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ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Academic and Educational Affairs

Student Supervision Guidelines

MBZUAI-ASA-SUPERVISION-PRO-V1.2

Effective date: Sep 2022

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1. Introduction

This document provides detailed information on the Guidelines pertaining to the assignment of student supervisors as per the Educational Affairs Policy Manual, as well as on the requirements and responsibilities of each party in the student's academic progression in terms of research and thesis completion.

The Guidelines serve as a vital component of the University's policies, intricately connected with the Educational Affairs, Code of Conduct, Admissions, and Registration Policy Manuals.

2. Objective

These guidelines aim to set out a transparent and equitable supervisor assignment process and enhance students' learning and research experience.

3. Scope

These Guidelines apply to:

1. All MBZUAI students, faculty, and staff.
2. All credit-bearing graduate programs offered by MBZUAI.

4. Student Supervisor Assignment Guidelines

4.1 MBZUAI PhD Programs

- 4.1.1 PhD candidates should name a list of three preferred supervisors as part of their application form during admission. The list should include one primary supervisor, one secondary supervisor, and a third choice.
- 4.1.2 During the first week of the semester, the Registrar's Office (RO), following the direction of the Department Chair, will formally communicate the primary and secondary supervisors (at least one (1) supervisor must be tenured) to all PhD students according to their preferences in the application form, as per the Educational Affairs Policy Manual.
- 4.1.3 A circulated email from the RO will include guidelines indicating that students may change their supervisor preferences during the first semester and before the start of the final exam period. These changes are to be submitted through the Supervisor Selection Request e-forms.
- 4.1.4 The RO will compile the PhD supervisor assignments and share them with the respective Department Chairs and the Academic Administration for their reference.

4.2 MBZUAI MSc Programs

- 4.2.1 During the first week of the semester, MSc students will be assigned a mentor from their department of study by Department Chairs.
- 4.2.2 The RO will confirm the mentor assignments with the students via email. This email will also include guidelines indicating that students may change their supervisor preferences during the first semester and

before the start of the final exam period. These changes are to be submitted through the Supervisor Selection Request e-forms.

- 4.2.3 Students can schedule one-on-one meetings with any faculty members they wish to meet regarding project supervision until the 10th week of the semester.
- 4.2.4 Students will submit their 'Supervisor Selection Request e-forms' to confirm their initial selection. The supervisor allocation process will begin after the 10th week of the semester and must be completed before the final exam period.
- 4.2.5 RO will compile the final list of student preferences and share it with Department Chairs for approval.
- 4.2.6 Once the final assignments are approved, the Registrar's Office will formally assign the supervisors in the Student Information System (SIS) and email both the Academic departments and the students.
- 4.2.7 The specific dates will be announced by the Registrar's Office.
- 4.2.8 The following should be noted and will be applied:
 - a. There is no guarantee that the preferred supervisor will be assigned.
 - b. Supervisors may have various numbers of students depending on their seniority and the workload policy.
 - c. One supervisor shall be tenured as per the Educational Affairs policy manual.

Roles and Responsibilities

| Role/Decision/Action | Responsibility* | Conditions and limitations |
|--|------------------|----------------------------------|
| PhD Student lists preferred supervisors. | Student | Prior to the start of studies |
| Nominate the supervisors | Department Chair | In consultation with the faculty |
| Allocate supervisors for MSc Students. | Department Chair | Based on availability |

4.3 Changing Supervisor/Supervisee

Changing Supervisor

- 4.3.1 Students may request a supervisor change by completing a Supervisor Change e-Form.
- 4.3.2 The change request must be endorsed by the Department Chair in consultation with the supervisor.
- 4.3.3 The request must be made before the final exam period.
- 4.3.4 Both the student and supervisor will be advised of the outcome of the request.

Roles and Responsibilities

| Role/Decision/Action | Responsibility* | Conditions and limitations |
|--|------------------|---|
| Request change of supervisor | Student | |
| Endorse/reject the change of supervisor. | Department Chair | In consultation with the relevant faculty |
| Enter supervisor change into SIS. Advise Provost of change. Advise student and faculty of change | Registrar | |

Changing Supervisee

4.3.5 A supervisor may change a student supervisee, but such cases must be brought to the Department Chair and assessed on a case-by-case basis.

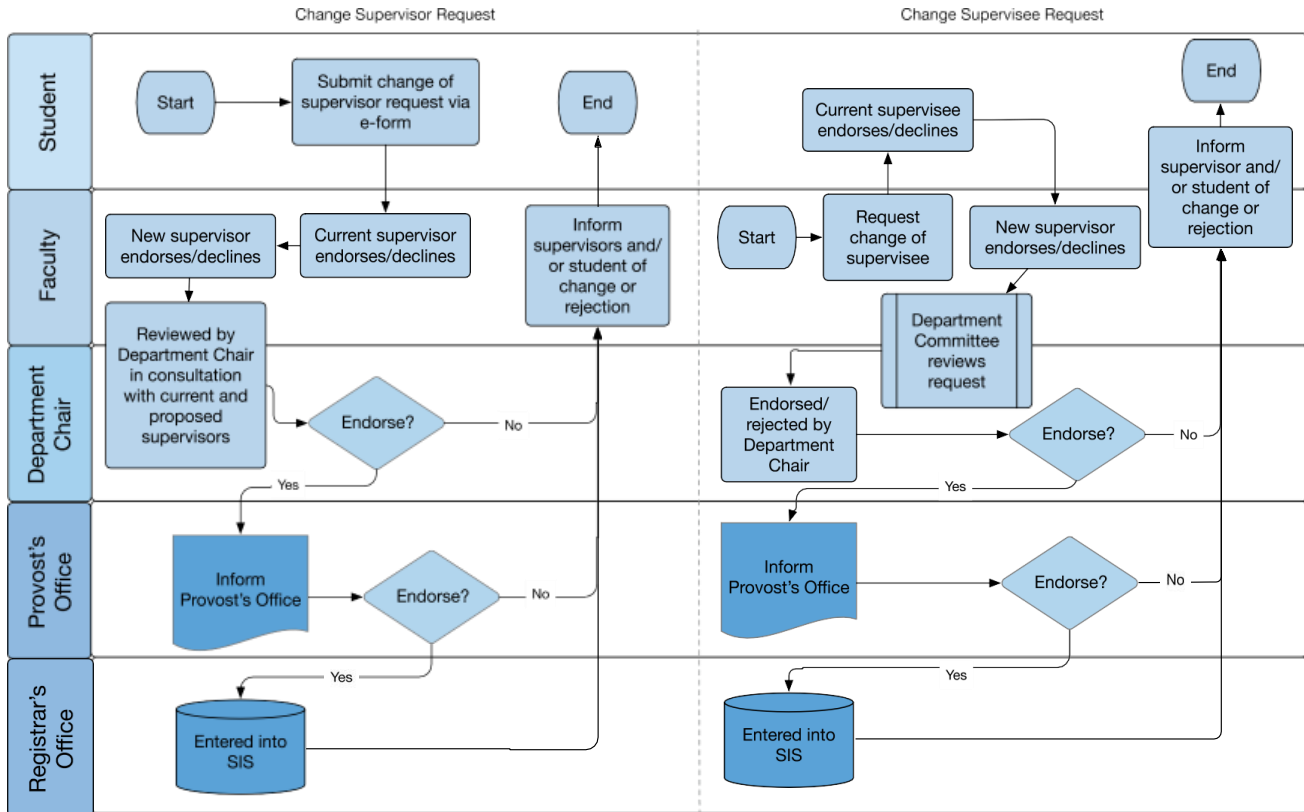
4.3.6 If the Department Chair agrees the change is warranted, the Department Chair will endorse the change and inform the student and Registrar.

Roles and Responsibilities

| Role/Decision/Action | Responsibility* | Conditions and limitations |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|------------------------------|
| Request change of supervisee | Supervisor | |
| Review change request | Department Chair | In consultation with faculty |
| Endorse/reject change of supervisor. | Department Chair | On advice from committee |

4.3.7 The RO enters the student supervisors into SIS.

Change Supervisor/Supervisee Workflow



4.4 Student Supervision Process

- 4.4.1 During the first weeks of the semester, the supervisor contacts the student for project expectations and supervision meetings.
- 4.4.2 Students are responsible for organizing meetings with the supervisor when needed, but a minimum of four times per semester is a requirement. The meetings can be organized with primary or secondary supervisors and as physical meetings or online.

Roles and Responsibilities

| Role/Decision/Action | Responsibility* | Conditions and limitations |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|
| Email to introduce supervisor. | Supervisor | |
| Request a meeting with supervisor. | Student | |
| Keep meeting log. | Student | On advice from Registrar |

4.5 Review of Supervision and Student Progress

- 4.5.1 At the end of each semester, the student and their supervisor will discuss progress, and each student will submit a narrative and evidence as part of a Student Progress Evaluation using the Student Progress Evaluation Form. The primary supervisor will provide evaluative commentary, identifying any issues and listing achievements.
- 4.5.2 The information collected will form the basis of discussion at the review meeting each semester, utilizing the Student 360 feedback form. The objective of Student 360 is to provide more personalized holistic feedback on student performance and identify at-risk students.
- 4.5.3 The supervisor's evaluation will be added to the Student Progress Evaluation Form as necessary after the meeting and provided to each individual student.
- 4.5.4 During Student 360, all faculty and the Department Chair will discuss all students one by one and any issues that arise from it, including supervision practice, the research content of individual projects, or potential issues with courses.
- 4.5.5 All students will be notified of the outcome of the review.

Roles and Responsibilities

| Role/Decision/Action | Responsibility* | Conditions and limitations |
|---|-----------------|----------------------------|
| Convene all-supervisor meeting | Provost | |
| Review student progress | All supervisors | |
| Collect feedback from external reviewer | PhD Students | |

5. Glossary of Terms

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Academic advising | The process by which faculty assigned as supervisors provide guidance to students on program and course choices. |
| Academic supervision | The process by which faculty assigned as supervisors to students provide guidance on research as well as other academic career progression questions and conducts annual student assessment. |
| Mentor | A faculty member who guides students during the initial phase of their academic journey in their first semester, serving as a primary contact point for academic advice and settling into the new academic environment. |
| MSc | Master of Science. |
| PhD | Doctor of Philosophy. |
| Supervisee | The student being supervised. |
| Supervisor | Faculty member who provides both academic advising and research supervision to a student. |
| Supervisor selection process | The process of assigning supervisors for MBZUAI MSc and PhD students. |
| Theses supervision | The process of advising and overseeing students' Masters Theses and PhD Theses research, reporting and assessment processes. |

6. Related Documents

| Related Document(s) |
|---|
| Educational Affairs policy manual (Section 6.7) |
| Supervisor Selection e-form |
| Supervisor Change e-Form |
| Student Progress Evaluation form |
| Admissions policy manual |
| Registrar Office policy manual |
| Code of Conduct policy manual |
| Academic Work and Faculty Workload Policy |

7. Document Control and Version History Information

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|---|---|
| Document Name | Student Supervision Guidelines |
| Reference Number | MBZUAI-ASA-SUPERVISION-PRO-V1.1 |
| Guidelines owner | Provost |
| Department | Academic and Student Affairs |
| Version Number | 1.2 |
| Approval Date | 05/08/2024 |
| Approved By | President |
| Date of Last Review | 30/05/2024 |
| Date for Next Review (normally after two years or when changes occur). | 05/07/2026 |
| <i>For Office Use – Keywords for search function</i> | advising, student research, supervisor, supervision |

8. Version History

| Version number | Person responsible | Date of change | Comments |
|----------------|--------------------|----------------|--|
| V1.0 | Provost | 01/09/2022 | First approved version |
| V1.1 | N/A | 26/03/2024 | Change on the title to align with Educational Affairs policy |

9. Revision History

| Revision number | Date | Description | Comments |
|-----------------|------------|---|--|
| V 0.01 | 6/10/2021 | First draft | Initiated by Director of Academic Development |
| V 0.02 | 18/10/2021 | Amendments incorporated | Feedback from Provost and Registrar |
| V 0.03 | 27/06/2022 | Amendments incorporated | Feedback from Provost |
| V 0.04 | 28/06/2022 | Amendments incorporated | Feedback from Associate Provost |
| V 0.05 | 29/06/2022 | Amendments incorporated | Feedback from President |
| V 0.06 | 04/07/2022 | Amendments incorporated | Feedback from President and Provost |
| V 0.07 | 05/08/2022 | Amendments to timelines and insertion of faculty “wish list” incorporated | Feedback from President |
| V 0.08 | 08/08/2022 | Amendments to timelines incorporated | Feedback from Provost |
| V 0.09 | 12/08/2022 | “Wish list” timing, workflow and roles and responsibilities clarified. | Feedback from President’s Office. |
| V 0.09 | 30/08/2022 | Endorsed by Provost | |
| V 0.10 | 01/09/2022 | Approved by President | |
| V 1.2 | N/A | 30/05/2024 | Major change to the process. Separation of MSc and PhD supervisor selection processes. |
| V1.2 | 05/08/2024 | Endorsed by Provost | |