

## **MA (Taught) Supervision & Dissertation Supervision Information for 2023-2024**

From Claire Westall, PGT Director, Sept 2023

Due to the changes brought by semesterisation and the university's new requirements about supervision contact, this document briefly explains how MA supervision and MA dissertation supervision should work for the academic year 2023-2024.

### **Semester 1**

**Supervisors need to meet with their MA students twice during the first semester. Once at the start, and once towards the end to discuss the PLP essay, or simply to discuss progress if no PLP essay has been required/submitted.**

S1/0-1, Before Semester starts MA students are allocated to supervisors in the usual way. Supervisors should meet all their MA supervisees in Week 0, or by the end of Week 1 of the first semester if necessary. Supervisors should initiate this meeting, sending out appointments to their students. It is a requirement for supervisors to meet their supervisees at the start of the year. In week 0, MA students also have welcome meetings with the PGT Director and their MA convenor.

S1/6, MA students undertaking Postgraduate Life in Practice (nearly all our MA students) submit their PLP essay on Monday of Week 6 via the VLE. Essays will be made available for marking asap afterwards. Feedback needs to be completed by supervisors within 20 days of submission. Feedback will be released back to students via e:Vision in the usual way.

S1/10-11. Supervisors should meet with their supervisees to discuss the PLP essay feedback and their general progress. If a student is not required to complete a PLP essay, supervisors still need to meet with them before the end of the semester for a second supervision.

### **Semester 2**

**Supervision moves to the dissertation supervisor at the start of Semester 2. This means that dissertation supervisors will need to have an "Introductory Meeting", meet-and-greet style, with their new supervisee/s at the start of Semester 2 before formal supervision appointments (5 x 1 hour) begin. Formal dissertation supervision and review of drafts ends on 19<sup>th</sup> July 2024. Supervisors need to complete supervision forms for all five formal supervision appointments and submit them to the English Office.**

S2/0, Week 0: Students will be informed of their dissertation supervisors as we start Week 0. Staff will be able to see who their supervisees are via e:Vision before students are informed. Supervisors should try to meet all their supervisees in Week 0, but certainly by the end of Week 1.

S2/1, Week 0-1: Supervisors should arrange individual "Introductory Meeting" appointments (meet-and-greet style, with a pastoral check-in element) with their dissertation supervisees. A schedule for the 5 supervision appointments should be made at this point. This should be a short meeting of no more than 30 minutes (and may be much shorter), and it does not count as one of the 5 one-hour formal supervision meetings.

S2/3-5, Weeks 3-5: **Dissertation Meeting 1.** Full-Time Students should have their first formal dissertation supervisor (of one hour) around this time.

S2/8-10, Weeks 8-10: **Dissertation Meeting 2.** Full-time students should have their second formal dissertation supervision (of one hour) around this time.

S2/13: Students submit their assessed essays on Monday of this week, 20<sup>th</sup> May 2024. It makes sense for dissertation supervision to leave space either side of this submission date.

S2/14-15, Weeks 14-15, Semester 2 Assessment Period: **Dissertation Meeting 3**. Full-time students should have their third formal dissertation supervision (of one hour) around this time.

## Summer

**Dissertation Meetings 4 & 5:** Students should have their last dissertation meetings with their supervisor in the summer before the 19<sup>th</sup> July 2024 (unless an exceptional circumstances situation means this date is put back by mutual agreement).

A maximum of 5 x one-hour formal supervision appointments should be provided for each student, and no more. Each supervision appointment needs to be recorded on the appropriate supervision meeting form and these forms emailed to the English Office.

MA Dissertation to be submitted through the VLE MA Dissertation Submission site **by 12pm, noon, on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> September 2024** (full time students, and part-time students who started in 2022-23). For part-time students starting in 2023-2024, the dissertation deadline is 12pm, noon, on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> September 2025.

## Reading Drafts

The MA Handbook states:

In the interests of fairness, supervisors of MA dissertations are permitted to comment on no more than two occasions on a given portion of written work, and on not more than one occasion on a draft of the whole dissertation. It is completely acceptable – although not of course mandatory – for a student to submit written work to their supervisor in advance of all five supervision meetings (with the proviso that the limitations specified in the previous sentence are respected).

Supervisors will not read or comment on any draft delivered to them later than **19<sup>th</sup> July 2024** without prior agreement, unless there is medical or other evidence from a third party to explain why the draft is late. **Supervisors are required to keep a record of all supervision meetings and pass them to the Postgraduate Administrator to place on the student's file.**

## Dissertation Schedule for Part-Time MA Students

For part-time students, the dissertation is deemed to begin at the start of Semester 2 in their first year of study, when they are allocated their supervisor, so that they can benefit from two full summers of dissertation work. As with full-time students, part-time students in their first year of registration should submit their dissertation proposal by **12pm, noon, on Monday of S1/14, Semester 1 Week 14, 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2024**. They would then spread their five supervision meetings across the full period available to them. The expected scheduling pattern for supervision appointments for part-time students is as follows:

### YEAR 1

S2/1: **“Introductory Meeting”** with supervisor (meet-and-greet style)

S2/14-15: **Dissertation Meeting 1** (to help the student start their dissertation over their first summer)

## **YEAR 2**

S1/3-5: **Dissertation Meeting 2** (to help review summer progress and make next-step plans)

S1/14-15: **Dissertation Meeting 3** (this meeting could be pushed into Semester 2 if needed)

S2/4-8: **Dissertation Meeting 4**

S2/14-Summer: **Dissertation Meeting 5** (final supervision before independent study period to complete dissertation, with this meeting being held after the essay deadline but before 19<sup>th</sup> July)

All rules (above) about reading drafts and having of 5 x one-hour formal supervision meetings applies to part-time students in the same way as to full-time students (see above).

## **Final Note**

This document has been drafted to help all staff, but especially new staff, know what MA supervision should look like under semesterisation, and also because new summer guidance from the university about supervision requirements meant slight changes had to be made to the expected pattern of supervision for taught MA students.