

CHAPTER 1

The global practice of doctoral supervision in southern Africa

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Abstract

This book was catalysed by, and primarily draws on, the reflective experiences of fifteen southern African academics working collaboratively to enhance their doctoral supervision knowledge and practice. This first chapter explores the need for such work, its positioning within global supervision practices, development and norms, and the cultural and contextual constraints on those. It begins by introducing the shape of the book as a whole, contextualising the book's contribution by scoping what is known internationally about recent developments in doctoral study and its supervision. It analyses the genesis of the recent southern African collaborative supervisory development structures adopted, and the related design and comparative research, offering early evidence of the model as a richly generative, systematic, sustainable and affordable approach to developing an area of academic work that is often under-valued in institutional structures and rewards. Further, it argues for the wide transferability of such a model. It concludes by analysing some of the key contextual features of the systems within which contributors work and develop their academic supervision practices.

Introduction: why is this book needed?

This first chapter outlines both longstanding and more recent need for doctoral supervision development in southern Africa, contextualising that within an overview of the global picture. It outlines the design considerations underlying an initiative developed in response to that need, focused around collaborative workshops for experienced doctoral supervisors from three southern African contexts in South Africa, Namibia and Zambia. Building on this collaborative academic work and supervision experiences of workshop participants, each chapter outlines key literature, thinking, and issues related to one area of supervision practice. Central chapters make clear links with practice through specific and personal exemplification of such issues, and reflections on the solutions or approaches adopted. Such 'vignettes' draw on the supervision work carried out by colleagues from different Higher Education systems, and working in different local contexts. As such, they point to the complexity of doctoral supervision work as both teaching and research, as part of a global practice but enacted within local cultural and contextual both affordances and constraints. Because of the sources of the data, we cannot claim to give authoritative accounts of doctoral supervision across universities in southern Africa – rather, all we can point to is the indicative nature of the accounts presented here, which are presented in relation to the global literature, including that emanating from sub-Saharan Africa where possible. But first, we point to the need for such a focus.

Doctoral supervision: the state of the art

Taylor (2012) synthesises and expands on a range of global phenomena concerning doctoral study, and more recent literature underlines the range and spread of evolution in the field. Recent years have widely seen changes to the nature of the doctoral degree, and to that of the doctoral student cohort; there have often also been considerable changes to the ways in which students are expected to engage in their doctoral studies; and in many Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) or national systems, postgraduate research supervision is frequently under-valued, under-provisioned and under-developed. Additionally, and representing mass frustration and disillusion on the part of both doctoral students and their supervisors, as well as arguably poor use of resources, timely doctoral completion rates remain stubbornly low.

Related to these changes, and to western neo-liberal norms, is a tension in the core aim of doctoral work:

- Traditional PhDs focused on the **nurture of beginner researchers** fit to contribute to the curation and development of an academic field. However, in recent years we have seen the emergence of:
- A **scientific-technical postgraduate education** that serves wider purposes of market economies, sometimes incorporating new industry/university partnerships and reflecting a perceived need for specialist human capital to build advanced knowledge economies.

Other considerable changes over the last 30 years or so, and which are present to a greater or lesser extent in the southern African region, include (Taylor, 2012):

- massification: a considerable increase in the numbers undertaking doctoral study;
- internationalisation: a trend for early career researchers to study in countries other than their country of origin;
- diversification: an expansion in the range of backgrounds (including life-stages) of domestic doctoral students;
- commodification: a shift from a traditional master-apprentice model of supervision, to one of 'provider-consumer';
- 'McDonaldisation': increased pressure from individual or university (including government) funders for improved completion rates and timeliness;
- regulation: replacement of private, 'behind closed doors' and sometimes idiosyncratic supervision by institutional mechanisms intended to assure and enhance the quality and uniform minimum standards of supervision;
- casualisation: an expansion of part-time doctoral study, often linked with greater maturity of student
- dislocation: doctoral students often now studying wholly, or in part, away from the university campus
- proliferation: a shift to offer professional, industrial-, or practice-based doctorates as well as the more traditional PhD;
- augmentation: a move to a supervisory team or two or more supervisors, rather than a single supervisor ;
- cross-fertilisation: a shift towards more multi, inter- and trans-disciplinary doctoral studies;
- capitalisation: an expectation that doctorates will not only reproduce an academic workforce, but will support the proliferating advanced needs of knowledge economies.

Of course, these changes are not all independent, and have arisen for a variety of reasons. They have occurred to different extents in different countries. Further, they each bring both advantages and (sometimes unintended) consequences for individual students and for societies. But critically for the focus of this book, they have together fundamentally altered the traditional (western) role of the supervisor to one which is considerably expanded, and markedly more complex. Much of the relevant literature emanates from the global north, and predominantly, from western systems, and does not transfer unproblematically to other contexts: many universities in the global south function within post-colonial and rapidly-evolving contexts where historical norms, while predicated on colonial systems and values, have to be re-developed for local cultures, contexts and ownership. However, universities in the global south are necessarily drawn into the aforementioned range of profound developments.

How, and why, have such changes spread? In part, and as above, the catalysing contexts are global. In particular, our economies and our education systems necessarily operate in a global context, in which less affluent countries see little choice but to adapt the priorities and emerging practices of the global north. Higher education systems are not immune to such pressures, and university research, including the nurture of doctoral students, has to adapt or remain marginalised. Academics (and increasingly, doctoral students) are mobile, their worth measured sometimes almost-exclusively on the quality and quantity of their published

contribution to knowledge, so that in a globalised world, the above changes, while not reflected in identical ways across, or even within, jurisdictions, have been widely experienced. In southern Africa, then, we see most of these developments replicated (e.g. Bitzer 2011, Pillay & Balfour 2011). They bring with them a range of significant challenges for universities: how are tensions of purpose to be resolved, and what sort of doctoral education is appropriate for the range of outcomes now valued by society? Who should provide that education? After all, it is not self-evident that a cloistered career academic is the best support for a professional doctorate – or even for a scientific-technical doctorate where industrial and entrepreneurial skills might be as highly valued as the purely academic. Some universities now employ, for example, industrial partners as co-supervisors for appropriate doctoral studies. However, the core challenge of a vastly enhanced role for academic supervisors remains.

Even before many of these changes took root, supervision was understood as a complex and demanding endeavour: Brown & Atkins (1988, p.15) note that:

Research...supervision is probably the most complex and subtle form of teaching in which we engage. It is not enough for us to be competent researchers ourselves – although this is vital. We need to be able to reflect on research practices and analyse the knowledge, techniques, and methods that make them effective. ...We have to be skilled at enabling our research students to acquire these techniques and methods themselves without stultifying or warping their own intellectual development. In short, to be an effective research supervisor, you need to be an effective researcher and an effective supervisor.

Concerningly, Taylor et al.'s (2021) scoping study of supervisor preparation and development in twenty-one major doctorate-awarding jurisdictions across the globe, suggests that in very few of them is the challenge of appropriate equipping of doctoral supervisors addressed systematically and effectively. Their analysis suggests that of the 21 systems represented, ten operate near a 'restricted' pole of professionalism in supervision, with little support reward, or development available to supervisors. Just six systems were judged nearer to an 'extended' professionalism in terms of the conceptualisation of supervision reflected: often substantial initial professional development available to supervisors, and supervision recognised and rewarded in a variety of ways, including via promotions and awards. However, practice even for this group typically varied considerably across constituent HEIs. The remaining five systems were analysed as in transition between the two poles.

Within those systems closer to an 'extended' professionalism, in the UK, the UK Council for Graduate Education UKCGE has recently introduced [accreditation](#) of experienced doctoral supervisors as part of an effort to support deliberate systematic and scholarly reflection on, and valuing of, a wide range of aspects of doctoral supervision. Accreditation is dependent on a 5000-word scholarly reflection across ten key areas of supervision, together with references from a former student and from a supervisory colleague. The whole is peer-assessed by a panel of those already accredited, with formative feedback to the applicant. This initiative was foundational to the work analysed in the current book. UKCGE accreditation is made available to experienced supervisors anywhere in the world, and indeed, is beginning to attract applications from a range of jurisdictions. However, such initiatives remain unusual, globally.

How much does that matter? Supervision is a critical aspect of doctoral study systems. The literature demonstrates unequivocally that the quality of supervision contributes to degree

completion, to length-of-time to candidacy, to doctoral student wellbeing and satisfaction with the overall doctoral experience, as well as to central and broader competencies developed while studying (Meyer, Shanahan, and Laugksch 2005; Pyhältö, Stubb, and Tuomainen 2011) – so a well-equipped supervisor has the potential to very positively influence a range of highly-valued outcomes of the doctoral process.

Concerningly, previous research has also identified a variety of ethical problems sometimes embedded in supervision. These include incompetent and inadequate supervision, supervision abandonment, intrusion of supervisor views, abusive and exploitative supervision, dual relationships, encouragement to commit fraud, and authorship issues (Goodyear, Crego, and Johnston 1992; Löfström and Pyhältö 2014; Mahmud and Bretag 2013). While not all these specific challenges are widely evidenced in southern Africa, it would be naïve to imagine they do not exist. Conversely, ethically-conducted supervision, including respect for students' research decisions, has been shown to improve the ethical attitudes of students (Gray and Jordan 2012). But the situation is complex: Löfström and Pyhältö (2020) demonstrate that effective supervision requires inspection and development of provision at a number of levels simultaneously: a macro/meso level (enabling infrastructures, rules, and regulations), a meso level (local practices of research communities), and a micro level (individual relationships). Within these last, inter-supervisor relationships as well as supervisor-student relationships, need serious consideration where there is more than one supervisor – and yet, as we shall show later, there are also often multiple advantages to a plurality of supervisors. The evidence, then, is clear: The quality and integrity of supervision is critical to doctoral student thriving, and professional development of supervision, by appropriate means, is a clear route to achieving enhanced quality of doctoral study and outcomes.

Global norms or contextualised practice in southern Africa?

As identified above, doctoral supervision takes place against a background of contextual, political, economic and cultural affordances and constraints but in a global higher education system. Southern Africa's systems have necessarily been shaped and influenced by their colonial past and the related inherited education systems. Since independence, southern African nations have perforce had to develop their higher education systems to be agile and responsive to the social and economic drivers of relatively new nations. They have usually sought a rapid but cost-effective expansion of higher education, bringing not only greater equity of opportunity, but challenges of capacity and quality (e.g. Bitzer, 2011; Pillay & Balfour, 2011). Such policy issues are explored further in chapter 2.

In relation to supervisor development, though, the policy context means that the global challenges for doctoral supervision capacity are exacerbated: development of 'extended' supervision in Taylor et al.'s (2021) terms requires confident and knowledgeable leadership – and often, significant resources. One aim of this book is to demonstrate that the latter requirements can be over-stated, and that novel, more affordable, alternatives can be very effective. However, for southern African academics this is usually only one small facet of concern in their academic work (Bickton et al., 2019). They often find it difficult to establish themselves in global academic communities, or publish in international journals (Tijssen, 2007) - or to support their doctoral students or doctoral graduates in doing so. There are a variety of reasons for this, including that of resource, and that the originality of southern work is often not recognised where the field elsewhere has 'moved on', despite the fact that the

core knowledge still has to be established for southern contexts. The challenges are being addressed, slowly, by international academic communities and through development of southern-focused journals, but that is no substitute for development of academic capacity, and increase of self-determination and agency in southern academia. This book is based on mutual capacity development that makes a small contribution to addressing that challenge.

Our response: collaborative doctoral supervision workshops

The book derives from a collaborative experience of building on the UKCGE accreditation structure outlined earlier, to support development of an enhanced quality of supervision for more experienced supervisors, namely those who have already seen a candidate through every stage of the doctoral journey to successful completion. This is a prerequisite for UKCGE supervisor recognition: the focus was built on a perception that there are often introductory, and early career, supervision development opportunities available within a university or online – and that deeper development draws on productive use of accumulated wisdom of experience. As academics, the UKCGE model of informed scholarly reflection on experience speaks to core values shared in academia, of respect for systematic and rigorously-accumulated evidence, together with philosophical argument. The first author, based at University College London Institute of Education, in late 2021/early 2022 adopted a design research approach to facilitating a series of six online collaborative workshops for experienced doctoral supervisors within her own faculty. This was intended to support activity related to ‘personal, recent, analytical, example-based, scholarly and systematic’ reflection on doctoral supervision, and catalyse both enhanced supervision practice and also foundations for successful application for the related UKCGE accreditation.

Core workshop aims were to support sustainable and affordable, deliberate and academically informed reflection on related issues. The chosen theoretical approach was via the establishment of a genuine ‘professional learning community’ (Vescio, Ross & Adams, 2008), with transference to supervisory practice supported by approaches adapted from Timor-Schlevin et al. (2021). Related research questions asked:

RQ1: How can workshops be designed so as to support supervisor development in affordable and sustainable ways that also enhance mutual collaboration and learning across the contexts concerned?

For the first iteration, with IOE participants all working within the academic discipline of education and social science, the first author invited two external academics from Egypt and the University of Johannesburg, as ‘critical friends’, initially to observe and comment – but in fact both participated actively, and both in due course applied for and received UKCGE supervisor recognition. Their successful participation has underlined the global accessibility of the initial approaches adopted, though not necessarily a cross-discipline suitability, and through the initiative of both chapter authors, it catalysed the instigation of a similar locally-informed approach in southern Africa (South Africa, Namibia, Zambia), and in parallel, a comparative element to the research, within SAUSC (the Southern Africa-UCL Supervision Collaboration). The editors of this book have led that collaboration. The second research question therefore asked:

RQ2 (for SAUSC): How do contextual affordances and constraints across the four universities involved, inform academics' supervision practices, and their reflections on, and learning about, doctoral supervision in and through such workshops?

Given the theoretical framing of the initiative, the outline structure of workshops in both contexts was as below, focused around six fairly intensive hour-long workshops, each subdivided into two areas of focus. The central ten such half-sessions each took as a theme one of the ten areas of supervision for which the UKCGE submitted 'Reflective account' has to provide 'personal, recent analytical, example-based, scholarly and systematic' evidence. That structure also offers a broad framework for the main body of this book. In order to build a genuine 'professional learning community', participants were asked each to take an area of supervision, scope some of the literature in that area, and relate it to practice in ways which would simulate active reflection and critique across the group, framed as follows (Figure 1):

Please volunteer for an area that is of particular interest or use to you, and use that half hour to lead group engagement, reflection and critique focused around both experience and some relevant literature. Feel free to be fairly 'straight' or to use whatever approach you think might be stimulating for the group. Thank you!

Note that eventual applications are required to be **'personal, recent, analytical, example-based, scholarly and systematic'**.

Workshop 1

- Introduction, overview and developing ethical researchers
- Recruitment and selection

Workshop 2

- Supervisory relationships with candidates
- Supervisory relationships with co-supervisors

Workshop 3

- Supporting candidates' research projects
- Encouraging candidates to write and giving appropriate feedback

Workshop 4

- Keeping the research on track and monitoring progress
- Supporting candidates' personal, professional and career development

Workshop 5

- Supporting candidates through completion and final examination
- Supporting candidates to disseminate their research

Workshop 6

- Reflecting upon and enhancing (supervisor) practice
- Final steps for submission

Figure 1: Outline structure of collaborative supervisor workshops

UKCGE recognition requires submission of a scholarly reflection that evidences thinking and personal practice around each of the areas 'recruitment and selection' through to 'reflecting

upon and enhancing (supervisor) practice’ – together with validating references from each of a completed student and a colleague. These areas are not exhaustive of facets of doctoral supervision – for example, they do not include explicit mention of education for ethical research, or explicit consideration of the ethical issues that might rise during doctoral supervision – but they do include opportunity to demonstrate reflection on such issues. For the focus workshops, the first author made a deliberate decision to ensure such issues were at least pointed to, by their incorporation in the first session. Taylor et al. (2021) suggest that it is unusual for doctoral supervisors to be familiar with any significant part of the literature around doctoral supervision, which is curious given their identity as academics – but also reflective of some of the pressures experienced by academics globally, at least some of which are identified above.

Our research

Within a design research (Bakker, 2019) and interpretivist paradigm, we wanted to understand the extent to which a genuinely professional learning community was evolving, and what was supporting or hindering that; also, to identify early indications of the ways in which the associated learning was transferring to practice. Here, we outline our approach and some early findings in order to illuminate the background to this book, but more detailed, and later, findings are analysed elsewhere: workshop design, and comparative aspects, underpin, but are not themselves, the main thrust of the book, which is focused on the *substance* of emerging workshops and subsequent reflective accounts.

Data collection included workshop video recordings and associated transcripts, participant post-workshops surveys, interviews with key personnel probing workshop experiences and learning, and anonymised submitted reflective accounts.

Design of questionnaires focused initially around structure, people organisation, reported practices and content, and comparative interview elements included also Halse & Malfroy’s (2010) dimensions of supervision (the learning alliance, habits of mind, scholarly expertise, technê and contextual expertise), as well as Bruce & Stoodley’s (2013) categories of supervision-as-teaching (promoting the supervisor’s development, imparting academic expertise, upholding academic standards, promoting learning to research, drawing upon student expertise, enabling student development, venturing into unexplored territory, forming productive communities, and contributing to society). Both research tools drew on Vescio, Ross & Adams’ (2008) characterisation of (school-based) professional learning communities as:

- a highly interdependent community with shared goals;
- shared values and norms with respect to the goal of improving student learning;
- clear, consistent and structured focus on developing that learning;
- reflective dialogue that leads to extensive and continuing conversations about curriculum instruction and student development;
- de-privatisation of practice for the purpose of improving practice;
- and a focus on collaboration to achieve that.

As such, a professional learning community is a particular sort of ‘participatory inquiry group’ as drawn on in Timor-Schlevin et al.’s (2021) identification of productive approaches to

transference of learning (in their case, within social worker development). They set out to address (p.278) 'the tension between critical and hegemonic discourses ...linked to the evolving agency of professionals to operate with critical professionalism under hegemonic rationality', which we argue is well aligned to our aims in the SAUSC collaboration. They address such tensions through a lens of critical theory, using a critical reflexivity approach to develop awareness of the persona meanings of political structural mechanisms that shape the distribution of resources such as money, status respect, etc., in order to resist those where appropriate. Reflexive attention then, can address personal and interpersonal dynamics, and collective perceptions and assumptions (Chiu, 2006).

The processes adopted by Timor-Schlevin et al. therefore successively address, in our case, awareness of (often tacit) perceptions of practice, received hegemonic meanings and implications, and the reconstruction of those with critical perspectives informed by the supervision literature, in a virtuous cycle of learning, sharing of experience, reflection and co-processing. The aim is that participants acquire perceptions of greater, and specific, agency, informed by knowledge of both the evidence base and reflective accounts of (their own and others') practice. Two further, important, issues remained: first, the key role of the facilitator in enactment of these principles, a role initially taken by the first author but, consistent with a professional learning community, delegated through much of each half-session to the colleague responsible for that work; and second, the threat of constraining power relations between the first author, herself the instigator of the initiative and a UKCGE assessor, and other colleagues. That was addressed in part through the intra-mediation of the first editor, who had already experienced one series of workshops, and in part by the framing of hegemonic, and personal, supervision practices as external to all collaborators and so open to critical reflection. This last required not only a de-privatisation of practice, but also deep interdependencies and trust built up through the collaboration: interviews probed the extent to which that was achieved.

Ethical approval of the related work given by University College London's IOE Research Ethics Committee, reference REC1590. **Analysis** was thematic within each of the above themes, and again, is reported in detail elsewhere. In terms of workshop design we wanted to understand the extent to which emergence of a genuine professional learning community fit for achieving the intended outcomes was being supported, and what changes would improve that.

We found, for example, in response to first iteration 'in' UCL, that participants reported:

- 'The best professional development I've had in 17 years at IOE: challenging, refreshing, reconstructive of both thinking and practice';
- '(It was) transformative to approach supervision with a parallel academic and professional lens';
- 'A wonderfully supportive, stimulating and humbling experience that is already impacting my supervision practice';
- 'I feel privileged to have had access to so much wisdom and experience: my thinking about doctoral supervision has deepened and grown, and my practice is both renewed and developing further'.

But participants also felt that:

- ‘Time for small group discussion of a stimulus question or case study is the jewel and shouldn’t be rushed’;
- ‘I should have been more disciplined about making notes on my learning as I went – as was suggested!’;

Further, the main goal of workshops was development of supervision, but as a valued accreditation of that, not all applications for UKCGE recognition were initially successful (though resubmissions were). That was a challenging experience for mature academics who had invested heavily in active participation in workshops and in crafting a substantial reflective document. For the second iteration ‘in’ southern Africa, then, we introduced:

- An induction session to explain workshops, but also lay out basics of the four national/university doctoral supervision contexts, as a foundation for mutual understanding (and so development of a professional learning community);
- A stronger steer on the centrality of small group discussion (and limited number of slides) to support depth of reflection on the symbiosis between supervision literature and practice;
- A stronger steer on making notes of reflections and experiences during and after sessions, to support both depth of writing and manageability of producing the final reflective account;
- Active listening to, and probing for, contextual or cultural affordances and constraints on supervision practice: for example, most students were working in a second/third/... language; there were usually institutional incentives for timely completion; early academic foundations were often insecure; there was commonly insufficient supply of experienced supervisors; and across institutions, a range of doctoral assessment systems.....
- A semi-formal optional, peer assessment of draft submissions, so that participants both better understood assessment criteria, and through assessing others’ work and themselves receiving feedback, could produce a stronger submission themselves.

The broader SAUSC collaboration:

As indicated, the supervision literature is quite extensive, but often under-appreciated, and UKCGE have produced a related 20-page [bibliography](#). However, there is very little representation within that of southern African literature in the field. Complementary activities therefore included development of an annotated bibliography of sub-Saharan African literature focused on postgraduate research supervision, as well as this book focused on doctoral supervision as academic practice in southern Africa. However, the sub-Saharan supervision literature is very dominated by academics working in South Africa, making it difficult to identify wider southern African concerns and evidence and scholarship in the field. Future possibilities include further expansion of the model, as affordable and sustainable, and/or the instigation of a similar supervisor development and recognition programme in southern Africa.

Origins and genesis of this book

This book originated in the desire of participant supervisors to share some of the benefits of working in this way, and the fruits of academic study of, and collaborative reflection on, doctoral supervision in the context of three southern African universities in different

jurisdictions. There is no claim to generalisation across southern African academics' experiences, even within their own university, but the work outlines indicative scholarship and reflection. Rather more than the initial UCL participation which was entirely by academics working in Education, the SAUSC collaboration included academics from a range of disciplinary backgrounds. Unsurprisingly, academics from e.g. Engineering found engagement with the social science-framed supervision literature quite challenging – but not prohibitive. All three home universities work within an Anglophone context, which supported communication across the collaboration – but also reflects a further limitation to transferability of specific reflections.

The book is not primarily drawn from the research analysed above, but from individual participant scholarship and academic reflection, and from the range of ten reflective accounts initially submitted for UKCGE recognition after this first set of SAUSC workshops, together with slides used for those workshop sessions: all were generously shared by their owners. Chapter authors have then drawn on those sources, attempting to achieve both breadth and balance, to give an overview of reflections on each area of supervision, as represented in the literature and as experienced by participant supervisors working in a southern African context. Inevitably the literature drawn on is often derived from the global north – but as will be seen, often resonates with, or poses questions for, the southern African academics involved. Taken together, we hope the book communicates the potential for a systematic approach to supervision development which is affordable, sustainable, and transferable.

Within that, the book points to participants' many joys – and challenges – in supervising doctoral students. Very many of those are experienced in ways that will resonate with academics working in very different contexts, but there are areas also, where the identified issues may take on a particular nature in southern African contexts and cultures. These include:

- recruitment strategies and discrimination in chapter 3;
- the use of WhatsApp (mentioned in chapters 4 and 6);
- the lack of institutional support and role of hierarchy in chapter 5;
- language barriers, in chapter 7;
- gender issues, identified in chapters 3, 9 and 12;
- the particular nature of workload issues discussed in Chapters 5 and 7;
- connection to policy officials and community engagement, identified in chapters 9 and 12;
- the problems of supervising colleagues, in chapter 10;
- public vivas and performing well in public, also discussed in chapter 10.

Institutions represented in the book

Finally, it is important for the reader to have an overview of the similarities and differences between the universities represented in this volume.

The University of Namibia (UNAM)

Dates from 1992, and in 2022 had four faculties and 12 campuses across Namibia, hosting over 30,000 students from 41 countries. UNAM offers a variety of 39 models of Doctoral and 63 of masters degrees. UNAM doctoral theses are required to be 46-75,000 words in length, and to offer a 'substantial and significant contribution to knowledge' defended in a three-hour 'viva'. Assessment of the doctorate is by at least three examiners, normally two external and one internal. Students submitting for a PhD by dissertation focused on a supervised research project are required to have a minimum of two Scopus-indexed articles accepted or published with supervisor/s before graduation. Those submitting for a PhD by publication present as chapters at least four published or accepted peer reviewed articles with the student as main author and co-authored with supervisor(s).

Challenges for UNAM doctoral study are reported to include delays in time allocation for doctoral supervision, low completion rates for part-time and distance doctoral students, and student funding (*UNAM academic*).

The University of Johannesburg (UJ)

was founded in 2005 as a merger between three pre-existing institutions, and in 2022 had over 50,000 students. UJ is 4th among the 13 South African top universities by World University Ranking. UJ offers a PhD and DEd by thesis, full time or part time, with the thesis making a significant contribution to the field. Before submission, a student makes three presentations to the faculty and two manuscripts must be submitted to accredited journals. The final thesis is examined by three examiners (two local, one international) and all examiners must pass the thesis. At the time of writing (2023) there is no viva voce, but one is to be introduced from 2024. Alternatively, there is an article-based PhD based on five articles published in high impact journals, plus a short dissertation. Doctoral supervision is predominantly one-to-one but co-supervision is promoted; a PhD or other doctorate is sufficient to be eligible for supervision, but there is no formal training.

Challenges are analysed as lack of supervision training/skills, poor supply of high-quality doctoral students, student finance, high attrition rate, prolonged completion periods, and high workload for supervisors (*UJ academic*).

The University of Zambia (UNZA)

dates from about 1966, on two campuses in Lusaka. In 2022 there were about 25,000 students, studying for 157 different first and postgraduate degrees. Among the top 100 universities in Africa, in April, 2023 UNZA was ranked number 11, and in the world it was ranked in 501-600. Doctoral degrees are offered by research (fulltime, part-time, campus-based or distance), with students required to take appropriate department-recommended courses; plans are underway to also offer taught/research doctorates. The University also offers Higher Doctorates via published research. Doctoral theses are of up to 100,000 words that are required to make a significant contribution to knowledge. These are assessed by two

internal and one external examiners (all experts in the field of the thesis), followed by a viva of about three hours where questions are asked by both audience and examiners.

Supervision is usually one-to-one, except in the case of interdisciplinary or sandwich programmes, and supervisory guidance and updating is provided.

Challenges are reported to include delays in paying external examiners, delays in students receiving or responding to supervisor feedback, and low completion rates (UNZA academic).

University College London (UCL)

dates from 1826. Historically it was located (on a loosely-connected set of sites) in central London, but has recently developed an additional site in east London. In October 2022 UCL had about 44,000 students of whom just over half are from outside the UK and about 6,000 are postgraduate research students. UCL is commonly found in the top ten or twenty of world university rankings, with individual departments often exceeding that – for example, IOE, UCL's Faculty of Education and Society (formerly known as the Institute of Education), has topped the World QS rankings in Education every year from 2014 to the present (2023).

UCL offers fulltime or part-time doctorates, on-site, remote or mixed mode, and as well as the traditional PhD, offers professional research doctorates such as the EdD. These require assessment of a thesis which makes a significant contribution to knowledge, and evidence of preparedness to conduct high quality independent research. Entry expectations to a doctorate normally include a strong Masters dissertation and fluent use of academic English. Co-supervision of doctoral students is mandatory, and assessment is by one internal and one external examiner, both eminent in the field of the thesis and without any significant connection with the candidate, supervisors or thesis.

Challenges include very limited funding available for UK research students; high attrition and poor completion rates, especially by part-time students; very limited supervisor development; and poor recognition, status and sometimes workload allowance made for doctoral supervision.

Conclusion

We have outlined the global and fluid nature of doctoral work, while also pointing to continuities and to a deeply contextual facet of doctoral development. Doctoral supervision, then, is necessarily complex, involving a subtle and shifting blend of teaching and of research – and yet we have also evidenced a widespread under-valuing of, and under-equipping for, that work, and so a pressing rationale for the initiative on which this book rests. We have analysed at a high level the structures and the approaches we adopted, the associated research that is still ongoing, and the nature of the universities whose academics contributed to the collaboration and whose work is represented here.

The rest of the book draws in evidence generated by workshops and recognition applications, to offer exemplification of the work undertaken, building on the authors' collaborative work and shared scholarly analysis of supervision experiences. Each chapter outlines a critical engagement with key literature, thinking, and issues related to one important facet of

supervision practice, in a way that opens up the evidence base for wider use. Each author relates that to informed reflection on the area through use of shared personal exemplifications, and reflections on the solutions or approaches adopted in the light of the literature. Such 'vignettes' draw on the supervision work carried out by colleagues from different Higher Education systems, and working in different local contexts. As such, they point to the complexity of doctoral supervision work as both teaching and research, as part of a global practice but enacted within local cultural and contextual both affordances and constraints. They do so via a supervision development model we suggest is generative, systematic, sustainable, affordable and transferable. But excitingly also, they also underline the commonalities of our global practices (and challenges), they expose a range of novel and creative approaches to supervisory pedagogy and research, and they serve to encourage others to engage in an equally exciting and rewarding journey into the systematic enrichment of our doctoral supervisors and supervision.

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