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# Doctoral Supervision with Colleagues

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## Abstract

The doctoral supervision of an academic colleague when both are employed in the same university has attracted limited research. In contrast, there is a plethora of research on a range of aspects related to doctoral supervision including

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processes associated with doctoral supervision, guidance for the doctoral supervisor, and the relationship between the doctoral supervisor and candidate. The completion of a doctorate is a substantial investment by both the candidate and the university and is brought into even sharper focus if the candidate is also an employee at the same university. Though each of the parties is driven by different agendas, they share a common interest in the successful completion of the doctorate. This may place additional pressure on the candidate and supervisor, particularly in relation to their professional credibility and career trajectory.

This chapter draws from previous research conducted by the authors' into this complex relationship and presents a number of recommendations to inform best practice. These recommendations have been drawn from the research participants, literature, and the authors' experiences as doctoral candidates and doctoral supervisors for colleagues. The first section discusses important issues related to the area of colleague doctoral supervision. The following section identifies a series of recommendations concerning colleague doctoral supervision for the various stakeholders. The final section offers a blueprint for those tasked with formalizing this potential complex relationship.

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**Keywords**

Doctoral supervision · Colleague · Supervisor · University sector · University policy

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## Introduction

At a staff meeting at a regional university early in 2016, a member of upper management announced to a group of academics that one of his goals was to oversee a rapid expansion of the number of students enrolled in doctoral programs. He might have generated more support among his listeners had he refrained from quantifying the extent of this expansion. Doubling the number of students enrolled in doctoral studies might, however, have been more aspirational than literal. It might also have been a means of engaging his audience in a discussion. Those members of the audience who would be responsible for providing the infrastructure, both human and material, might have drawn some comfort from identifying the distinction between the two. That may well have dissipated in the face of the additional observation that the time frame for this grand ambition would be four years.

Though in time the numbers were scaled back to more manageable levels, what the episode shows is that institutional change cannot be about means or ends; it must be about means *and* ends. Yet as Åkerlind and McAlpine (2015) warn in the context of doctoral supervision, although it is just as true in a wider context, there is an inherent danger in considering practice independently of purpose, for it reduces meaning and obscures the inherent relationship between the two. In this case, a leader tasked with expanding doctoral programs and encouraging new research marked out an ambitious project that was conceived independently of the broader practices of the institution whose interests he sought to serve. It was not beyond the institution's capabilities, however, if, in President Kennedy's words, it was prepared

to “pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, [and] oppose any foe” (Kennedy 1961) to assure its success. This is, however, impossible in the increasingly complex environment of a modern university balancing a web of complex identities, some of which can appear mutually incompatible. This assertion would not be groundbreaking news for an academic facing a heavy teaching load, managerial responsibilities, research demands, and a doctoral student or students with varying temperaments and methods of operating.

Schools and faculties of education benefit from employing academics with currency in the classroom. Unlike the university sector, the school sector does not offer career incentives commensurate with the effort of obtaining a doctoral qualification. A new academic without a doctorate, such as is often the case when a classroom teacher or industry professional shifts to the university sector, is often confronted with the need to commence a doctorate concurrent with the opening months of their employment. Even longer-serving academics who may already hold a tenured position are now also faced with the institutional expectation that they acquire a doctorate if for no other reason than the professional credibility it will confer (Denicolo 2004; Schulze 2014). Balancing the demands of a doctorate and the broader expectations of an academic role can be exacerbated when the doctoral supervisor of a colleague is also a direct line manager with responsibility for reporting on their productivity and performance.

The data for this chapter draws from a research project undertaken by the authors which included interviews across two universities with seven doctoral supervisors of colleagues working in the same institution (Ethics Approval: H15REA245). They ranged from extremely experienced supervisors of up to 20-years’ experience to academics relatively new to supervision. A staged analytical approach was taken to identify categories in the interview data using NVivo software, and then the research team read and reread each transcript to analyze the content for further themes (Fereday and Muir-Cochrane 2006). A comparative cross-checking approach was used to conduct an iterative search for similarities and differences between each interview transcript. The following predominant themes were identified from personal narratives written from each participant’s interview: institutional processes, relationships, professional credibility, and community and power relationships. Four recommendations arose from review of the data which could inform the approach universities take to colleague doctoral supervision.

## **Universities and the Neoliberal Context**

The call for expansion of his university’s doctoral programs cannot be dismissed as one research manager’s idiosyncratic response to increasing higher degree research student numbers, for the call to arms was not delivered in a vacuum, nor did it break new ideological ground in anything but scale. The university system has to some extent redefined itself in “market-oriented, utilitarian terms in response to an altered economic environment of public funding constraints, user pays principles, full-fee paying courses and research directly tied to business needs” (Winter 2009, p. 123).

Baguley and Fullarton (2013) contend that although terms such as “benchmarking” and “outputs,” with the implication of an objective measure of performance, have traditionally been used in business contexts, “their growing currency in the education sector is indicative of a wider integration of management practices by educational institutions” (27). The aspirational business target announced by the research manager was, no doubt, at least partly informed by what Giroux (2002) and Macoun and Miller (2014) describe as the increasingly neoliberal culture of modern universities. This sees academics operating in environments which prioritize “profit, control, and efficiency, all hallmark values of the neoliberal corporate ethic” (Giroux 2002, p. 434). Kerby (2013) notes that “even amongst educators who conceded that marketing is an indispensable function of schools, there is a perception that it is incompatible with education” (10). Central to this ethic is the performance benchmark.

As universities generally embrace neoliberal models focused on achieving performance benchmarks, such as academic outputs in the ‘right’ journals, performance management strategies are increasingly extended to Research Higher Degree (RHD) students in order to increase the efficiency of resources allocated to research supervision and encourage students to operate like even more productive employees. The above trends combine to place constraints on the kind of research that is performed and valued within universities and to generate increasingly competitive cultures within departments. (Macoun and Miller 2014, pp. 289–290)

It is not surprising that many academics have, perhaps without conscious intent, internalized business-related values that are driven by the profit motive (Henkel 1997; Slaughter and Leslie 1997; Winter 2009; Winter and Sarros 2002). This has seen an institutional transformation that has “reshaped the nature of universities, making them into producers of commodities that consumers (students) may choose to demand depending on their competing preferences and the institution’s perceived brand image” (Winter 2009, p. 123). A system predicated on this type of accountability must measure outputs, and in doing so academics must provide proof that they are discharging their professional responsibilities in the form of research targets (Harley 2002) and student satisfaction (Sharrock 2000).

Because institutions attempt to sustain traditional academic cultures while simultaneously promoting and developing corporate ideologies and structures, they are characterised by a multiple or hybrid identity (Foreman and Whetten 2002). As identities are not unitary and fixed but pluralistic and fluid, there exists the context for different expectations and discourses as to: (1) the roles, rights, and obligations of academics (e.g., academics as autonomous professionals; academics as managed employees); and (2) the nature and purpose of the institution (e.g., a crucible of learning and education; a profit-making enterprise). (Winter 2009, p. 124)

Yet this leaves institutions hopelessly compromised by the need to balance their corporate identity and their educational/service identity. The confusion that this can lead to is particularly evident in how the universities rate their own doctorates, which, if research conducted in Australian universities is generalizable, is not highly. Analysis of job advertisements undertaken by Pitt and Mewburn (2016) for 42

lower-level academic jobs on the websites of eight universities indicated that in marketplace terms they had little faith in their own product. The advertisements betrayed a confusion over academic identity. In addition to research and teaching, which were assumed, universities framed their understanding of academic roles using what was dismissively characterized “as a host of “really weird” job criteria” (Ross 2016). These ranged from organizing seminars to pastoral care for work-stressed colleagues. One advertisement stipulated 24 key selection criteria (KSC), of which 21 were essential.

Some KSC just seemed nonsensical (e.g., ‘Development and delivery of university teaching and learning principles and methodologies’) while others seemed contradictory to the focus of the role, including research-only roles that listed teaching as a requirement and teaching-focussed roles that listed research. While others seemed unclear on what was ‘essential’ and ‘desirable’ with one university adding a third, ‘compulsory’ KSC category. (Pitt and Mewburn 2016, p. 93)

Mewburn was moved to ask “if we design this education experience, and we evaluate it and teach it and employ it, why aren’t we happy?” (Ross 2016). The answer, unfortunately, is that a hybrid identity inevitably spawns contradictory impulses. It is one thing to say that institutions have evolved, but that is entirely different to people’s perceptions altering along a similar time line. Halse and Malfroy (2010) argue that these changes in the higher education landscape are nothing short of a transformation, one which has “triggered structural changes, new funding regimes, and stricter accountability and quality assurance requirements that have changed the nature of doctoral education and the work of doctoral supervisors” (79). Yet the changes in perception have not kept pace.

## **Academics Negotiating the Hybrid Identity of the University**

The identity confusion which universities are experiencing is also felt by academics, particularly those undertaking a doctorate in conjunction with their core employment. They are, by definition, boundary spanners who dwell in no man’s land, perceived by colleagues as neither student nor fully fledged academic. This can be in stark contrast to their perceived competence in their other duties and the anomaly that their standing can range between new sessional staff member to experienced academic with administrative duties. This ambiguity can extend even to the institutions that create and maintain the “official” culture. Scott (2004, p. 439) characterizes universities as perhaps the most “value-laden institutions in modern society,” ones in which “values such as collegial governance, institutional autonomy and academic freedom have a long tradition of defining the essential elements of academic and university identities” (Winter 2009, p. 122).

It is understandable that a research manager whose career is tied to meeting or exceeding benchmarks would want to see increased productivity under their watch. It is equally understandable that academics with a sustained ideological commitment

to supervision as an integral part of their professional identity would want to continue despite an awareness that time release comes perilously close to being an honorarium. So what dominates the supervision landscape is the spectacle of groups locked into an ostensibly collaborative venture where one side remains committed to discipline scholarship, intellectual curiosity, a community of practice, accountability to peers, and professional autonomy (Ramsden 1998; Winter 2009) and the other which characterizes some of these as “fanciful, steeped in a bygone age, or insular and ignorant of the competitive and financial realities facing universities today” (Winter 2009, p. 123) and, of course, every combination in between. One of the interviewees may well have lamented that he was steeped in the values of a bygone age when he took up employment at another university but committed to finishing supervising candidates at this previous university. He observed that “there was no money or recognition or anything, but you have an ethical commitment to people.”

The question, therefore, of how to more effectively manage the doctoral supervision of colleagues must be explored in the context of where it sits in the broader university experience. For though an academic’s professional identity might be neatly divided in their official role description between teaching, research, and service, in reality, this compartmentalization is both factually inaccurate and destructive of the very ends it seeks to achieve. Each of the interviewees whose responses have shaped the recommendations section provided their workload allocations followed almost immediately by an observation of varying directness that indicated that the figures were essentially meaningless. Not one of the seven indicated anger or even low-level dissatisfaction with that situation. If anything, the overriding reaction was informed by an amused, semi-contemptuous dismissal of the figures informed by the assumption that the interviewer would, as an academic, be in on the joke.

## **Doctoral Supervision of Colleagues in a Changing Landscape**

Though there is a general consensus that change has occurred in the higher education sector, the implications are far more contested. In a series of interviews, the authors undertook with academics who have supervised colleagues, not one raised the link between doctoral supervision and their university’s neoliberal business agenda unprompted and not one showed an inclination to pursue that line of thinking when it was raised for them. Instead, they spoke sincerely and enthusiastically of “an ethical commitment to people,” students as “colleagues,” supervision as the pursuit of a “mutual enquiry process,” of “becoming friends in the process,” and the act of supervising as being nothing short of a “privilege.” It is hardly surprising that academics were then nonplussed by the public commitment to doubling outputs in an area that they valued so highly and which informed their professional identity. Again, this was not a site specific aberration. The demand for research education “seems strong” with record numbers of students enrolling in research degrees (Pitt and Mewburn 2016, p. 88).

Academics supervising colleagues who are enrolled in doctoral courses would no doubt be particularly aware of the inaccuracy of workload models, for they find

themselves confronted by the identity confusion that afflicts many academics who are already immersed in a complex web of roles ranging across a broad spectrum which includes teacher, administrator, researcher, and mentor.

In short, professional life is increasingly becoming a matter not just of handling overwhelming data and theories within a given frame of reference (a situation of complexity) but also a matter of handling multiple frames of understanding, of action and of self-identity. The fundamental frameworks by which we might understand the world are multiplying and are often in conflict. (Barnett 1999, p. 6)

The supervisory doctoral relationship with colleagues is therefore particularly complex due to a range of factors including the expectations of an academic's role, the type of supervision, the academic level of the candidate, supervisor/supervisee "fit," personal relationships, and institutional governance (Denicolo 2004; Guerin et al. 2015; Manathunga 2007; Moxham et al. 2013; Pyhältö et al. 2015; Stephens 2014; Watson 2012). Some supervisors engage in a process that they might conceptualize in the most altruistic of terms without ever really engaging with the reality that they do so against the background of a growing commodification of doctorates. Some universities list on their websites a list of preapproved doctoral topics and the available supervisors as a means of streamlining the process of enrolment. When they do engage with supervision, the manner in which an academic approaches the task is inevitably shaped by their own experience of supervision (Amundsen and McAlpine 2009; Lee 2008). This is hardly surprising, for as Turner (2015) observes, early career academics frequently undertake doctoral supervision shortly after they complete their own doctoral study. Given that they have no other frame of reference, they often attempt to replicate their own experience or in the case of a negative supervisory experience consciously attempt to avoid doing so.

This seemingly premature introduction to supervision is further problematized by the fact that it often occurs with limited or no systematic preparation (Amundsen and McAlpine 2009; Peelo 2011; Turner 2015). While looking to develop their professional and supervisory identities (Lee 2008), academics are left to find their own way without feedback or guidance (Blass et al. 2012; Turner 2015). That each of the interviewees began their supervisory careers without any preparation beyond their own doctorate says much about the lack of alignment between the desire of a corporate structure to offer a product that will be subject to often quite rigorous benchmarks and the need to ensure that staff with the necessary skills are available to conduct it. Beyond even that revelation is the extent to which staffs have resigned themselves to this amateurish approach. Not one of the interviewees expressed any sense of concern let alone anger that they began what they all agree is an integral part of their role as academics without preparation (Guerin et al. 2015).

Given the equanimity with which they recall having been initiated into the world of doctoral supervision, it is unsurprising that the interviewees generally did not see a profound difference between the supervision of a colleague and "normal supervision." This reflects the difficulty in disentangling this unique relationship from the broader experience of doctoral supervision. What Denicolo (2004) found is

that good supervision by a colleague can be indistinguishable from the “normal” experience of good supervision. The experience is characterized as a richer version of what one would instinctively associate with a positive supervisory experience. This was the experience of a number of the participants: “You just apply the same judgements that you apply to anyone else,” “The approach I take with pretty much any student,” and “I’ve always been able to separate the [other work] functions quite away from the person” are indicative of a view that each supervision has unique challenges so a work relationship is merely a contextually specific characteristic. Each interviewee saw supervision as informed by the establishing and maintaining of a relationship. As Stephens (2014, p. 539) concedes, however, “the reality of doctoral candidature is that it rarely progresses in an idealised way.” The effect of a strained or ultimately unsuccessful supervisory relationship between colleagues can resonate throughout their workplace. Yet again, two interview subjects who had unsatisfactory experiences in supervising colleagues and are now unprepared to countenance any further similar arrangements still see the issues as failings specific to the individuals involved rather than indicative of an inherent concern within an institutional setting. The interviewees’ preparedness to commence supervision without preparation, the absence of any subsequent concern about the appropriateness of that arrangement, their disinclination to view doctoral supervision within a business paradigm, and their staunch commitment to the act of supervision as something quite central to the professional identity would tend to show that in this instance the universities are perhaps better served than they really deserve to be (McAlpine 2013).

Yet as Forsyth (2014) observed, for all the growth of doctorates, there has not been a commensurate growth in the academic workforce. Hopes for a more graduated introduction to supervision are likely, therefore, to be dashed, as will the employment hopes of many newly graduated doctoral students. It is clear that not everyone is singing from the same song sheet.

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## Recommendations for Colleague Doctoral Supervision

Universities make significant investments in areas such as staff recruitment which enhance their reputational standing. This becomes even more complex when staff undertakes a doctorate at the institution in which they are employed given that it requires an even greater commitment of university resources. If staff leaves prematurely, the institution is unable to offset the expenditure through measures such as grants or other productivity gains (O’Meara et al. 2016). Reasons for staff leaving an institution are many and varied and can include family reasons, geographic location, academic identity, gender issues, challenging staff relationships, lack of support, or greater opportunities elsewhere (Guzmán-Valenzuela and Barnett 2013; O’Meara et al. 2014; Probert 2005; Easterly and Ricard 2011). Though staff changes are inevitable and can be positive for an institution, to ameliorate this “brain drain” additional support needs to be provided for both colleagues undertaking doctorates and those supervising them.



The following recommendations have been drawn from the authors' recent research in this area and their experiences as doctoral candidates and supervisors of colleagues and relevant literature. The four recommendations are predicated on an institutional recognition that the doctoral supervision of a colleague is in fact a different form of supervision rather than just a potentially richer conventional relationship. The authors have assumed that such recognition is forthcoming and has framed the recommendations as a series of responses that veer into the contested terrain of "common sense." The fact that they are very human-centered responses will make them attractive to supervisors wedded to an altruistic construct of service. Given that they are seeking to be cost-effective and make use of available resources, they will be equally attractive to the administrators tasked with funding any initiative. In adopting these recommendations, the richness of colleague supervision is retained, and the potential challenges are planned for and hopefully avoided.

### **Recommendation 1: The Doctoral Supervision of Colleagues Is Undertaken by Experienced Supervisors Who Are Not Direct Line Managers of the Candidate**

An important issue for academic staff undertaking a doctorate is negotiating the hybrid identity of being both an academic and a student in addition to their relationship with a colleague who is also their supervisor (Pyhältö et al. 2015). Viczeko and Wright (2010) offer an understanding of identity as it pertains to teacher education that has particular relevance to doctoral supervision. The relationship between the supervisor and student, in their view, must evolve as the collaboration deepens over the course, literally, of years of endeavor. Denicolo (2004) explores this transition, implying that the relationship and thus the identities of the protagonists, and sometimes antagonists, were mutable, subject like any organism to change. In addition, as Denicolo (2004) observes, colleague supervisees regress to novice status as a new doctoral candidate and therefore "special skills are demanded of the colleague supervisor no matter what form the relationship takes in other arenas of their work" (p. 696). Denicolo (2004) also notes from the supervisor's perspective that supervising a colleague can result in issues of authority, difficulty in balancing a management/administrative role with the support role of supervisor, and the role switching required to be both a friend/colleague and a supervisor providing critical feedback.

The supervisor/student relationship takes on an importance that transcends the mere production of a thesis, although in some cases successful completion is linked to a tenured position and/or ability to become a principal supervisor. The student is socialized not just into the world of supervision but into the academic world enacted through models of mentorship, teaching, people skills, and management. Tierney and Bensimon (1996, cited in Ponjuan et al. 2011) posit that new academic staff are socialized into academic life partly through their interactions with senior faculty who are seen as role models. As part of their leadership role, senior faculty, particularly through their doctoral supervision responsibilities, are expected to embrace

generative research mentoring and support the intellectual well-being of future cohorts of scholars (Fletcher 2012; Lemmer 2016).

The importance of an experienced supervisor to provide support for a colleague undertaking a doctorate is critical in order to navigate the complexities of this transition. Researchers have highlighted power issues in supervisory relationships which can both empower and disempower candidates (Doloriert et al. 2012; Guerin et al. 2015; Hemer 2012). The multiple roles of an academic with their “inherent tensions, and sometimes conflicting agendas and constructs” can be difficult to navigate even for more experienced academics (Denicolo 2004, p. 694). The addition of the role of either doctoral supervisor or supervisee to this list is “likely to exacerbate an already super-complex situation” (Barnett 2000, cited in Denicolo 2004, p. 695).

## **Recommendation 2: The Implementation of Internal Processes Should Recognize the Complexities of Doctoral Supervision of Colleagues**

Universities often provide some release time for staff members undertaking doctoral study either within the same institution or at another university as part of their workload allocation. Supervisors are also granted time allocation for supervising higher degree research (HDR) students which is also how staff undertaking a doctorate are identified at the university. There does not appear to be any additional internal recognition of colleague supervision in the university sector. There are various pressures on doctoral supervisors which can also be affected by the employment level and stage of the colleague, who may be sessional, fractional, or full time, and their career aspirations. Some will require, or may demand, much greater time commitment and mentoring than others.

There can be expectations that colleagues undertaking a doctorate have ready access to supervisors who are often on the same campus and an appropriate and easily accessible research infrastructure. However, issues can arise due to the proximity of the work environment, particularly if progress is hampered by any number of impediments that can arise over the course of a doctorate. Other colleagues may also wish to discuss the doctoral candidate’s work with the supervisor which can transgress boundaries of confidentiality afforded to other doctoral students (Denicolo 2004). To assist in alleviating some of these issues, universities need to clearly recognize this particular supervisory relationship.

Supervisees may feel they are unable to approach the supervisor outside of designated times due to their awareness of their heavy workload and commitments. A specific policy related to workload allocation and expectations for colleague doctoral supervisors and supervisees also needs to be considered so that it is prioritized in workload allocation models. Some universities provide paid leave for 3–6 months for doctoral completion for colleagues which is particularly helpful in the final critical stage of writing. However, commensurate consideration needs to be afforded by supervisors who may still be managing a full-time academic role and

providing feedback and support during this intensive period of research and writing for the doctoral candidate. Further recognition could be through the inclusion of a multiplier in workload formulas related to research which recognizes publications co-authored by the supervisor with the supervisee during the period of the doctorate.

An alternate understanding of supervision may also be an area worthy of further exploration. Watson (2012) suggests group supervision practices “could be considered for all forms of colleague student supervision” (573). The formation of a group of people tasked to support colleague doctoral supervisors which includes key personnel from administration who understand the particular pressures on academic staff would assist in building new communities through supportive collaborative structures. In addition, online resources for supervisors with a particular focus on colleague doctoral supervision could be developed with a community of practice established for supervisors negotiating this complex relationship.

### **Recommendation 3: Institutional Recognition Should Be Provided for the Doctoral Supervisor of a Colleague**

Often institutional policies around areas such as doctoral study have been developed by administrative staff with the result that they can focus on institutional processes to the detriment of other considerations. Experienced academic supervisors need to contribute to the writing and implementation of policies and processes around doctoral supervision with a particular focus on some of the issues that may arise during colleague supervision. The doctoral supervision of a colleague includes an important element of mentoring, which is also expected of an experienced supervisor who is aware of institutional expectations in this regard, but takes on a more specific nature for colleagues (Manathunga 2007). In order to effectively mentor, there needs to be an institutional oversight of the supervisee’s academic role, including teaching and service, to ensure a holistic approach that recognizes that the doctoral journey is part of the collective responsibility of an institution (McAlpine 2013). Given the importance, particularly for new academics, of completing their doctorate as an important milestone in their academic career, it is essential that supervisors, and their own line managers, are aware of their workload and research commitments.

A group meeting with the colleague supervisor, candidate, and the head of school (or equivalent) to discuss the workload commitments of the colleague they are supervising is a necessary prerequisite to an organized commencement of the doctoral journey. This will enable the person responsible for workload allocation and the colleague supervisor to have a holistic view of the supervisee’s academic commitments. This approach moves beyond the neoliberal approach currently being undertaken by personalizing mentoring and adapting it to the needs of the individual mentee (Franko et al. 2016). For though the doctoral experience might be the major focus of the student’s professional life, it is unlikely that it will be at the center of the supervisor’s universe irrespective of their dedication.

Supervisors involved in colleague doctoral supervision should be acknowledged through institutional processes which recognize the additional pressures and

complexities of this relationship. This may include formal acknowledgment through the research office, a social gathering of colleague supervisors from across the university, and additional workload for this supervision. As well as providing a supportive network, the acknowledgment at higher levels of the university will contribute to a positive and collegial environment and may encourage other supervisors to undertake this important responsibility for a colleague.

#### **Recommendation 4: Further Support Should Be Provided to Both Supervisor and Doctoral Candidate by an External Critical Friend**

There are also opportunities to move beyond an institution-centric view of the supervision. It may be possible to include colleagues from another university or, if this is not feasible, other sections of the university, to support the doctoral team as a “critical friend.” This may serve to bring further balance and perspective to this complex doctoral relationship. This could be extended to a critical friend for the supervisor so they are able to focus on any issues related to the doctoral relationship and receive another perspective which is not necessarily aligned to their institutional processes and policies. This critical friendship could also take the form of co-mentoring (Allison and Ramirez 2016) and could be mutually beneficial. If there are concerns regarding confidentiality by seeking this mentorship outside the university, then a colleague in a different section of the university may be able to undertake this role. In addition the colleague being supervised could also be paired with an early career researcher who can provide important advice about how to prepare for the next stage of their career after completion of their doctorate and what strategies they can implement to build their academic profile.

These co-mentoring arrangements could be formalized by the respective universities or sections of the university with contracts drawn up establishing goals and responsibilities. External colleagues may also be offered adjunct appointments in order to ensure that the relationship is mutually beneficial and to further strengthen the research relationship. Critical friends need to be established as early as possible in the doctoral relationship with clear role expectations and work allocation. In addition, critical friends can also advise whether a team needs to be altered as a candidate progresses through their journey with scope for this to occur to address changes in aspects of the research such as its design or methodology which may require additional or different expertise.

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## **Conclusion**

Ponjuan et al. (2011) posit that “as the retirement rates of senior faculty steadily increase, higher education institutions will need to replace more faculty members than ever before, placing a premium on the recruitment and retention of new faculty members” (319). Recruitment of quality staff is one of the challenges which academic leaders are currently experiencing in a university sector which is increasingly

emphasizing performance and productivity exemplified by the link to quality research and global university rankings (Jepsen et al. 2012). As increasing numbers of academics shift their priorities from teaching to research, there are additional tensions related to knowledge creation and transfer and the administrative processes which impede this progress (Braun et al. 2016; Jepsen et al. 2012).

Colleague doctoral supervision is a collective institutional responsibility which needs to be highlighted through formal university policies and processes. The double investment by a university in the current neoliberal environment warrants both “risk mitigation” but also a recalibration of the purpose of universities and the role of the doctorate. Supervising a colleague through their doctoral journey should be a positive and enriching experience with unequivocal support from the university shown throughout this journey. This close alignment between “means” and “ends” requires an acknowledgment of need and an effective and sensitive use of resources to respond to them.

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