

## **SDE-M: Sharing and Discussing Expectancies Method**

**Aimed at building a positive relationship between supervisor and Ph.D. student**

This tool aims to assist both the supervisor and the student by creating an opportunity to reflect in an atmosphere of mutual understanding and interaction, and to encourage communication, the sharing of goals, and common expectations.

Many researchers agree that clarifying expectations and sharing information directly at the beginning of the first year of the Ph.D. can play a key role in creating a more productive relationship and greater shared participation, as well as avoiding misunderstandings and potential conflict.

This form is in no way intended to monitor or assess the work of the supervisor and the doctoral student, nor does it impose any particular practices. It neither intends to capture a single, permanent snapshot of the relationship between both parties. Rather, it should be used as a potential starting point to facilitate the constructive sharing of mutual expectations. In addition, considering the dynamic nature of the student-supervisor relationship over the course of three years, and the evolution of the doctoral work, it could be beneficial to use the form again at the end of the first and of the second years.

### **INSTRUCTIONS:**

Firstly, the form should be completed individually by the supervisor and the doctoral student. Then they should arrange a dedicated meeting to thoroughly compare and discuss their answers. While completing the form, keep in mind that the terms “supervisor” and “student” do not refer to “ideal” figures but to the specific supervisor-student dyad, meaning that it is possible that the supervisor fills the form differently in reference to different Ph.D. students and to the type of funding (e.g., whether or not the project topic is pre-determined). Every dyad is unique, there are no correct or definite answers. The goal of the tool lays in triggering a dialogue among the parties.

The form explores four domains: “Research Project”, “Contact/Involvement”, “Thesis”, and “Publications” through several items that investigate specific aspects of the Ph.D. experience (two items on “Future Career” are dedicated to final year students). Each item consists of two opposing statements, displayed to the left and to the right of four dots. Respondents should select the dots on the left if they agree more with the left statement and the dots on the right if they agree more with the right statement. The far-left and far-right dots should be selected in the case of a full agreement; the two middle dots should be selected in the case of partial agreement. Showing a propensity towards one of the two opposite views is mandatory (no middle dot is present).

For each pair of opposing statements indicate your stance selecting the position that best represents it. The closer the chosen position to the sentence, the more it indicates agreement with it. There is no intermediate option as the tool is aimed at triggering discussion.

For example, you should tick the second square if you think that it is somewhat up to the supervisor to monitor the progress of the research project:

|                                                                                         |                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                        |                                                                                          |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                         | Fully agree<br>with sentence<br>to the left ( <i>in<br/>this case<br/>mainly up to<br/>the<br/>supervisor</i> ) | Agree a little<br>more with left<br>sentence ( <i>in<br/>this case<br/>somewhat up<br/>to the supervisor</i> ) | Agree a little<br>more with<br>sentence to<br>the right ( <i>in<br/>this case<br/>somewhat up<br/>to the Ph.D.<br/>student</i> ) | Fully agree<br>with<br>sentence to<br>the right ( <i>in<br/>this case<br/>mainly up to<br/>the Ph.D.<br/>student</i> ) |                                                                                          |
| It is up to the<br>supervisor to<br>monitor the<br>progress of the<br>research project. | ■                                                                                                               | ✓<br>■                                                                                                         | ■                                                                                                                                | ■                                                                                                                      | It is up to the<br>student to monitor<br>the progress of<br>her/his research<br>project. |

NB

We are planning to create an online version of this form, but for the moment we ask you to please use this version.

If you have suggestions to improve the questionnaire, or spot any error, please let us know by emailing [lucia.regolin@unipd.it](mailto:lucia.regolin@unipd.it)

|    | <b>RESEARCH PROJECT</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1  | Choosing the topic of research is a responsibility of the supervisor.                                                                                                                                                                                           | ■ ■ ■ ■ | Choosing the topic of research is a responsibility of the student.                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 2  | It is up to the supervisor to decide the approach for conducting the research project.                                                                                                                                                                          | ■ ■ ■ ■ | It is up to the student to decide the approach for conducting the research project.                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 3  | It is up to the supervisor to monitor the progress of the research project.                                                                                                                                                                                     | ■ ■ ■ ■ | It is up to the student to monitor the progress of her/his research project.                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 4  | The supervisor should provide teaching experiences (undergraduates' supervision, marking theses, lectures, exams) as an integral part of the doctoral training.                                                                                                 | ■ ■ ■ ■ | Teaching experiences (undergraduates' supervision, marking theses, lectures, exams) are outside the scope of the training.                                                                                                                                                           |
| 5  | The "Terza Missione" ( <a href="https://www.anvur.it/en/activities/third-mission-impact/">https://www.anvur.it/en/activities/third-mission-impact/</a> ) is an integral part of the Ph.D. training program, and the supervisor should support these activities. | ■ ■ ■ ■ | The student should be minimally involved in "Terza Missione" activities ( <a href="https://www.anvur.it/en/activities/third-mission-impact/">https://www.anvur.it/en/activities/third-mission-impact/</a> ), especially if these are not strictly related to their research project. |
|    | <b>CONTACT/INVOLVEMENT</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 6  | The supervisor should take the initiative to regularly schedule the meetings with the student.                                                                                                                                                                  | ■ ■ ■ ■ | The student should take the initiative to ask for meetings with the supervisor.                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 7  | The supervisor should approve the educational or academic activities of the student falling outside the thesis project.                                                                                                                                         | ■ ■ ■ ■ | The supervisor should NOT be asked to approve the educational or academic activities of the student falling outside the thesis project.                                                                                                                                              |
| 8  | The supervisor should approve all the research activities of the student, even those falling outside the thesis project.                                                                                                                                        | ■ ■ ■ ■ | The supervisor should NOT be asked to approve all the research activities of the student, particularly those falling outside the thesis project.                                                                                                                                     |
| 9  | The supervisor should provide the student with opportunities to collaborate with other research groups.                                                                                                                                                         | ■ ■ ■ ■ | The student should independently seek opportunities to collaborate with other research groups.                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 10 | The student should adapt to the supervisor's decisions concerning the daily working time/schedule and working place.                                                                                                                                            | ■ ■ ■ ■ | It is up to the student to choose her/his daily working time/schedule and working place.                                                                                                                                                                                             |

|    | <b>THESIS</b>                                                                                                                                        |         |                                                                                                                                       |
|----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 11 | The supervisor should organize a timetable for the drafting of the thesis and for providing systematic revisions                                     | ■ ■ ■ ■ | The student should organize a timetable for the drafting of the thesis and ask for a systematic revision of the thesis draft          |
| 12 | The supervisor should voluntarily provide a systematic revision of the thesis draft.                                                                 | ■ ■ ■ ■ | The student should explicitly ask for a systematic revision of the thesis draft.                                                      |
| 13 | The supervisor is directly responsible for the quality of the thesis.                                                                                | ■ ■ ■ ■ | The student is directly responsible for the quality of the thesis.                                                                    |
|    | <b>PUBLICATIONS</b>                                                                                                                                  |         |                                                                                                                                       |
| 14 | Any publication by the student must be subject to supervision.                                                                                       | ■ ■ ■ ■ | Not all publications by the student should be subject to supervision.                                                                 |
| 15 | Any publication by the student should include the name of the supervisor.                                                                            | ■ ■ ■ ■ | Not all publications by the student should include the supervisor's name.                                                             |
| 16 | The supervisor should establish the order of authors listed in any publication that results from the thesis.                                         | ■ ■ ■ ■ | The student should have the prerogative to establish the order of authors listed in any publication arising from the doctoral thesis. |
| 17 | The supervisor should identify opportunities for publication.                                                                                        | ■ ■ ■ ■ | The student should identify opportunities for publication.                                                                            |
|    | <b>FUTURE CAREER (DEDICATED TO FINAL YEAR STUDENTS)</b>                                                                                              |         |                                                                                                                                       |
| 18 | The supervisor should advise and discuss with the student about potential career paths after completion of the Ph.D., within or outside UNIPD.       | ■ ■ ■ ■ | The student should autonomously identify potential career paths to be pursued after completion of the Ph.D.                           |
| 19 | The supervisor should actively assist the student in searching for postdoc positions, securing funding opportunities, preparing for interviews, etc. | ■ ■ ■ ■ | The student should autonomously search for postdoc positions, search for funding opportunities, preparing for interviews, etc.        |