

# Supervision, Independence and Ownership

Chapter 13 from the book:  
Lotte Rienecker and Peter Stray Jørgensen  
with contributions by Signe Skov

The Good Paper - A Handbook for Writing Papers in Higher Education

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# 13. Supervision, independence and ownership

Supervision provides help and feedback to aid you in writing a good paper. As a student writing a longer paper you will be offered supervision, and – more importantly – supervision is something you will use.

Supervision can be aimed at the paper's

- subject specific aspects
- research, methods
- textual composition
- writing process.

Being supervised and assessed when writing papers is practice for being able to write within the parameters of a professional discourse, within general scientific and scholarly criteria and within a supervisor's/assessor's administration and criteria.

Being able to use and receive supervision is a personal and social skill in itself! It is therefore extremely important to have the courage to ask your supervisor which parts of your work are good and where you should do things differently to ensure that you gain the best competences possible from supervision.

However, the condition is that you can acknowledge your supervisor's criteria and the validity of his/her feedback. If you are unable to do so, you should consult your supervisor.

The fact that supervisors often function as assessors can complicate supervision for both student and supervisor. On the one hand supervision becomes a situation in which you must perform well: The supervision and assessment situation results in the writer's ownership of his/her own text being brought under pressure because the supervisor's statements are considered overly important. On the other hand, the supervisor's dual role can mean that the supervisor must be withholding in terms of how far into the process he/she will supervise and how straightforward he/she will be.

## **How much supervision can you receive?**

The amount of supervision differs in different educations and at different levels of study. In some places, early papers are not supervised. BA projects, Professional BA