



University of Salford
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Similar yet different? Professional Doctorate Supervision: Wants, Needs and Expectations

Achieving your Professional Doctorate

<http://www.openup.co.uk/professionaldoctorate>

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‘The consequences of acquiring knowledge are always incalculable and seldom beneficial’
(Edward Hyams)

- Supervision... ..
- Professional Doctorates... ..
- Professional Doctorate Supervision... ..
- Interesting experiences, challenges and solutions
- Comparison and sharing of experiences



Supervisory semantics...facilitator, director, adviser...

- PhD student: 'How will I know my writing is doctoral level?'
- Professor: 'I don't know... .. I know it when I see it'
- 'Joined up learning... .. you should both be learning together'
- 'Marrying experience with sort of inexperienced students'
- 'It's a really interesting and quite strange relationship... ..'



PhD, DMA, DProf, DClinPsy, PhD by published works... ..

- Fundamentally the same?
- Similar and different?
- Same outcome and different process?
- Intellectual posturing?

- ‘It isn’t the students who have ‘this’ angst, it’s the academics themselves’

- ‘To attempt to sustain the attention of rival schools of academics by argument alone is tantamount to constructing a Gothic arch out of junket’ (Tom Stoppard)



Supervision: knowing how, knowing what, knowing that, knowing who, not knowing... ..

- Private communication (Boucher and Smyth 2004)
- Difficult to research/observe (Delamont et al)
- Co-supervision/peers/student groups/others

- Interaction, dynamics, values and beliefs

- Trocchia and Berkowitz (1999)
- Nurturing
- Top Down
- Near Peer
- Platonistic



Stravinsky:

- ‘The very people who have done the breaking through are themselves often the first to try to put a scab on their achievement’.
- Wellington and Sykes:
- What factors influence the decision to undertake a professional doctorate?
- Who makes this decision?



Professional Doctorates... ..

- Influence, development, creativity, real world, application, people skills, artistry, expertise, dynamism, passion, design, reflection, evaluation, energy, tension, searching, trying, arguing, campaigning, rational, strong, champion, thoughtful, committed, irrational... ..
- ‘I want it to be mine... .. you know rather than being directed by... .. I want to know that it’s been influenced by me’



Professional, practical, real

- **Leading research in professional practice**
- 'I think that I assumed all that had been taken care of when they enrolled on the course... ..'
- Heath (2005) lack of acknowledgement EdD and PhD and student needs/processes
- **Supervision/support within the practice context?**
- 'Maybe there's a comfort zone, that when you come to the University... .. its more definite that it's going to be confidential... .. it's away from the work area'
- **Linking with practice: is it the same as being in practice, of practice?**



Where is the thinking?

- ‘People don’t seem to realise that it takes time and effort and preparation to think... ..’ (Bertrand Russell)
- ‘Many people would sooner die than think, in fact they do’ (Bertrand Russell)
- Where is the time to think?
- Supervisor workload, professional workload, drivers for change, always change... ..



Professional, practical, real

- Tensions between academic expectations and practice realities and cultures? (Heath 2005)
- Expert (practitioner) to novice (researcher 'student role') Evans 1997:1998
- Negotiate the boundaries (Boucher & Smyth 2004) peer, student, work colleague, friend, confidante??? Potential for organisational impact, role impact, changes, weaknesses of practice (Ellis 2006)



Partnerships with practice

- Practice participation in the process of study and assessment
- Dilution of academic role? Standards?
- Changing nature of education, learning, role of the academic, a change too far?



Some thoughts for the future...

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- Need to think about values and beliefs underpinning professional doctorates
- Should have thought about supervision skill mix, capacity building
- Need to engage with and in practice
- Need practice involvement
- Need to use co-supervision
- Need to learn from the professional doctorate students and listen
- Need sensitivity to the practitioner researcher role
- Need sensitivity to the changing role and world of the academic

- 'You should both be learning together, that's how I see it'

- 'Not mini PhDs'