General guidelines for the supervision of research and studies
- The rights and duties of postgraduate students and their supervisors
Approved by the Faculty Council on 14 February 2008

Senate guidelines on postgraduate supervision
On 8 June 2006, the Senate of the University of Helsinki approved general guidelines according to which each postgraduate student must be assigned at least one supervisor. Attention must be paid especially to supervision at the outset of postgraduate studies. Postgraduate students must be acquainted with postgraduate studying, guided in making the best use of course offerings and supported in their integration to the academic community. Students must receive regular supervision when they pursue studies related to their research work and postgraduate education.

General supervision guidelines
These general guidelines are intended to support cooperation between postgraduate students and their supervisors in the Faculty of Agriculture and Forestry. Both postgraduate students and their supervisors have rights and duties, which should be discussed at the start of a supervisory relationship.

Personal study plan
Postgraduate students must write a personal study plan (PSP, or HOPS in Finnish) with their supervisor. The personal study plan must encompass a research and postgraduate study plan as well as supervisory arrangements. Postgraduate students together with their supervisor must update their personal study plan throughout the postgraduate degree programme once a year or more often if necessary. The postgraduate study plan must be written and confirmed according to Faculty practices.

Appointment of supervisors
Each student is assigned at least one supervisor when the student is granted the right to pursue postgraduate study. The professor in charge of the discipline can also serve as a supervisor. The Faculty recommends that each postgraduate student be assigned more than one supervisor. At least one of the supervisors must be a professor or docent or have equivalent academic qualifications. The other supervisors must hold at least a doctorate. If more than one supervisor is assigned, the role of each of them must be agreed together with the student. The Faculty also recommends that a monitoring group be set up to support the student.

Supervisory relationship
The supervisory relationship begins with the drafting of the personal study plan. At this stage, the supervisor and the student agree on guidelines for their cooperation. They also agree on the dissertation objectives and timetable, the practical implementation of supervision, degree studies and other issues crucial for the progress of postgraduate studies. The student and the supervisor can later clarify their supervisory relationship with a written agreement.
The rights and duties of a postgraduate student
- A commitment to independent, critical and long-term work
- The right to be assigned a supervisor who supports the student’s independent work
- The right to receive supervision and assistance in issues related to studies and research from
  the professor in charge of the discipline as well as at least one supervisor
- The responsibility for the progress of studies, keeping the supervisor(s) up-to-date on the
  research work and updating the study and research plan each year
- The duty to register at the University as an attending or non-attending student each academic
  year

The rights and duties of a supervisor
- A supervisor commits to long-term and regular supervision and the promotion of the
  supervisee’s research work.
- Supervisors agree on their mutual distribution of duties.
- During the drafting of the research plan, the supervisor should take into account that the
  student must be able to complete the doctoral degree and related studies in four years of full-
  time study.
- The supervisor must have sufficient and equal time for all the supervisees.
- The supervisor meets each supervisee regularly and treats all supervisees equitably.
- The supervisor guides the student in research-related practices (research ethics, research
  plan, scientific conferences, publishing etc.).
- The supervisor supports the student’s integration into the academic community.
- The supervisor discusses issues involving research funding and funding opportunities with the
  supervisee.
- The supervisor ensures the continuity of his or her supervisees' supervision in changing
  circumstances and proposes, if necessary, the appointment of another supervisor.
- The supervisor ensures for his or her part the quality of a dissertation manuscript and its
  suitability for preliminary examination.

The rights and duties of the monitoring group
- The right to give constructive and critical feedback on the progress of postgraduate studies
  and research work, but not the responsibility for the supervision of the dissertation

The rights and duties of the professor in charge of the discipline
- The professor is in charge of the supervision of dissertations and postgraduate students in the
  major subject.
- If a supervisor is unable to ensure the continuity of supervision, the professor in charge helps
  the postgraduate student find a new supervisor.
- The professor ensures the quality of a dissertation manuscript and its suitability for preliminary
  examination.
- The professor ensures that the studies indicated in a study plan have been completed.
- The professor initiates the dissertation examination process and monitors its progress until the
  completion of the degree.

Problems
In the case of a problem that cannot be solved, a student and/or a supervisor can contact the
professor in charge of the discipline, the head of the department or the vice-dean in charge of
research affairs.

A supervisory relationship can be terminated in writing upon the initiative of either the postgraduate
student or his or her supervisor. If the postgraduate student has more than one supervisor, any
changes in supervision can be carried out within existing supervisory arrangements or by appointing a
new supervisor according to Faculty practices.