Guidance Note for Supervisors' Statement of Support

All applicants for PhD studentships at the Scottish Graduate School of Social Science are required to submit a statement of support from their prospective supervisor(s). The supervisors' statement is a key component of the application and of the assessment process. We suggest that supervisors take note of the relevant marking scheme when writing the statement of support as the purpose of this document is not to discuss the student per se but rather the way in which the student fits into the host department/unit's overarching research environment and, in particular, how the proposed supervisory team will provide the student with an outstanding PhD experience that engages with appropriate advanced training opportunities.

Once you have completed the statement please return it to your prospective student, who will upload it as part of their completed application *no later than 12 noon on Thursday 7 February. N.B applications will not be accepted after this time and date.*

Supervisors' statements should follow the style and content guidance below.

Style guide

- The statement must be in either PDF or Word format.
- The statement must display the letter-head of the supervisor's organisation.
- The statement must clearly state the name and position of the supervisors.
- The statement must contain, as a subject line, the name of the student that the reference concerns (e.g. John Smith), the academic discipline (e.g. Human Geography), and the host institution (e.g. University of Glasgow).
- Statements should not exceed 2 sides of A4.

Content guide

Statements should include all of the points below:

- A statement of the proposed supervisory arrangements, including second supervisors (and their relevance) and contingency supervisory arrangements. Where the supervisory team is cross-institutional then the added benefits to the student and their proposed research is expected to be set out and the statement should be co-written and signed by both supervisors
- A consideration of the research environment at the host HEI, with specific reference to the fit between the department and the proposed topic of research.
- Detail potential research training courses/programmes offered by the host HEI that would be of benefit to the applicant; consideration of broader advanced training that will likely be required including but not limited to that provided by SGSS.
- An assessment of the potential impact of the proposed research and its significance to the academic discipline/s concerned.
- Details of the supervisory experience of the supervisors (e.g. how many students have been supervised to completion and within time (ie, we expect to see a stated proportion of how many students supervised have completed within 4 years or

equivalent for part-time students) and what other students are currently being supervised by both supervisors), and any specific research experience relevant to the student's proposed project, including any particular methodological experience or training.

- Confirmation that the proposal is the applicant's own work written with support from you.
- Confirmation that the first supervisor has attended supervisory training within their host institution within the last 5 years.