NEW SUPERVISOR STRUGGLING

Relevant Literature

Research on new supervisors has focused on doctoral supervision (Amundsen & McAlpine, 2009; Turner, 2010). New doctoral supervisors typically approach supervision based on reflecting on their own experiences in being supervised and observing other supervisors. While they may co-supervise or seek advice and support from experienced supervisors, learning how to supervise is developed through actually engaging in supervision (Amundsen & McAlpine, 2009).

New supervisors report that supervising is often more difficult than expected (Turner, 2010). While new supervisors may gain pleasure from supervising, they may also experience worry, anxiety and conflict (Amundsen & McAlpine, 2009; Turner, 2010). As noted by Wisker (2012, p. 138):

One thing we might feel when starting to supervise students is that we are ourselves out in the open, drifting, unsure of the regulations and how to interpret them, unsure of how much we can help students without over-interfering, how much we are supposed to do to support them and what other support or enabling systems and practices are in place elsewhere.

Young supervisors have reported particular difficulties in being taken seriously by older students (Amundsen & McAlpine, 2009).

New supervisors may also struggle to balance supervision with other academic duties and personal life. Contributing to this, insufficient information may be available on the expected workload associated with supervision (Amundsen & McAlpine, 2009).

References

