

Ethical Guidelines for Supervision at Western Norway University of Applied Sciences

Western Norway University of Applied Sciences (HVL) strives to provide students and doctoral candidates with high-quality supervision. These ethical guidelines apply to academic supervision at all educational levels, from bachelor's to Ph.D. (Both students and Ph.D. candidates are hereafter collectively referred to as students).

The faculties and departments are responsible for ensuring the quality of supervision through the training and awareness of supervisors. Additionally, each supervisor must continually acquire the necessary and sufficient competence in terms of knowledge, skills, and qualifications to fulfil their duties as supervisors to the best of their ability. Supervision should take into account both academic and individual considerations. The working and learning environment at HVL should be safe and inclusive. Harassment, racism, and discrimination shall not occur.

I. The relationship between the supervisor and the student

To promote a good relationship, it is important that both the supervisor and the student show mutual respect for each other's academic and personal integrity. This includes, among other things, that:

- The supervisor and the student should show respect for each other. They should not engage in actions or make statements that can be perceived as discriminatory and / or offensive to the other's integrity or dignity.
- The supervisor must be aware of the asymmetrical relationship that exists in a supervisory relationship and make a particular effort to facilitate constructive dialogue.
- The supervisor and the student should be discreet when referring to colleagues and other supervisors.
- The supervisor should not use supervision time to address their own academic or personal challenges unless relevant and significant for the student's work or training. The supervisor should be open and receptive to personal issues the student raises that may affect the supervisory relationship. Confidential information that emerges during supervision must not be shared with others.

- If the supervisor sees that the student needs help due to personal challenges, the supervisor should encourage the student to seek appropriate support services. This could be the student's general practitioner or health services provided by Saman (Student Welfare Organisation in Western Norway): [Sammen | Student Welfare Organisation in Western Norway](#)

II. Professionalism and impartiality

- The supervisor and the student should maintain a professional relationship and should not have a relationship that compromises the necessary professional distance. The supervisor has a particular responsibility not to place the student in a vulnerable situation and / or exploit such a situation. If a relationship beyond the professional arises between the supervisor and student, the faculty / department management should be notified, and the formal supervisory relationship should be terminated.
- If the supervisor and the student have a private friendship, both parties should be attentive to the importance of clear boundaries between the professional and the private.
- The supervisor should not exploit academic knowledge and authority to gain professional or personal advantages, or otherwise undermine or oppress the student.
- One cannot be a supervisor for someone with whom one has a family or marital relationship (in line with the rules of impartiality in the Norwegian Public Administration Act).
- If a student has multiple advisors, there should be no romantic or familial relationships between the advisors. Faculties may make exceptions based on special considerations¹.
- The supervisor and the student should meet prepared and at agreed times and avoid distractions and irrelevant dialogue that can disturb the supervision.
- **Gifts and fees:** The supervisor should not accept gifts or fees for supervision beyond what is agreed with the responsible unit. In case of doubt, the supervisor should seek advice from the leadership.
- **Co-authorship, use of data materials, and / or research results:** A supervisory relationship in and of itself does not justify co-authorship. Co-authorship should be

¹ Exceptions may be considered if there are no other advisors available within the field of study

based on a significant contribution to the publication. This is described in the national ethical guidelines for co-authorship and the Vancouver recommendations.

- If the supervisor wishes to use the student's data materials or research results in their own publications or research, the supervisor must obtain permission from the student, inform the student of what this might entail, and follow discipline-specific and general research ethical guidelines for referencing sources and crediting. Similarly, the student must clarify and obtain permission from the supervisor and follow discipline-specific and general research ethical guidelines for referencing sources and crediting.

III. Duties of the supervisor and the student

Both parties have duties that must be upheld for the supervision to work as effectively as possible:

The supervisor should:

- Stay updated on the frameworks and guidelines for supervision.
- Make the student aware of relevant regulations and guidelines adapted to the student's level and work. This includes thoroughly familiarise themselves with the student's project and associated data, and contributing to identifying ethical issues in research.
- Act as a good ethical role model in research and convey the requirements for ethical conduct in research. The supervisor should ensure that the student receives training in research ethics in accordance with legislation and national ethical guidelines and can reflect on and discuss ethical questions and dilemmas in research, both generally and specifically related to their own project.
- Help the student evaluate both strengths and weaknesses of chosen method(s), ensuring that data collection, storage, use and publication of data and personal information, as well as project completion, are carried out in accordance with laws and regulations. The supervisor should ensure that necessary approvals are in place before the start and, if necessary, during the project. (In the event of changes to the project, the supervisor should ensure approval for amendments is obtained and that an amendment notification is sent to the department).
- Facilitate the student's inclusion in the work or learning environment in a good manner.

- Create a good and constructive dialogue and be open to feedback, including on the form of supervision.

The student should:

- Actively participate in the academic supervision and contribute to a good and constructive relationship.
- Familiarise themselves with and follow the principles and guidelines of research ethics, handle and store data and personal information according to the institution's guidelines and in line with the law, and seek advice from the supervisor if they are in doubt.
- Be open and critically reflective about their own work based on input from the supervisor and provide the supervisor with full insight into their work and progress.

IV. Conflict in the supervisory relationship

- The supervisor and the student should strive to act such that any disagreement does not escalate into conflict and a poor working climate.
- If the supervisor or the student finds the supervision situation so challenging that further cooperation seems impossible, they should involve the nearest management to find the best solution.

Legislation and Sources:

- [Act relating to universities and university colleges](#)
- [Act on the organisation of research ethics \(Research Ethics Act\)](#)
- [Act relating to procedure in cases concerning the public administration \(Public Administration Act\)](#)
- [Act relating to the processing of personal data \(The Personal Data Act\)](#)
- [Regulations for the degree of Philosophiae Doctor \(Ph.D.\) at Western Norway University of Applied Sciences](#)
- [Vancouver Recommendations- ICMJE | Recommendations](#)
- [Ethical Guidelines for Supervisions Relationships – The Faculty of Medicine \(uio.no\)](#)
- [Ethical Guidelines for Supervisions Relationships - University of Oslo \(uio.no\)](#)
- [Ethical Guidelines for Supervision - UiA](#)
- [Ethical Guidelines for Supervision at UiT The Arctic University of Norway](#)

- [Guide on the Responsibility of Institutions for Research Ethics | Research Ethics](#)
- [Guidelines for Research Ethics in the Social Sciences and the Humanities | Forskningsetikk](#)
- [Together | The Student Association in Western Norway](#)