / process	Standards exist on admission but still limited and inconsistent		
Ireland	4 / 3	Supervisor	Nothing in place, however recommendations from Union of Students in Ireland	No standards for supervision, bad contact hours, intellectual	Overburdening of other work outside their research.			

				property rights				
Italy	3-4 / 3-4 (thesis deadlines)	Relator	Little evidence of standards	No means to evaluate supervision.	Need more treatment as researchers and privilege	Better recruitment procedure in place lately		
Lithuania			Some national standards [10].	Supervision varies, often better when part of a project	Difficult circumstances, often all is just on paper, not in practice	Recruitment procedures appear ad-hoc.		
Norway		Show/guide the way/direction.	No national standards, largely internal initiatives	Varying frequency and load of supervision. Contact time limited.	Lack of uptake of supervisors receiving training.			
Poland	5 / 4	Promoter	Polish act of academic title and academic degrees. Details attached – see note 3.					
Portugal	5 / 4	Orientator	Only regulations on entry requirements and need to submit plans prior to undertaking research.	Supervisory workload a problem.	Bad infrastructure, particularly for sciences. Plans are very vague.	Planning to introduce a training programme.		
Russia			Varying standards according to		Lack of orientation or literature			

			differing subjects [11]		needed for research			
Serbia and Montenegro	Variable, allocated time not defined	Mentor	Law is available to cover but does not define duration of studies.	Better standards on supervision		Exact admission standards in existence for entry.	No evidence of procedure to complain on supervision	No evidence of review.
Slovakia	3-5 / 3	Trainer	No evidence, only limits on completion times and no clear idea of rights	Real relationship problems / contact time limited. Need status as workers				
Slovenia	5+ / 4	Mentor	Regulations being drawn by national association [12], with summary attached focus on training and incorporation of ESRs – see note 4.	Working conditions, no code of practice, or access to funds.	Nothing explicit on supervision			
Spain	4.3 / 4	Director	Need for contract to cover their rights and also standards on minimum conditions	Need employee rights and recognition as employees	Training Courses Pre-PhD are available.	Lengthy process not organised		
Sweden	6 / 4	Leader by the hand	Law on admissions, validity of	Need better introduction to PhD	Courses of many kinds (self teach	Legislation in existence on rules for	Informally a mediator may be appointed	Individual study plans are updated

			research and employment.	studies, provision of supervisor training necessary.	and classes) are provided.	admission.	to deal with disputes but not necessarily impartial.	but they don't serve often as review methods.
The Netherlands	Many Years / 4	Promoter ("encourager of movement")	No space to question supervision / training leading to high student drop out. Regulations are needed	Too much burden of PhD students on supervisors	Need to train supervisors on supervising			
UK	3.8 / 3	Supervisor	Code of practise for research degrees [4] being updated	Need more awareness of training of supervisors [6]	Need for more recommended by Roberts [5] [7]	Standards in admissions being introduced to be improved [6]	Need for feedback mechanisms and confidential complaints	Too bureaucratic, needs to help the career development of the postgraduate

References:

1. France, model charter: http://garp.univ-bpclermont.fr/CdT/Chartes/from_menrt/MENRT.html
2. Documentation of charters in France: http://garp.univ-bpclermont.fr/CdT/
3. S. Benos, "The Law 1268/82 and the following provisions for the Higher Educational Institutions," 5th edition (Benos, Athens, 1999).
4. QAA Code of Practise for Research Degrees, being updated, http://www.qaa.ac.uk/public/COP/cop/contents.htm
5. HE White Paper, http://www.dfes.gov.uk/highereducation/hestrategy/foreword.shtml
6. Standards in RDPs, http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/hefce/2003/03_23.htm
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8. Example of Belgian doctoral charter, http://www.ulb.ac.be/facs/sciences/etudes/doctorat-charte.html

9. Danish doctoral standards, http://www.videnskabsministeriet.dk/cgi-bin/doc-show.cgi?doc_id=130951&doc_type=3&markwords=phd
10. Government Resolution on the Approval of the Provisions of Doctoral studies No 908, 2002 June, 14; http://www3.lrs.lt/cgi-bin/preps2?Condition1=205433&Condition2=
11. Russia education department, www.ed.gov.ru.
12. http://www.mszs.si/slo/znanost/znanstvena_zakonodaja/pravilnik_o_usposabljanju.asp
13. New Draft QAA Code of Practice for UK:

1. Summary of standards in Denmark

1) Conduction of an independent research project under supervision (the PhD project).
2) Preparation of a written thesis based on the PhD project.
3) Completion with a satisfactory result of research courses (PhD courses), approved by the institution. The total extent of the courses must correspond to approximately 30 ECTS points.
4) Participation in research activities, including stays at other, mainly foreign, research institutions, or in similar ways.
5) Gaining teaching experience or experience in the dissemination of knowledge, directly related as far as possible to the PhD project in question.

Extract of Danish Supervision guidelines:

9. (1) In accordance with its regulations the institution shall provide for each PhD student:

1. A principal supervisor who is responsible for the full PhD study programme and who is employed by the institution, cf. subsection (2)
2. A project supervisor who is responsible for the monitoring of the PhD project. The project supervisor may be identical with the principal supervisor. If the PhD project is carried out outside the institution, the project supervisor shall normally be employed by the institution where the project is carried out.
3. Additional supervisors within the institution or elsewhere employed if considered necessary

Provided by Tine Ejdrup

2. Translation of the French Thesis Charter

The preparation of a PhD thesis is based on a freely settled agreement between the PhD candidate and his/her supervisor. The choice of a research subject and the commitment to satisfy the required working and researching conditions are the two main parts of this agreement. Therefore the supervisor and the doctoral candidate have respective rights and duties of a high level of requirement. This charter defines those mutual obligations, by reminding of the deontology which has inspired the existing regulations and the already experienced practices and by taking into account the diversity of disciplines and institutions. This charter aims at guaranteeing a high level of scientific research and methods.

The institution shall act so that the principles established by the charter should be respected during a PhD under co-supervision.

The charter is part and parcel of the registration process. Indeed, the PhD candidate, the supervisor, the head of the laboratory and the head of the doctoral school sign the text of this charter. The institution can specify it with regards to the following principles in order to settle its own doctoral training policy.

1 – The PhD, a stage in a personal and professional project.

To follow doctoral studies must be part of a personal and professional project whose goals and requirements are clearly defined. Therefore, clear objectives and clear means to implement them must be defined.

The candidate must be kept informed of the possibilities of employment concerning his/her research topics inside or outside the academic world. The doctoral school, the supervisor and the relevant services of the institution must provide the candidate with national statistics about the doctors' professional future in general, and with information about the job opportunities which have been offered to former doctors from the same laboratory. The doctoral candidate’s professional career should be defined as soon as possible.
During the four years following the achievement of the PhD, each doctor must keep his/her supervisor and the head of his/her doctoral school or the head of his/her doctoral training department informed about his/her professional situation.

The goal of a supervisor and of a head of doctoral school shall be to find fellowships for as many PhD candidates as possible. The future

supervisor and the head of the doctoral school keep the candidate informed about the potential financing to prepare a PhD (research fellowships from the state, regional fellowships, industrial fellowship, grants from not-for-profit organizations ...)

The facilitation of doctors' professional future depends on the means which are set up. Therefore, it also relies on a clear commitment from the PhD candidates. If he/ she is a member of a doctoral school, the PhD candidate must obey its regulations, including the participation to training courses, conferences or seminars.

The supervisor can suggest specific training courses to his/her PhD candidate, in order to enlarge the candidate's field of scientific competencies. These courses, recognised by the head of the doctoral school, shall enlarge the scope of his/her topic and shall facilitate his/her professional future. In parallel, it is the PhD candidate's responsibility to prepare his/her future by making contacts with potential employers (laboratories, universities, private companies in France or abroad), with the help of the doctoral school and the institution. This strategy may include the participation to the *Doctoriales*. Depending on the research fields and the laboratories, those complementary trainings can usefully include a few week stay in a private company.

2 – Research subject and feasibility of the PhD thesis.

To register for the degree of PhD implies to specify the subject, the research context and the laboratory.

The subject leads to the realization of an original and formative work which can be achieved within a scheduled delay.

The choice of the subject relies on an agreement between the PhD candidate and his/her supervisor. This agreement is formalised through registration.

The supervisor, chosen for his/her recognized deep knowledge and ability in the concerned research field, must help the PhD candidate grasp the original dimension of his/her contribution to knowledge in his/her scientific research context and must ensure of its relevance; he must also ensure that the PhD candidate shows innovation abilities.

The supervisor must define and gather the means required to carry out the research work. That is why the PhD candidate is fully integrated into the laboratory, where he/she has access to the same means as the other researchers in order to achieve his/her work

(equipments, means such as computers, documentation, opportunities to attend conferences, seminars, to present his/her work in scientific meetings, either "PhD candidate congress" or larger conferences).

Finally, the PhD candidate shall follow the defined rules related to community life in the laboratory, rules shared by the other members of the lab. He/she must also respect scientific deontology. The PhD candidate shall not be used to make up for the lack of employees and shall not be given tasks not related to his/her doctoral research.

The PhD candidate commits him/herself to work regularly on a given period of time. He/she is required to report the difficulties he has come up against and the degree of completion of his/her work to the supervisor. He/she must show initiative qualities in his/her research work.

3 - Supervision of the PhD

The future PhD candidate shall be informed about the number of PhD theses currently supervised by the researcher he/she will work with. Indeed, a supervisor is able to follow only a limited number of PhD theses at the same time if he wants to be involved enough in this work-in-progress supervision.

The PhD candidate has the right to be personally supervised since his/her supervisor has undertaken to dedicate a significant amount of time to this task. It is necessary that the initial agreement should specify the principle of frequent and regular meetings.

The PhD candidate commits him/herself to submit as many progress reports as required by his/her research subject to his/her supervisor and to present his/her work in the framework of the laboratory seminars. The supervisor commits him/herself to comment regularly on the research progress and to discuss its new orientations regarding the existing results. He/she is required to make positive remark on, or to object and review the PhD candidate’s work, for instance when the PhD thesis is to be defended.

The supervisor, in accordance with the PhD candidate, puts forward a thesis jury and a day on which the PhD is to be defended to the head of the institution, by way of the head of the doctoral school or of the doctoral training service, in respect to the institution rules. At least one third of the members of the jury shall not belong to the institution and it is desirable that it should not exceed six members. The members are chosen for their scientific abilities; the researcher

or academic members of the jury shall not have taken an active part in the research work, except for the supervisor(s).

4 - PhD duration

A PhD thesis is a stage in a research process. It should be completed within the scheduled delay, thus respecting the principles of doctoral research and the PhD candidate's interests.

It is generally considered that a PhD should be completed within three years of registration. By the end of the second year, the possible date when the PhD thesis could be defended shall be discussed with regards to the work progress. Permission to extend registration may be granted as an exception, on the motivated demand from the PhD candidate and on his/her supervisor’s advice. This agreement does not imply the automatic renewal of the funding that the PhD candidate could have benefited from until then. Financial aids can be sought, especially for PhD candidates with social difficulties. Permission to extend registration must be kept unusual. It is granted by decision of the head of the institution, on the advice of the head of the doctoral school, after an interview between the PhD candidate and his/her supervisor.

It shall be related to specific situations, such as full-time job, full-time teaching, specific subject-related difficulties, and research with a high level of risk. It must not substantially modify the nature and intensity of doctoral research, as defined in the initial agreement.

In any case, to carry out doctoral research implies the annual registration of the PhD candidate with the related institution. The PhD candidate and his/her supervisor must fulfil their commitments regarding the working time requirements so that the PhD should be completed within the scheduled delay. Recurrent violations to these commitments are the subject of a common statement between the PhD candidate and his/her supervisor, which leads to a mediation procedure.

5 - Publication and valorisation of the PhD

The quality and impact of the PhD thesis can be measured through publications, patents or industrial reports derived from the research work. This can be the PhD thesis itself or articles written during or after the PhD thesis edition. The PhD candidate must appear as one of the authors.

6 - Conciliation procedure

In case of persistent conflict between the PhD candidate and his/her supervisor or the head of the laboratory, each of the signatories of this charter can appeal to a mediator. This mediator, without removing responsibilities from anybody, listens to the parties, suggests a solution and makes it accepted by each of them, in the perspective of the PhD completion. The mediator's mission implies his/her impartiality; he/she may be chosen from the members of the management committee of the laboratory, of the doctoral school, or outside the institution.

In the event of the mediation failure, the PhD candidate or one the signatories of this charter can ask the head of the institution to nominate a mediator outside the institution, with the approval of the scientific council. Finally, one of the parties can appeal to the head of the institution.

26.02.2004
Translated by Frédéric Voisin-Demery & Apidoc

3. Polish act of academic title and degrees

The right to confer titles and degrees is only with authorised HEIs;

The State Committee of Titles and Degrees confers this authorisation on the basis of HEI's proposal. During authorisation process, the Committee takes into consideration the level of particular HEI's scientific activity, and the number of employed professors, independent researchers (called habilitated PhDs) and other academic teachers;

The PhD degree is awarded to persons, who:

A. have a MA/MSc degree (or equivalent),

B. have passed the appropriate doctoral examinations (a discipline corresponding to the subject of the doctoral thesis, an additional discipline, and a modern foreign language),

C. have submitted and successfully defended a thesis reviewed by at least two specialists.

The thesis, written under the supervision of a professor, should present the author's original solution to an scientific problem and demonstrate his/her general theoretical knowledge of the discipline and his/her ability to conduct independent research.

PhD degree is conferred by the resolution of board of the particular HEI.

Dissertation not ratified or rejected by one HEI can not be the base to submission in another HEI.

Provided by Polish Observers to Eurodoc

4. Summary of standards in Slovenia - "Regulations on training and incorporation of early stage researchers in research institutions and higher education institutions":

INTRODUCTARY PROVISIONS

- These regulations define the form of research training of early stage researchers in research institutions and higher education institutions.
- The funding is provided by the Ministry Education, Science and Sport with an intention to restore and develop research workers.
- The funding is allocated on the basis of the call for applications.
- Definition of basic conditions, which should be fulfilled by the applicant.
- Funding is offered for 4.5 years to obtain PhD.

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

- Definition of the content of the call for applications.
- Amongst other things, a frame working programme and working hypothesis (in the project form) has to be included in the application by the applicant and the host institution.

REVIEWING APPLICATIONS

- Criteria for suitability of supervisor. In addition, it is determined that single supervisor cannot supervise more than three PhD students and that he/she should be at PhD student disposal for at least two hours per week.
- Criteria for suitability of research group in which the training will take place.
- Criteria for suitability of the applicant.
- Criteria for judging the proposed research working programme.

DECISION MAKING

- The final list of approved applications is prepared by the ministry with regard to the priority list prepared by the National Science and Research Council.

IMPLEMENTATION OF FUNDING

- The status of an early stage researcher at the host institution is that of a regular employee with a fixed working time.

SHORT FORMS OF TRAINING OF EARLY STAGE RESEARCHERS ABROAD

- Short term trainings abroad (up to 1.5 years) are possible in the frame of funding.

MONITORING OF EARLY STAGE RESEARCHER'S TRAINING

- Regular (yearly or half-yearly) reports written by the supervisor have to be submitted to the ministry.

TEMPORARY AND CONCLUDING PROVISIONS

These regulations do not include training for supervisors (there is no possibility for such kind of training in Slovenia). PhD students have an opportunity to change supervisor, but the procedure is complicated and they often fear to do that, because of possible offence to the original supervisor. It is not possible to (officially) have a second supervisor. There only exist review methods for the PhD student but not for the supervisor.

Provided by Damjan Dvorsek

Appendix 2 - Supervision and Training Charter for Early Stage Researchers

Across Europe, supervision and training for Early Stage Researchers (ESRs) has a wide range of inconsistencies and varying range in standards for research degree programmes. This has some significant effect on the expectations of ESRs who are seeking to broaden their research interests within the European research community. It is therefore necessary that this charter has been put together with a coherent set of views in terms of expectations of ESRs across Europe, which all states are urged to adopt and implement as appropriate. This will help ensure common standards for ESRs who should be trained and equipped to be 21st century professional researchers, where in some European countries their status as employees is desired.

Supervision Arrangements

Role of the supervisor – The supervisor's role is to provide guidance and advice on the progress of the ESR as an expert in the field of research. It is particularly necessary to include guidance and an agreed project plan at an early stage of the research programme. Throughout the programme, the supervisor should give a critical review of progress. Another important role of the supervisor is to discuss with the ESR their training needs, agree and act upon implementation of those needs.

Role of the ESR – The ESR is responsible for undertaking the project agreed with the supervisor and also responsible to develop their own initiative in carrying out research. The ESR should also note the procedures for formal review of progress and agree with the supervisor how they will regularly report on progress. The ESR should also actively pursue the necessary training as agreed with the supervisor, and find access to provision for their training needs.

Training of supervisors – All supervisors new to the role should receive structured training and mentoring from experienced supervisors to ensure the standards expected of them are met. It is also desirable that senior academics undertake "refresher" training courses, which can be integrated into academic leadership programmes to ensure standards are still maintained.

Workload of supervisors – The workload of supervisors should be monitored so that their supervision responsibilities are feasible alongside other teaching and research duties that they may have. No supervisor should be assigned more ESRs than is feasible.

Contact time – There should be sufficient contact time available for regular communication between the ESR and members of their supervisory team. There should be up to 1 hour per week available for the ESR to meet their supervisor(s). There is particular need for time from the supervisor(s) at induction stage to ensure that arrangements and plans are finalised at an early stage in the research. Also it is necessary in the event of a change of supervision to adjust arrangements and plans appropriately.

Appointment of supervisors – It should be ensured that supervisors are appointed by formal admission procedures where by they have sufficient experience in the research topic as well as appropriate training and mentoring if they are a new supervisor.

Planning a research programme – The ESR and supervisor should agree upon a formal plan at the start and set some key objectives that will be subject to later review. It should be ensured that the project is feasible within the time frame available and that the appropriate equipment and resources will be made available for the project to be viable.

Other responsibilities of the ESR – It should be ensured that the ESR is not overburdened with other working duties including teaching and assisting undergraduate and graduate students who are undertaking relevant projects. ESRs will not be given responsibilities that are the work of other employees unless it is relevant to their research as agreed with the supervisor.

Equipment and Resources – It should be ensured by the supervisor that equipment and resources are available and accessible to the ESR to carry out their research within the required time.

Review Methods

Regular review meetings and progress reports – Regular reviews and progress reports should be maintained as evidence of progress from both the ESR and the supervisor. The progress review should also include evidence and monitoring of the ESR's personal development for their benefit while undertaking their research.

Constructive and pro-active feedback from the supervisor to be recorded – The supervisor should give analysed critique of the ESR's progress in their research as well in their personal development and give clear goals for improvement or reorganisation to rectify any matters that arise.

Sharing and dissemination amongst peers – There should be opportunity for ESRs to share and present their research to different audiences, both to other ESRs and also to other peers as appropriate to help encourage greater dissemination of their research.

Confidential and Structured Feedback Mechanisms

Structured feedback mechanisms – There should be appropriate mechanisms in place to allow feedback that is representative of ESRs in a research department. Where part time and "off site" ESRs are also involved, feedback mechanisms should also be extended where possible.

Review, action and response methods – Where feedback via the appropriate channels has been raised, any review and action should be taken and reported back. Procedure to ensure review and action has taken place should be in place.

Impartial, accessible, transparent complaints and appeals procedures – Any complaints and appeals procedures should be easily accessible and well publicised to the ESRs so that they know exactly what action to take as soon as possible should any issues occur between them and their supervisor. Where research is undertaken outside the institution, it should be ensured that the external complaints procedures are equally accessible within the external location.

Appropriate complaints procedures at local level – All complaints will in the first instance need to be made in the department or environment within which the ESR is working. Care must be taken to ensure that person(s) are appointed to deal with any complaints such that an ESR can complain to someone who does not have conflict of interests.

Institutional and external complaints to be dealt with efficiently – Where complaints are made to the institution or beyond that externally, the appropriate body to whom the ESR may petition must respond instantly with a timetable of how they intend to handle the complaint.

Complementary Training of Early Stage Researchers

Formal induction training - There should be a formal induction training programme run to inform the ESR of the terms and conditions relating to their research programme, provide the initial training they require to begin their research and the facilities they need to be aware of at departmental level, institutional level and externally. This should also incorporate a formal agreement between the supervisor and the ESR in terms of a plan of action.

Generic skills – Appropriate skills training courses should be made available to the ESR's needs for continuing professional development. Examples of this are presenting, data processing, writing and management.

Research methods – Appropriate instruction including literature reviewing, specialist courses relevant to the subject and how to begin the research process and develop a methodology.

Writing skills – Appropriate courses should be available to assist with writing theses and publications.

Networking – The need to attend conferences, forums and other means should be encouraged to allow ESRs to network with other researchers within the research community and share information.

Management and leadership – Coordinating and organising a research project to analyse information and coordinate further data acquisition necessary. Further to this it should address the need for management and leadership in the professional world to meet the training needs of those who seek career paths outside of academia.

Time organisation and planning – Advice on how to plan research and organise time in order to meet appropriate targets and deadlines should be provided which will also assist successful completion.

Examinations - Full overview of the viva examination and what is expected of the ESR to be a successful doctoral candidate.

Teaching – ESRs engaged in teaching should undertake comprehensive staff development training in pedagogy and other necessary skills to carry out their tasks. Teaching will contribute to their professional development for which appropriate credit should be given. Fair and consistent remuneration should be applied with formally agreed contractual arrangements.

Career planning – Advice and support on seeking post-doctoral employment should be provided along with training in career planning including application,

interview and curriculum vitae skills paying attention to the specific interests of an ESR training to be an experienced researcher.

Definition of Terms

Complementary Training – Training that will develop the skills and development of an Early Stage Researcher which will demonstrate to a potential employer their abilities that have transferability.

Contact time – Time spent meeting physically with a supervisor or supervisors. If there is more than one supervisor, and meetings are held separately at all, contact time will be the sum of meeting time spent.

Early Stage Researcher (ESR) – A candidate for a research degree programme.

Feedback mechanisms – Means by which to feed back comments and concerns either collectively or from an individual regarding issues that arise both at the level of the department, the institution and the place of work if professional placements are involved.

Peers – Others in the same field of research as the ESR who will be interested in their work and able to share expertise to provide further ideas and advice to the ESR.

Progress reports – A log showing evidence of progress made at regular intervals for reference by the institution but also by the ESR and supervisor to identify achievements and any further work or training needed.

Research methods – The alternative means by which information is found, that will vary according to the discipline.

Research methodology – A specific approach to research adopting a set of methods by which an attempt is made to contribute to knowledge.

Review meeting – A meeting between the ESR and supervisor(s) to discuss progress and agree plans for future work and review training.

Supervisor – An academic responsible for the oversight and guidance of an Early Stage Researcher.

Workload – The tasks assigned to academic staff including teaching, research, administration as well as supervision of students and Early Stage Researchers (ESRs).