

Ethical guidelines for relations between supervisors and students or candidates at the University of Bergen

Determined by the University Board on 31.05.2012.

1. Respect

The supervisor and the student or candidate shall show respect for each other. They shall not perform actions or make statements that might infringe on the integrity or the dignity of the other.

2. Asymmetry in the supervisory relationship

The supervisor must be conscious that the supervisory relationship is asymmetrical. The supervisor shall not use his or her academic knowledge and authority to offend or subjugate, or to win personal or academic advantage at the expense of the student or candidate. The student or candidate is entitled to take up for discussion circumstances that he or she believes are problematical, see point 6.

3. Professionalism

The supervisor and the student or candidate shall have a professional relationship and they shall have no relations that are in conflict with this professionalism. The supervisor has a specific responsibility not to put the student or candidate into a vulnerable situation and/or exploit such a situation. If a sexual relationship should arise between the supervisor and the student or candidate, the formal supervisory relationship shall cease.

4. Trust and confidence

The supervisor should be open and sensitive to any of the student's or candidate's personal circumstances that might be of significance to the supervisory relationship.

5. Gifts and remuneration

The supervisor shall not receive any remuneration or gifts of significant value for the guidance given, other than what has been agreed with the institution. As regards gifts of insignificant economic value, the supervisor him or herself must assess whether the gift might influence the supervisory relationship in any problematical manner.

6. Conflicts between the supervisor and the student or candidate

If the supervisor or the student or candidate believes that the supervisory relationship has become problematical, the supervisor and/or the student or candidate should consider changing, renegotiating or concluding the supervisory relationship. The procedure for this shall be described in the supervision contract that the supervisor and student or candidate have signed or shall appear in the regulations of the department or faculty in question. It shall always be possible to contact the Head of Department if circumstances arise that are felt to be problematical.

7. The role and responsibilities of the department or faculty

The University of Bergen has the ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the student or candidate receives good, professional supervision and guidance. All levels of the university leadership have a specific responsibility if anything undesirable occurs in the supervisory relationship, and the university leadership becomes aware of this.

8. Intellectual property rights

The supervisor and student or candidate shall treat each other's work with respect and follow good reference practice on both sides. The university's rules on handling employees' rights to the results of work and research at the University of Bergen also apply to students.

9. Termination of the supervisory relationship

If for any reason the supervisory relationship is terminated before the agreed time, both supervisor and student or candidate must make every effort to ensure that this occurs in an orderly manner.