# Supporting ECADOC early stage researchers through collective academic supervision

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Time dedicated to different aspects of the summer school (n=24)

Q2: Please rate the amount of time dedicated to different aspects of the summer school from 1 (too little) to 5 (too much), where a rating of 3 would mean that the amount of time was "just right" for the specific activity.
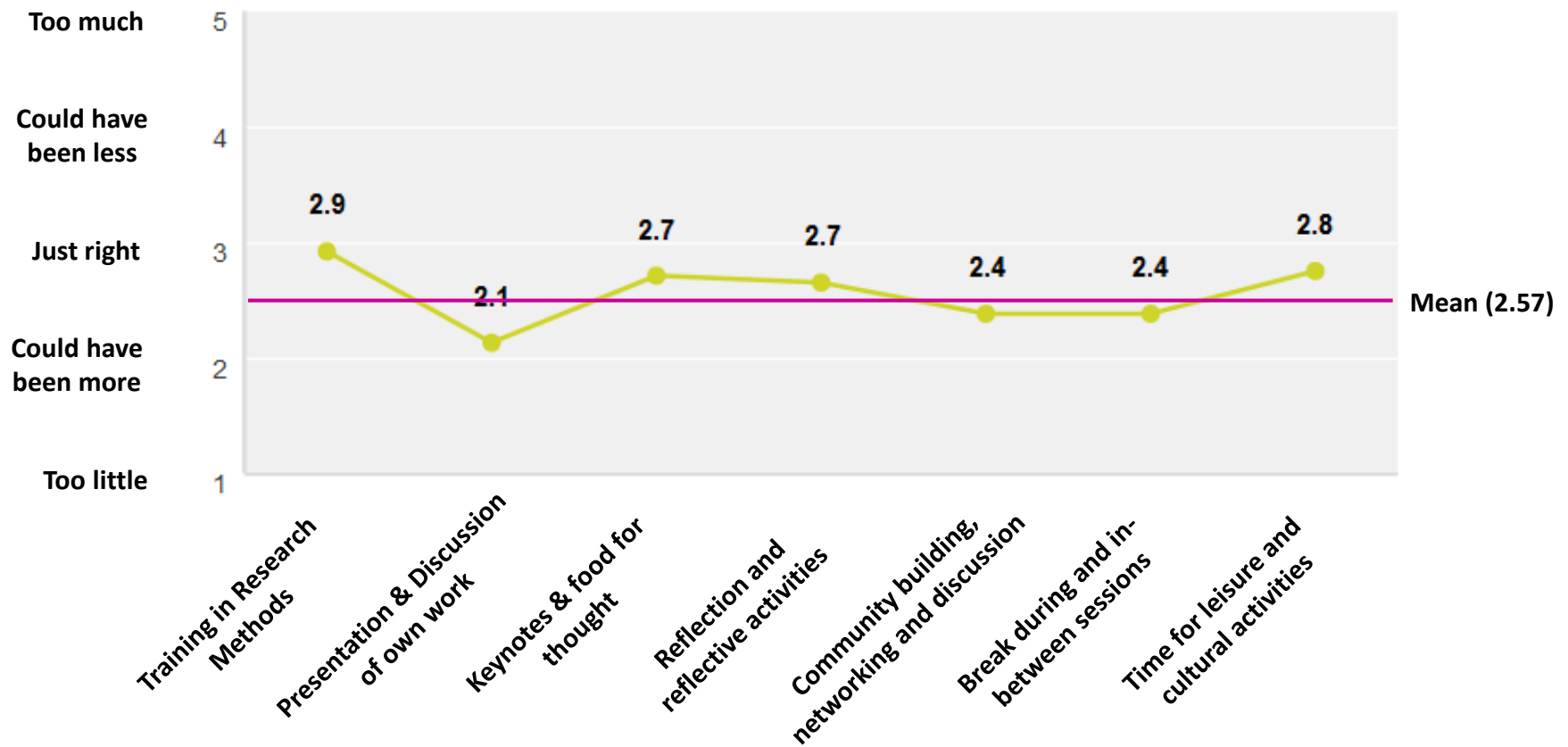
External evaluators comment on supervision
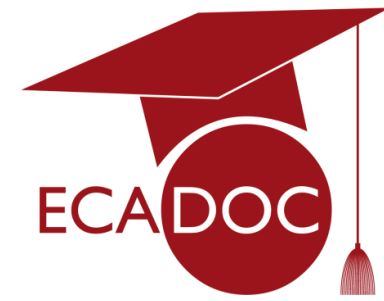
- "The PhD student presentations were appreciated and provided a useful opportunity for students to articulate their research and to receive constructive feedback in small groups. I sampled three of these sessions which were facilitated in different styles. Where efforts were made for the students to lead the feedback conversations with their colleagues, this was exemplary. Such an approach avoids the students deferring to the experienced facilitator present and therefore not voicing their own thoughts or sharing their own relevant knowledge. "(External evaluator)

Underpinning the CAS model

- Malfroy (2005) and other authors (Boud and Lee 2005; Yeatman 1995; Haksever and Manisali 2000) argue that the traditionally dyadic relationship of supervision has led to a neglect of more collective and collaborative forms of supervision.

Underpinning the CAS model

- An emerging strand in recent research on supervision deals specifically with community or collective approaches to supervision.

Studies show that:

- collective forms of supervision do not only increase students' participation in authentic academic activities (Heath 2002; Pearson 2005)

- but also add learning value compared to one-to-one supervision (Parker 2009; Samara 2006; Shacham and Od-Cohen 2009).

Differences in structure of supervision

- Studies have documented both the instructional and social benefit of laboratory meetings and regular seminars where students meet and present research work in groups with other students and established scholars (Vekkaila et al. 2012; Gardner 2007, 2009).

- In the humanities and social sciences, academic and social isolation among research students is often attributed to a lack of regular group meetings and interaction (Gardner 2007, 2009; Heath 2002; Neumann 2003; Wright and Cochrane 2000).

Situated learning theory

- The majority of studies on collective forms of supervision also share a common theoretical approach—Situated Learning Theory.

- With reference to Lave and Wenger (1991),
  - learning is conceptualized as the process of becoming a member of an academic community (Pearson and Brew 2002), and
  - supervision as the act of facilitating new members to become fully embedded in this community by promoting and enabling knowledge participation (Northedge 2003).

a model of Collective Academic Supervision (CAS)

- The core idea is that greater exposure to the theoretical and methodological approaches of their peers can help in honing students' argumentation for their own approach and choices.

- The term ''academic'' is emphasised because it implies a particular approach to knowledge which not only takes place in writing, but also in systematic and critical dialogues with peers and members of the academic community (Socio-cultural learning theory Lave & Wenger 1998)…and beyond the academic community

- In short, our ambition in working with the CAS model is to facilitate academic learning by stimulating students' active participation in both written and oral dialogue.

How is this done?

- The ESRs are divided into groups of four

- Groups can be based on similarities in methods or topic or can be random (for 2016 similarities in scientific method will be tried)

- Supervisors are assigned

- ESR are asked to prepare and CAS is explained in brief

Communications to ESRs prior to CAS 1/3

- On September 7, we will organise collective academic supervision in groups of four doctoral researchers from 9.15 - 12.15 including a coffee break.

- Each group will be moderated by a member of the scientific committee or the advisory board of ECADOC.

- We will be working in seven parallel groups, so that you will be presenting and discussing your work with a small circle of peers.

Communications to ESRs prior to CAS 2/3

- For this purpose, we would like you to prepare a presentation and suitable materials, which you can introduce to your colleagues.
- This may take no more than 7-10 minutes (in English). Please bring copies of your slides and materials to share (6 copies).
- You can choose to present using a projector or not, that's up to you.
- Your presentation should focus on a particular challenge of your doctoral research. We would also like you to formulate your personal goals for the discussion, e.g. the questions or challenges on which you would like to get feedback from your peers.
- It is completely up to you, what aspect of your research you want to focus on. You can focus on content or process as you like.

Communications to ESRs prior to CAS 3/3

- The groups will follow the Collective Academic Supervision model (CAS model) and will allow us to follow a structured feedback model in which all group members take part.

- This will also allow for the presenters to assume a listening position, from where they will not be required to defend their research, questions or process.

- The groups will be set up by Rie Thomsen (rietho@sdu.dk) based on the descriptions of your research topics, which you sent us with your applications for the summer school.

Communication to supervisors prior to CAS

- Time is important in supervision especially in groups.

- You should take care that time is distributed equally among the participants and for each participant also between the three elements, presentation, structured feedback and shared discussion.

Communication to supervisors prior to CAS

Spend 30 minutes dedicated to each ESR

- 7-10 minutes presentation (max.)
- 20 minutes structured feedback (with presenter listening)
  - 2 minutes individual reflections and filling out the feedback paper
  - 5 min max each. Round where everybody shares their feedback (20 minutes) if you have time left you can discuss freely. Still with the presenter in the listening position.
  - 3 min (or more depending on the round) for the ESR to reflect on the feedback

Structured feedback approach

1. What I really like about the presentation is that….

2. During the presentation, I was wondering about….. OR: The presentation made me wonder about…

3. Something I think that you could also do, read, look at, include, explore, investigate, describe, analyse…..

Communication to supervisors prior to CAS

- You can choose to take each of the three feedback topics at a time or each ESR's feedback at a time.

- Ask the peers to offer short feedback and to relate it to the presentation, and not their own experiences.

- As the supervisor, do NOT use more time for feedback than the peer ESRs - Even if you feel that you should or can.

Communication to supervisors prior to CAS

- In your role as a facilitator, you should refer to the presenter in third person.

- Remind the presenter, not to react to the feedback immediately. Instead, ask the presenter to take notes.

- If the feedback group feels like giving their feedback papers to the presenter, it is fine. If you wish, you can encourage that.

- In the end, the presenter shares his or her reflections on what he/she has heard, what she is picking up on, inspired by or curious about.

Communication to supervisors prior to CAS

Encourage presenters,

- Not to answer to any criticism, which they might feel, nor to make corrections,

- To comment on the feedback, but not to feel obliged to defend her work.

- She is free to choose what to carry further in her research process.

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What we hope to achieve using the CAS model in ECADOC

- Promote equal participation of group members
- Minimize pitfalls inherent in other group methods
  - Unequal distribution of time
  - Focusing on defending – not able to listen
  - Just to mention a few….
- Support the development of diverse researcher identities in CGC research
- We acknowledge that supervisors and student are different in terms of valuing structured approaches
- The CAS model could/should/will be studied more

References

- Wichmann-Hansen, G., Thomsen, R., & Nordentoft, H. M. (2014). Challenges in Collective Academic Supervision. Supervisors' experiences from a Master Programme in Guidance and Counselling. Higher Education.

- Nordentoft, H. M., Thomsen, R., & Wichmann-Hansen, G. (2013). Collective academic supervision: a model for participation and learning in higher education. Higher Education, 65(5), 581-593. 10.1007/s10734-012-9564-x

Thank you for your attention!

Please visit our website at:
http://larios.psy.unipd.it/ecadoc/

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