

# **Supervision, COVID and Post-COVID – Quo Vadis?**

## Virtual World Café: PhD Supervision

Ed Constable, University of Basel, 13.04.2021

# Structure.

- 1 Being positive – reflections on what we have learned from on-line supervision
- 2 The unmet challenges of supervision
- 3 Acceptance of need for training
- 4 Conflict management
- 5 Recognizing cultural diversity
- 6 Integrity at the core – preparing the next generation

# Being positive – reflections on what we have learned from on-line supervision

## Positive

It is possible but loses spontaneity

Modern technology made it possible .. It would not have happened in 2015

## Negative

The supervisor-doctoral candidate experience is not so rich

The networking opportunities for doctoral candidates are severely limited

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# The unmet challenges of supervision

## The facts

Supervisors are very well-qualified as researchers

Supervisors typically have no training for supervision

Their own supervisors may not have been state-of-the-art → propagation

## Fazit

Supervisors need training

## The challenge

Supervisor training has no stigma and should be welcomed rather than viewed as a sanction!

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# Acceptance of need for training

Supervision training should be local in the institution

It should be delivered by people qualified both in didactics *and* in supervision

Transferrable documentation or accreditation is to be welcomed

Training should be an essential part of the tenure track

The voice of the doctoral candidates should also be heard

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# Conflict management

One of the most difficult challenges for the new supervisor is handling conflicts within the group

These can be between supervisor and doctoral candidate or between doctoral candidates

Typically supervisors are not trained in conflict management – this should be part of the training

Supervisors should recognize what lies inside their competence and what needs external help. The supervisor is not a trained mediator or conciliator.

***Doctoral candidates and supervisors must learn to make use of the existing infrastructure for mediation provided by their parent institutions.***

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# Recognizing cultural diversity

One common cause for conflict between doctoral candidates or between doctoral candidates and supervisors lies in different cultural and social backgrounds.

Discussion lies at the heart of understanding these diversity issues

Increased mobility will result in increasing issues of this nature

Diversity can relate to race, ethnicity, gender, age or sexual orientation among others.

***Institutions should be able to provide assistance for doctoral candidates and supervisors encountering issues of this type.***

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# Integrity at the core – preparing the next generation

Science and scientists are under ever-increasing scrutiny from society, the body politic and funding agencies

Scientific integrity must lie at the heart of the doctoral training and at the core of the supervisor-doctoral candidate relationship.

Institutions should have training programmes in place for both supervisors and doctoral candidates.

Platforms should exist for supervisors and doctoral candidates to exchange freely on these issues

**Thank you for your attention**

**Vielen Dank für Ihre Aufmerksamkeit**

**Merci de votre attention**

**Tack för din uppmärksamhet**

**Dëkojame už dëmesj**

**Dank u voor uw aandacht**

**Dankie vir jou aandag**

**Ngiyabonga ukulalela kwenu**

**Enkosi ngosinaka kwakho**

**Kea leboha ha u mametse**