



## A framework for supervision roles within Postgraduate Taught Programmes

Postgraduate taught research projects are supervised by suitably qualified individuals drawn from within Trinity, and from a wide range of sectors and industries across society. Given that varying approaches to supervision can be used, this framework has been approved to ensure a common approach is adopted in terms of who can supervise, and to define the remit and limits of their role, and responsibilities, in the supervision of PGT projects.

By creating clear roles and responsibilities for each stakeholder and emphasising collaboration, communication and effective mentorship of the postgraduate taught student, this framework aims to enhance the quality, relevance, and impact of PGT research, ultimately contributing to the academic and professional development of Trinity's postgraduate taught students.

Person	Role	Responsibilities
<b>Primary academic supervisor or co-supervisor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- The primary academic supervisor or co-supervisor serve(s) as the main point(s) of contact and mentor(s) for the PGT student throughout their research.</li><li>- The primary or co-supervisory team may be (a) academic member(s) of staff in Trinity, and (b) Senior Research Fellows.</li><li>- Postdoctoral researchers may act as primary supervisors when contract permits.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- The primary academic supervisor may or may not be directly involved in the student's research project but bears overall responsibility for their academic progress.</li><li>- Oversees the academic design of the project, providing advice in identifying resources, including literature, data, and expertise, necessary for the successful completion of the research project.</li><li>- Monitors progress of the student's work and provides constructive feedback.</li><li>- Ensures compliance with academic standards, ethical guidelines, and university regulations.</li><li>- Facilitates opportunities for academic and professional development.</li></ul>
<b>Co-supervisor or secondary academic supervisor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- The secondary supervisor or co-supervisor contributes subject-specific expertise, teaching resources, and academic mentorship.</li><li>- In co-supervision arrangements, they may be of equal standing in relation to the roles and responsibilities of a primary supervisor.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Provide guidance on theoretical frameworks, conceptual models, and disciplinary perspectives.</li><li>- Offer feedback on research proposals, methodology sections, and academic writing.</li><li>- Facilitate access to course materials, academic workshops, and research seminars.</li><li>- Mentor students on academic and professional development opportunities within their field of study.</li></ul>



Person	Role	Responsibilities
<b>Subject Matter Experts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- May be an adjunct member of staff with either/both professional or academic affiliation to Trinity and professional affiliation with another organisation.</li><li>- May be part of a supervisory team in co-supervision arrangements.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Collaborates with the student and primary supervisor to offer subject-specific guidance and insights.</li><li>- Reviews drafts, provides feedback, and suggests improvements in their area of expertise.</li><li>- Assists in data collection, analysis, or interpretation, as relevant to their domain.</li><li>- Offers mentorship and support based on their practical experience and insights.</li></ul>
<b>External Support Supervisor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Provide specialized knowledge and expertise related to specific aspects of the research project.</li><li>- May combine their supervisory role with another role in the organisation (e.g., line manager if the student is also an employee).</li><li>- Will participate on the basis of co-supervision.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Oversees day-to-day activities related to the research project within the organisational context.</li><li>- Offers context-specific guidance, resources, and access to relevant networks.</li><li>- Facilitates opportunities for students to gain practical experience, such as internships, fieldwork, or access to proprietary data.</li><li>- Collaborating with academic supervisors to ensure alignment between academic requirements and industry expectations.</li><li>- May combine their supervisory role with another role in the organisation (e.g., line manager if the student is also an employee).</li></ul>
<b>Supervising academic from other university</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Collaborating academic staff from other universities bring diverse perspectives and expertise to complement the supervision process.</li><li>- May also be a collaborative partner on joint research projects, interdisciplinary initiatives, or international partnerships.</li><li>- May be part of a supervisory team in co-supervision arrangements.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Provides specialized knowledge or resources not available within the home institution to enhance the student's academic experience.</li><li>- Facilitates access to research facilities, funding opportunities, or academic networks.</li></ul>



Person	Role	Responsibilities
<b>Postdoctoral researchers, research assistants</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Postdoctoral researchers and research assistants contribute to the supervision process by offering peer support, technical expertise, and mentorship.</li><li>- Postdoctoral researchers may act as primary supervisors when contract permits.</li><li>- May not act as a primary supervisor.</li><li>- May be part of a supervisory team in co-supervision arrangements.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Provide guidance on research methodologies, data analysis techniques.</li><li>- Assist with practical aspects of research, such as data collection, laboratory work, or statistical analysis.</li><li>- Offer feedback on literature reviews, and draft manuscripts, if appropriate.</li><li>- Share insights from their own research experiences and academic journey.</li></ul>
<b>PhD students</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- PhD students contribute to the supervision process by offering peer support, technical expertise, and mentorship.</li><li>- May not act as a primary supervisor.</li><li>- May be part of a supervisory team where this aligns with disciplinary norms or is otherwise deemed appropriate by the School.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Provide guidance on research methodologies, data analysis techniques.</li><li>- Assist with practical aspects of research, such as data collection, laboratory work, or statistical analysis.</li><li>- May offer informal feedback on literature reviews, and draft manuscripts.</li><li>- Share insights from their own research experiences and academic journey.</li></ul>

Updated: September 2025