

## Getting into Supervision: A Checklist for Students

Before approaching an academic staff member requesting that s/he become your supervisor, a good strategy is to insert a pause and consider the following questions. Any particular supervisor will bring a different profile of strengths to the supervision of your project. The 'pause' is to enable you to consider *your* priorities.

This list of questions is relevant to both masters and doctoral students but the length of doctoral research means that the supervision is much more enduring.

### Checklist

- Why am I interested in this particular supervisor? Is it the supervisor or is it the project?
- Why am I interested in this particular project? Have I considered whether my past experience is likely to help or hinder my work on it?
- If I were to work with this supervisor, how would I overcome any barriers that might arise from differences associated with gender, age, cultural, language, etc?
- What am I hoping that s/he will contribute?
- What kind of supervision or academic assistance have I found helpful in the past? Do I think this (potential) supervisor will offer me that kind of assistance?
- What do their previous/ other students say about them as a supervisor?
- How many other students is this supervisor currently supervising? What are the pros and cons to this?

If this supervisor says no, ask her/him to suggest alternatives.

### Explore options

- Talk to as many potential supervisors as possible before asking (or nominating) someone.
- While you're unlikely to get everything you want in one supervisor, at doctoral level all candidates have a main and co-supervisor/s, or a main supervisor and advisory committee, Your supervisory team can be across faculty, e.g. between a department in Business and Economics and one in Arts if your project warrants it.
- You can also have a suitably qualified person who is not on staff at The University of Auckland as a co- supervisor or adviser (see Clauses 4k-m and Guideline 20 of the PhD Statute 2011), but the main supervisor must be a UoA staff member.
- Have an exploratory meeting with prospective supervisors.