



Community of Practice for Postgraduate Education and Scholarship

**MEETING OF THE
COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE FOR POSTGRADUATE EDUCATION
AND SCHOLARSHIP (CoP PGES)
OCTOBER 2022**



**UNIVERSITIES
SOUTH AFRICA**

Professor Stephanie Burton
17 October 022

Matters Arising:

PROPOSED ACTIVITIES FOR the CoP PGES IN 2022 / 2023

Topics:

- ✓ The National Report on Doctoral Qualifications (scheduled for July 7th)
- ✓ Supervision models and developments to enable their implementation
- Managing and optimising part-time study for postgraduate study programmes
- The postgraduate students' viewpoints and concerns
- Building collaboration to enrich the postgraduate experience
- Building curriculated modules into Masters and doctoral programmes
- **Mentorship for postgraduate students**
- **Student mobility**
- **Research ethics and integrity**

WORKING GROUP ON POSTGRADUATE FUNDING

Working groups have been agreed as a means of advising USAf and the RISG on specific challenges for postgraduate education, and in developing plans and proposals

Funding for postgraduate study is widely recognised as a serious challenge in South Africa.

- Since funding is a key issue, the CoP PGES should consider ways to address the issue, for example with respect to funding models that institutions are using to leverage resources to support postgraduate students.

Progress to date:

Members: Prof Dina Burger
Dr Gerald Ouma
Rep from the USAf
???

REPORT: UPDATE ON AECRS, Thuso Resources and Thuso Connect

Advancing Early Career Researchers and Scholars (AECRS)

- ✓ Team established and working effectively
- ✓ CoP PGES in action
- ✓ Programme Advisory Committee (meeting 30 Sept)

Current focus:

Thuso Resources
Thuso Connect

AECRS Team

Prof Stephanie Burton	Lead
Ms Janet van Rhyn	USAf
Dr Leandra Jordaan	Researcher
Ms TK Karimazondo	Coordinator
Ms Sendra Lehong	Adminstration
Ms Nomsa Maseko	Marketing and Comm.

PAC

Prof Sibu Moyo	SU
Prof Dina Burger	CPUT
Prof Corli Witthuhn	UFS
Prof Jesika Singh	UL
Ms Val Theron	HEITSA
Prof Nosisi Feza	UniVen
Mr Bheki Hadebe	DSI, Sponsor
Mr Chief Mabizela	DHET
Ms Nomvula Tsebe	USAf

UPDATE ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ADVANCING EARLY CAREER ACADEMICS PROJECT



A project to develop an effective system for **monitoring** the impact of academic support interventions



A nationally coordinated **mentorship resource platform**

Thuso Connect



A **national strategy group** focussing on postgraduate education = **CoP PGES**



An academic capacity development resource database – a **'national toolbox'**

Thuso Resources

COPPGES

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UPDATE:

Thuso Resources

The invitation –

Join the platform to allow your colleagues to access the resources

The request -

Share with us the resources that you have and can share

Thuso Connect

The invitation –

Join the platform – as mentors or mentees in the mentorship programme

The request - in due course...

Share with your colleagues



DISCUSSION TODAY

SUPERVISION MODELS AND DEVELOPING EXPERTISE IN SUPERVISION

SPEAKERS TODAY

Stephanie Burton - Introduction

Liz Brenner	Wits
Laetus Lategan	CUT
Nosisi Feza	UniVen
Dina Burger	CPUT
Peter Meissner	UCT

THE TOPIC – 4 Key questions

- What models of supervision are we using?
- What are the challenges we are encountering?
- What expertise do we need to develop?
- How can we develop that expertise?

Postgraduate supervision 1: Capacity

Adequate, high quality supervisory capacity is a draw-card for prospective students

Increased enrollment of postgraduate students requires an increase in the supervision capacity

- **Increasing the number of supervisors available**
 - nGAP and emerging academics
 - Early Career Researcher Programmes
 - Staff with doctorates

- **“Smarter” ways of providing supervision**
 - cohort supervision
 - use of online platforms, international collaborations

- **The supervisory workload** of academic staff members needs to be closely monitored and managed.

Postgraduate supervision 2: Expertise

High quality supervisory capacity is essential for student success

- Increasing the expertise of supervisors

- **“Smarter” ways of supporting supervisors**
 - *Mentorship*

 - Support platforms

 - National and international cooperation

New approaches: Rethinking the apprenticeship model

- **Group supervision, cohort training, shared resources, ...**
- **Collaborative Doctoral Training Centres**
 - UUK and USAf, NRF
- Training for employment as well as academia - requires greater breadth
- Students to be part of a community, peer support and peer learning
- Achieving critical outcomes on scale that makes a difference
- Added benefits
 - Collaborative research outputs
 - Creating new networks and contacts that can deliver future benefit
 - Exposure to working in different environments, perspectives,
 - Build capacity, capability and new skills

The scope of a Postgraduate Centre

A postgraduate centre can add value through:

- wide cross-faculty interdisciplinary interaction
- broad external outreach
- heightened profile and reputation

Some one needs to wake up every morning and worry about our postgraduates...

- Monitor and improve quality of postgraduate training and supervision
- Improve throughput rates through effective monitoring and guidance
- Enrich and improve the experience of postgraduate training
- Coordinate and smooth administrative processes
- Increase the size of the postgraduate cohort through more effective recruitment

International practice for postgraduate centres

- A central office with a core staff
- Interacting widely and intensively with faculties and university at all levels
- Directed by an academic who has been / is a practising academic researcher and postgraduate supervisor.
- Role of the Director is one of coordination and convening
 - representing the interests of the postgraduates on a wide range of committees and action groups
 - participating in strategy and planning
- Discussion, planning and advice on postgraduate-specific issues
 - policy reforms
 - programme changes reviews

Other support that postgraduate students need

- Advisory help and direction with respect to access to departments and supervisors
- Advice and assistance in accessing funding
- Coordination of postgraduate workshops on academic issues
 - eg. academic practice, ethics, intellectual property
 - Academic writing skills - broadly
- Facilitation of inter-disciplinary interactions
- Induction seminars and orientation
- Counseling –helping with problems as they arise (and before they can't be fixed)
- Language training
- Disciplinary issues
- Assistance with housing
- Graduate placement

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ELECTION OF STEERING COMMITTEE

Annexure 2, 3

TOPIC FOR NEXT MEETING of the CoP PGES

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THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING

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