



Membre de UNIVERSITÉ CÔTE D'AZUR 

# **Mentorship/supervision of PhD Students at University Nice Sophia Antipolis**

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- To start, answer on these questions:
  - **What is my duty in a given situation?**
  - **What is right, fair, obligatory?**
- Mentoring PhD students – among the “special duties” that come with assuming the role of university professor
- The aim is to help PhD students become competent scholars or scientists capable of conducting independent, original and ethically sound research

- Supervisors' approach to supervising research has a profound influence on how they will supervise.
- Shared experience, there are often no right or wrong answers, but there are a range of approaches from which we can choose.

# Pay attention to...

- student's fit with and preparation for a particular program
- student's uniqueness (background, personality, strengths, weaknesses)
- student's progress through program
- aggregated student performance (indicators of the degree to which program outcomes are being achieved)

We:

- Maintain appropriate professional distance
- Resist to try to clone ourselves in our students
- Avoid conflicts of interest
- Try to be able to place oneself imaginatively in another's situation
- Respect differences between students
- Achieve the right balance between nurture and objective evaluation
- Have the courage to give negative feedback (the end of studies for someone)

## Problems that students face...

- Dependency
- Not admitting to problems
- Poor progress.
- Not understanding the required standard of work and showing insufficient initiative
- Supervisor not interested in topic
- Conceptual difficulties
- Differences between supervisors
- Supervisor being too prescriptive 'my way is the only way'
- Lack of confidence – is student's work good enough?

# Important to know...

- Full or part time students?
- Experienced or inexperienced students?
- International or home students?
- PhD, professional or practitioner doctorate?
- Supervisor/co-supervisor

As a PhD supervisor: what are the problems that you have faced?

As a PhD student: what were the problems that you faced?

## Proposed QUESTIONS to supervisors

- What has been your experience of supervising PhD students?
- How many doctoral students do you have?
- What have your students gone on to do?
- How would you define an excellent PhD student or thesis?
- What effective ways are there of working with your students?
- How often do you see your students?
- What problems have arisen and how have you coped with them?
- How were you supervised when you did your PhD?