

# GOOD ADVICE FOR THE FIRST MEETING WITH YOUR SUPERVISOR

You and your supervisor need to draw up a supervision plan, which is a general plan for the production of your thesis. It's a good idea to use this plan as the basis of your first meeting. It will help you to decide how, where and when you will meet and what form of supervision you will be given. The plan does not have to be finalised and submitted until the end of the third semester.

You and your supervisor should also discuss your expectations and wishes in more general and personal terms. It's important to balance your expectations because the supervision process can vary a great deal.

Here is a list of points which may inspire you when you draw up a supervision agreement.

## Balancing your expectations and wishes

### Supervisor

- The supervisor's own experiences of good working processes.
- What does the supervisor expect of the student?
- How is the supervision process normally organised during the production of a thesis? In the supervisor's experience, what are the benefits of organising the supervision in this way?
- How many texts (and what type of texts) will the supervisor read?

### Student

- What does the student expect of the supervisor – and of themselves?
- In the student's experience, what constitutes a good working process?
- What are the student's wishes regarding the supervision process, including special wishes regarding the process and structure of supervision?
- What kind of supervision does the student need most (academic content, writing process, structure, help to collect empirical material, method etc.)?



- What does the student need at the next supervision meeting – feedback on texts, thumbs-up, discussion of theory, ideas/sparring for the next part of the process etc.?

### Supervisor and student

- When, where and how will you meet (email, phone, face-to-face, Skype etc.)?
- What kind of sub-goals/deadlines/milestones are you planning along the way?
- How will you communicate between meetings?
- How will you solve any problems that arise (for instance if the student fails to contact the supervisor as arranged, or vice versa)?
- What do both parties expect in terms of the amount of work invested in the process?
- Will the supervisor/student be unavailable at any point during the production process?
- Which themes/topics need to be discussed at supervision meetings?

### Planning the supervision process

- Is it a good idea to identify milestones for central sub-processes along the way?
- What type of text will be included in the supervision process? (Finished texts, drafts, synopses, thesis statements, outlines, introductions, conclusions etc.)
- How many pages should the student send to the supervisor prior to each meeting if the student wants feedback or needs a discussion? And what is the deadline for receiving these pages?
- How can follow-up on each supervision meeting be ensured?
- How will the supervision plan be evaluated and adjusted along the way? (For instance, this can be done at the end of each meeting).
- How will the wishes/expectations for each supervision meeting be defined? (For instance, the student could send an agenda or proposal for each meeting, identifying points of focus and requests.)
- It may be a good idea to end each meeting by discussing the time and topic of the next meeting.

## General advice for thesis students

- The requirements and descriptions applying to the production of a thesis vary from one subject to the next. Make sure you check the academic regulations applying to your subject.
- It's a good idea to give your supervisor a brief description of the texts you are sending to them: What have you sent, which part of the thesis is it, to what extent is it finished, what should the supervisor comment on etc.?
- It may be a good idea to produce a brief summary of your meeting to ensure that you have understood your supervisor's comments correctly and that you agree about any arrangements you have made.
- It's a good idea to inform your supervisor of any particular points of which they should be aware.
- Remember that supervision is a professional relationship, not a private one.