# Sample ‘Supervisory Expectations’ Checklist

| ***Consider where you (and your supervisor) stand in relation to each of these pairs of statements…*** | | | | | | | |
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|  | **Admission:** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1 | It is the School’s responsibility to ensure any student who is admitted can be adequately supervised and equipped in their chosen area of research. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | It is up to the student to thoroughly investigate the School before accepting a place as a research student to ensure adequate supervision and appropriate facilities are available. |
| 2 | The School should appoint the Supervisor. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | The student should be able to choose the Supervisor. |
|  | **Getting Started:** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3 | It is the Supervisor’s responsibility to select the topic. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | It is the student’s responsibility to select the topic. |
| 4 | In the end, it is up to the Supervisor to determine which theoretical frame of reference is most appropriate. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Students have a right to choose their own theoretical standpoint, even if it conflicts with that of their Supervisor. |
| 5 | The supervisor should direct the student in the development of an appropriate programme of research and study. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | The Supervisor should act mainly as a sounding board for students’ ideas, and give advice only when called upon |
|  | **Making Progress:** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 6 | Staff-student relationships are purely professional and personal matters should not intrude. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Close personal relationships are essential for successful supervision. |
| 7 | The Supervisor should initiate frequent meetings with the student. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | It is up to the student to decide when s/he wants meetings with the Supervisor. |
| 8 | The Supervisor should know at all times what the student is working on. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Students should have the opportunity to find their own way without having to account for how they spend their time. |
| 9 | The Supervisor should terminate supervision if s/he thinks the project is beyond the student’s capability | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | The Supervisor should support right through until the thesis has been submitted, regardless of his/her opinion of the work. |
|  | **The Thesis:** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 10 | The Supervisor should insist on seeing drafts of every section of the thesis | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | It is up to the student to ask for constructive feedback from the Supervisor when s/he is ready. |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 11 | The Supervisor has direct responsibility for setting the standard the thesis is expected to meet and ensuring that it does so. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | The Supervisor advises only, and leaves all decisions concerning content, format, and standards to the student. |
| 12 | The Supervisor should assist in writing the thesis if the student has difficulties. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | The Supervisor should be very wary of contributing too much to the thesis. |
| 13 | The Supervisor should ensure the thesis is finished within the minimum period. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | As long as the student works steadily, s/he can take as much time as s/he needs to complete. |

(Student Learning *Te Taiako*, Victoria University of Wellington, adapted from materials from the University of Canterbury and the University of Queensland.)