

## CHEC Academic Research Supervisor Capacity Development Programme (2025)

### For academic research supervisors (new)

Creating a capacity development programme for university research supervisors is an essential strategy to enhance their skills, enabling them to guide students more effectively. The Programme focuses on building both technical and soft skills across various areas such as leadership in mentoring, project management, communication, and ethical supervision.

The **CHEC Academic Research Supervisor Capacity (ARS)** Development Programme focuses on equipping supervisors with **key competencies** to enhance their leadership and effectiveness in research supervision based on four competencies with structured sessions. The workshop themes and sessions aim to promote alignment with institutional goals, foster student development, uphold ethical standards, and create a collaborative research environment. These competencies are: **RS1: Supervisory leadership and institutional alignment; RS2. Ethics and integrity in research; RS3. Mentorship and student development; RS4 Creating a constructive and collaborative research environment.**

Each competency area is broken down into four sessions. Sessions will run from 9:00 to 13:00 SAST, with the exception of discussion-based activities. The cost is R3000 per person per competency.

**Purpose:** To develop leadership and mentoring skills for supporting students' academic and professional growth by providing skills and understanding of best practices in research supervision.

**Target audience:** Academic staff involved in postgraduate research supervision (new and experienced supervisors) or interested in becoming successful research supervisors.

**Duration:** August to November 2025 (*this programme follows on the Advancing Scholarship Programme taking place in the first semester*).

**Mode of delivery:** Virtual

**Programme structure:** The Programme is divided into four competency areas.

Registration: Participants can register either (1) per competency (and pay per competency); or (2) register for the full programme (i.e. all four competencies and the capstone event. Total cost for full programme: **R11 000 per participant**).

#### Programme Structure

RS Orientation session			
Competencies		Workshops (4 hours each)	Dates and times All times 9:00-13:00 SAST, excepting discussion sessions*
<b>ARS1: Supervisory leadership and institutional alignment</b>		<b>Cost per person per competency: R3500</b>	<b>August</b>
Session 1.1	Roles and responsibilities of a research supervisor	Prof Fumane Khanare	11 August 2025
Session 1.2	Mentoring and coaching (including diversity & inclusivity)	Prof Daneel van Lill	12 August 2025
Session 1.3	Aligning supervision with institutional, national and global research priorities.	Prof Andrée Sursock	13 August 2025
Discussion	Facilitators	All	14 August 2025 9:00-10:00*
<b>ARS2. Ethics and integrity in research</b>		<b>Cost per person per competency: R3500</b>	<b>September</b>
Session 2.1	Ethical frameworks, responsible practices (including handling sensitive data, and approvals)	Dr Henriette vd Berg	8 September 2025
Session 2.2	Managing conflicts of interest, plagiarism and open science practices	Dr Khalida Akbar	9 September 2025
Session 2.3	Fostering innovation and impactful research	Prof René Pellissier	9 September 2025

Discussion	Facilitators	All	10 September 2025 9:00-10:00*
<b>ARS3. Mentorship and student development</b>		<b>Cost per person per competency: R3500</b>	<b>October</b>
Session 3.1	Building productive relationships and managing student expectations	Prof Cobus Oosthuizen	13 October 2025
Session 3.2	Milestones, progress monitoring, and crisis management.	Prof Gina Wisker	14 October 2025
Session 3.3	Networking, collaboration skills, and student career development	Prof Eugene Cloete	15 October 2025
Discussion	Facilitators	All	16 October 2025 9:00-10:00*
<b>ARS4. Creating a constructive and collaborative research environment</b>		<b>Cost per person per competency: R3500</b>	<b>November</b>
Session 4.1	Preparing for the submission and examination of the thesis	Prof Gina Wisker	10 November 2025
Session 4.2	Supervising multi-project or transdisciplinary students	Prof Sibusiso Moyo	11 November 2025
Session 4.3	Research funding, resource management, and collaboration strategies	Prof Elmarie Sadler	12 November 2025
Discussion	Facilitators	All	13 November 2025 9:00-10:00*
<b>CAPSTONE project</b> 4 December 2025		Participants will apply the knowledge and skills gained from all competencies through a Capstone Project. This final element encourages supervisors to develop practical strategies for research supervision within their respective contexts.	
<b>CHEC Certificate</b>		Upon successful completion of the Capstone project, participants will receive a CHEC Certificate in Research Supervision.	


#### Programme value

The development of mental models by learning from each other by engaging and participating across the higher education network.

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## Academic Research Supervision programme (RS) (long version)

### RS1: Supervisory leadership and institutional alignment

This competency explores the supervisory role in fostering academic success while aligning supervision practices with broader institutional and societal priorities.

#### Session 1.1: Roles and responsibilities of a research supervisor

Key topics:

- Supervisory styles: Hands-on vs. hands-off approaches
- Defining supervisor-student boundaries and expectations
- Balancing academic, pastoral, and professional responsibilities
- Supporting student autonomy and research integrity

#### Session 1.2: Mentoring or coaching including diversity

Key topics:

- Differentiating between mentoring and coaching
- Embracing diversity and intercultural communication
- Addressing the unique challenges of marginalized groups
- Promoting inclusion in supervisory relationships

#### Session 1.3: Emotional intelligence and well-being in supervision

Key topics:

- Recognizing and managing emotions in self and others
- Supporting mental health and emotional well-being in research
- Techniques for building trust and empathy
- Managing stress, conflict, and burnout

#### Session 1.4: Aligning supervision with institutional, national, and global research priorities

Key topics:

- Aligning student projects with institutional research missions
- Integrating research priorities such as SDGs and national agendas
- Identifying research that promotes societal impact
- Collaborating with national and international research networks

#### Discussion:

Interactive discussion to reflect on the practical challenges of supervisory leadership, followed by feedback and Q&A.  
Facilitators: Assigned facilitators guide and moderate the sessions.



## RS2: Ethics and integrity in research

This competency focuses on fostering responsible research practices and promoting high standards of ethical behaviour.

### Session 2.1: Ethical Frameworks in Research. Handling Sensitive Data and Ethical Approvals

Key topics:

- Overview of major ethical frameworks (e.g., Belmont Report, Helsinki Declaration)
- Data privacy laws and sensitive data management (e.g., POPIA, GDPR)
- Navigating ethical review boards and securing approvals
- Ensuring participant consent and safeguarding data integrity

### Session 2.2: Managing conflicts of interest and plagiarism

Key topics:

- Identifying and disclosing conflicts of interest
- Policies and procedures for dealing with plagiarism
- Educating students on academic honesty
- Tools for plagiarism detection and resolution strategies

### Session 2.3: Fostering innovation and impactful research

Key topics:

- Strategies for promoting creative and original research
- Bridging the gap between research and real-world impact
- Measuring societal impact through research outputs
- Encouraging entrepreneurial thinking among students

### Session 2.4: Open science and responsible research practices

Key topics:

- Benefits of open access to data and publications
- Sharing research findings responsibly
- Ensuring transparency and reproducibility in research
- Ethical implications of data-sharing and collaborative research

### Discussion:

Open forum to address ethical dilemmas and challenges in supervision. Facilitators guide case-based discussions.  
Facilitators: Experts in research ethics and integrity.



## RS3: Mentorship and student development

This competency focuses on building mentoring relationships that foster students' growth, progress, and professional development.

### Session 3.1: Building productive relationships with students

Key topics:

- Establishing rapport and mutual respect with students
- Understanding students' individual goals and motivations
- Communicating effectively in supervisory relationships
- Managing cross-cultural supervisory dynamics

### Session 3.2: Managing student expectations, progress, and feedback

Key topics:

- Establishing clear goals and timelines with students
- Tracking student progress with regular assessments
- Providing constructive feedback and handling disputes
- Balancing positive reinforcement with corrective feedback

### Session 3.3: Networking and collaboration skills

Key topics:

- Teaching students how to build professional networks
- Encouraging interdisciplinary collaboration and partnerships
- Supporting students in attending conferences and workshops
- Strategies for collaboration in research projects

### Session 3.4: Designing inclusive supervision for diverse students

Key topics:

- Identifying barriers faced by underrepresented student groups
- Implementing inclusive teaching and supervision strategies
- Addressing cultural, gender, and accessibility considerations
- Promoting equitable opportunities for all students

### Discussion:

Facilitators lead interactive activities and share best practices for mentoring student development.

Facilitators: Experienced mentors and supervisors.

This competency emphasizes building a research ecosystem that supports productivity, teamwork, and resilience.

#### Session 4.1: Milestones and progress monitoring

Key topics:

- Setting and achieving short-term and long-term milestones
- Conducting effective progress reviews and reporting
- Developing individual development plans (IDPs)
- Using tools and systems for research project management

#### Session 4.2: Supervising students in a multi-project or transdisciplinary environment

Key topics:

- Managing students across multiple projects
- Supervising interdisciplinary and cross-departmental research
- Building collaborative skills in transdisciplinary environments
- Integrating knowledge from diverse fields in supervision

#### Session 4.3: Research funding and resource management

Key topics:

- Identifying suitable funding opportunities
- Writing compelling research grant applications
- Budgeting and managing research funds effectively
- Handling administrative aspects of grant management

#### Session 4.4: Managing crises and setbacks in research supervision

Key topics:

- Identifying potential crises and proactive planning
- Supporting students through personal or academic setbacks
- Conflict resolution strategies in research teams
- Building resilience in students and supervisors

#### Discussion:

Interactive group discussions and scenario-based activities focused on managing challenges in research environments.

Facilitators: Experts in research management and leadership.