

## **Advancing Supervision Scenarios**

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Below you will find scenarios that we have developed for an online scenario-based training resource for the Advancing Supervision of Artistic Doctorates project. The scenarios address topics that we identified through the outcome of work carried out by other partners in the project. We paid attention that the scenarios include diverse academic, personal, and administrative supervision challenges. We have included supervisory challenges that we believe are general enough to be relevant across disciplinary boundaries of artistic research but situated them in specific disciplinary contexts through imagined doctoral projects. Some scenarios focus on supervisors' agency during a project, while some focus on the candidates' agency. We aimed to give the scenarios a particularity to allow readers and scenario enactors to recognise and empathise with the situations. There are two sets of scenarios following the protagonists Doe and Dr Noe and Moe and Dr Poe. Each set of scenarios follows a narrative arc that links supervision challenges as the projects progresses through different stages of the imaginary doctoral research.

## The scenarios of Jane Doe and Dr Noe

1. Jane Doe approaches Dr Noe to start a PhD in music composition. As a music historian, Dr Noe has studied 20<sup>th</sup>-century procedural composition techniques, and Jane proposes to work with generative algorithms, developing bespoke synthesiser instruments and working with "found vibrations." While Dr Noe has no experience with computational methods and electronic audio synthesis, they are very interested in the topic from a historical perspective. As their institution primarily focuses on performance and music education, Dr Noe would be the only suitable supervisor. Jane comes to the school with an academic background in fine arts and technology and significant, though more informal, experience as an instrumentalist and composer. The institution has been looking to establish a broader research agenda.

The scenario is relevant to the following areas of supervision: Academic Development: recruitment, responsibility before formal acceptance. Interpersonal Responsibilities: aligning interests & knowledge, institutional context. Personal Support: equivalent aptitude from non-academic practice.

Responses:

- A. Dr Noe does not see a close enough alignment to their expertise and knowledge and thus does not see any benefit to themselves in taking on another student. Between the specific research methods and practices that Dr Noe has developed and the diverse background of the PhD candidate, thus they do not believe the candidate is prepared to undertake a PhD in Music Composition. Supervisor archetype: Doctor Vater/Mutter or Diva
- B. Dr Noe is excited about the potential of Jane's proposal and wants to encourage a more diverse intellectual climate at the school. They agree to supervise Jane, agreeing with Jane that they would handle the academic framework but would need her to rely significantly on her expertise for the rest of the project. Supervisor archetype: Peer
- C. After some pressure from the administration, Dr Noe agrees to supervise Jane. However, they propose to take a historical approach to the project with less emphasis on the computational and compositional elements to craft a more classically academic dissertation. After all, the candidate is not a trained composer. Supervisor archetype: Drill Sergeant
- D. While theirs is a small institution, Dr Noe wants to accept the candidate and proposes to their institution to include a secondary supervisor. Dr Noe sits down with Jane and a specialist in interactive installations from the nearby art school. They agree together that the outside specialist should become a secondary supervisor. While this may challenge both institutions' disciplinary and academic profiles and promises significant logistical challenges, it would ensure sufficient support for the project and signal that it will meet the diverse academic demands. Jane is unsure whether the support is needed and might distract more than helping her. Supervisor archetype: Administrator

2. Given the areas of aligned interest and the potential for Jane to bring a diverse and emerging research agenda to the institution, the school enrolls her. She sits down with Dr Noe for their first formal supervision meeting. Given their shared interests and unique perspectives, Jane is unsure what she might expect from a supervisor relationship. How do Jane and Dr Noe begin to stake out their mutual responsibilities and commitments?

The scenario is relevant to the following areas of supervision: (Personal support: aligning expectations, articulating limits)

Responses:

- A. Dr Noe already has a rigorous schedule, and therefore, sets aside one hour, from 15:30 to 16:25 on Monday, every third week. One week before supervision, Jane must submit written material of sufficient quality to discuss, and then only in the aspects of the project that Dr Noe can discuss. After all, Dr Noe is a significant person without time to waste. Supervisor archetypes: Doctor Vater/Mutter or Drill Sergeant
- B. Dr Noe and Jane agree that the project is an exciting challenge for them both. Dr Noe can contribute to the methodology and the academic context of the project; Jane will take on the additional task of educating both Dr Noe and other people at the school in her area of research. Dr Noe asks that Jane schedule a meeting when she finds it appropriate and supplies whatever material is necessary. Supervisor archetype: Peer or Mentor
- C. Dr Noe proposes a very detailed schedule of supervision for the whole project, anticipating that Jane will need specific levels of supervision at various stages of the project and plan accordingly. They use particular milestones and deliverables to organise the supervision. Supervisor archetype: Helicopter Supervisor or Administrator
- D. Dr Noe proposes they begin with a series of discussions focused on historical and theoretical concerns that combine both supervisor's and candidate's research interests. These discussions are a way to 'get on the same page' by aligning the candidate's interest and talent to Dr Noe's current research output and epistemological framework. Supervisor archetype: Diva, Drill Sergeant, or Instructor

3. Jane is working with cheap electronic components, which she sources herself. However, she needs some workshop space to assemble her many electronic instruments, and a PCB (printed circuit board) mill would save her hours of work. Dr Noe has no budget to support this, and Jane is only working with a modest personal budget. How and how much can Dr Noe help?

The scenario is relevant to the following areas of supervision: Logistical Support: institutional resources, financing Interpersonal Relations: institutional/partner relations)

Responses:

- A. Dr Noe makes Jane aware of the institution's instrument budget, which might provide some support. They also point out a few places where Jane might look for additional funding and suggest that Jane ask the nearby Art Academy for a temporary studio space. Supervisor archetype: Mentor or Peer
- B. Dr Noe doubts that the institution would be willing to support the acquisition of such a specific piece of machinery, and the school does not have space for workshop facilities. Dr Noe suggests that Jane look into alternative arrangements, such as a local makerspace. If this does not work out, she might need to arrange for space and equipment independently. Supervisor archetype: Administrator or Drill Sergeant
- C. Dr Noe goes directly to the head of research and demands the necessary funding and space, even suggesting they turn one of the few practice rooms into a dedicated workshop. After all, it is the school's responsibility to ensure the project's success. Supervisor archetype: Helicopter Supervisor or Cheerleader
- D. The nearby Art Academy has the needed resources, and Dr Noe proposes that the dean pursue a formal institutional collaboration. A collaboration would make it easier for Jane to apply and encourage stronger cooperation in the future. Supervisor archetype: Administrator

4. Jane has been working hard to learn new techniques in software development and circuit design. This learning process has taken up most of her time and mental energy during the first half of her project. As she nears the end of the second year, she begins to feel that she does not have a significant research contribution so much as a collection of theoretical fragments alongside a series of promising experiments. The uncertainty about the project's orientation makes her anxious about the project's values, and her self-confidence is suffering. Jane might see herself as an artist or composer but is uncertain about her capability as a researcher. How does Dr Noe help Jane along?

The scenario is relevant to the following areas of supervision: Academic Development: planning & structure of the thesis, disciplinary representations of knowledge, researcher training Personal Support: motivation & empowerment, managing crisis, teaching self-management.

Responses:

- A. Jane worries that the project's theoretical fragments are not coming together. Dr Noe reassures that the practice-based work contains the theoretical concerns that she can unfold to describe the research contribution of the project and its historical & epistemological frame. While the writing may not be as developed by the end of the project, the delicacy and nuance of Jane's contribution are more than adequately conveyed by the work. Dr Noe cannot be sure of the jury's reaction to the project but finds Jane's work convincing. Supervisor archetype: Peer or Cheerleader
- B. Dr Noe asks Jane to stop developing techniques and focus on the critical contextualisation of her project with historical precedents and theoretical arguments to align the project more closely with traditional academic projects. Supervisor archetype: Doktor Vater/Mutter or Administrator
- C. Dr Noe spends their subsequent sessions reassuring Jane of her capabilities and place in academia. Dr Noe gently nudges her towards describing the contribution in her way by writing a text for a popular local arts publication. Supervisor archetype: Psychologist or Mentor
- D. Dr Noe gives Jane a reading list with practice-based research, expecting that they spend time acquainting themselves with that field. Dr Noe also suggests strongly they sign up for a course in academic writing. Supervisor archetype: Instructor or Pedagogue

5. Dr Noe meets Jes at a conference. Jes works with procedural graphics generation to support musical performance and has participated in several gallery settings, augmenting the performance of a popular string quartet with atmospheric environmental interventions. After hearing about Jane's work, Jes becomes very excited about a potential collaboration soon. This collaboration is not likely to add much to Jane's research at a late stage in the project, but it seems like a very good opportunity. Dr Noe discusses the opportunity with Jane. What are the potentials and pitfalls for Jane's professional development and the project? Should Jane pursue the opportunity, even if it might distract the completion of the thesis?

The scenario is relevant to the following areas of supervision: Academic Development: timeline of the thesis, Personal Development: networks, Career support.

Responses:

- A. Dr Noe encourages Jane to maintain contact with Jes but postpone new projects until the thesis is delivered. After all, gallery contacts could be an excellent help for Jane's long-term development as an artist. Supervisor archetype: Mentor or Administrator
- B. After informing Jane about Jes' interest, Dr Noe makes no further recommendation, allowing Jane to decide. Supervisor archetype: Peer
- C. Dr Noe encourages Jane to contribute to the collaboration. Jane should take time to fine-tune her existing experiments to fit the installation space and develop software to help her 'instruments' communicate with Jes' software. Dr Noe additionally suggests that the installation might add to the project's knowledge, thus supporting an extension of the PhD for several months. Supervisor archetype: Cheerleader or Pedagogue
- D. Dr Noe decides that it is not in Jane's best interest to prolong the doctorate and therefore does not tell her about Jes' proposal. Supervisor archetype: Drill Sergeant or Helicopter Supervisor

## The scenarios of Moe and Dr Poe

1. Dr Poe met Moe while teaching a Master's seminar on contemporary theory in painting, where Moe expressed a strong interest in science fiction pulp art from the 1920s to the 1970s. Moe impressed Dr Poe with their knowledge and interest in the topic. Moe's thesis show, earning him his MFA, showcased a promising interpretation of pulp sci-fi art through contemporary post-human anxieties. Dr Poe liked the series of paintings and approached Moe after the show to ask whether they were interested in a doctoral study. Dr Poe is interested in developing the theoretical implications of the project between surrealism, pulp/pop, and post-humanism representations. Moe is interested in strengthening their practice as an artist and has some interest in academia but is unsure of their plans for the future.

The scenario is relevant to the following areas of supervision: Recruitment, setting expectations.

Responses:

- A. Dr Poe works with Moe to develop an application that addresses their shared interest and leaves Moe some room to establish a professional artistic practice. There might be some room for both of them to learn something from each other. Supervisor archetype: Peer.
- B. Dr Poe promises to use their connections with regional galleries and institutions to allow Moe to show their work in several professional settings if Moe can assure Dr Poe of the quality of work. Supervisor archetype: Diva.
- C. Dr Poe insists on the work's theoretical importance and the relevant perspective that Moe's work affords. They strongly encourage Moe to pursue a project related to their artistic work, which takes a more historical approach to the topic, reviewing pulp representations over the last century. It will be a challenge, but Dr Poe assures Moe of the strength of his methods and theories Supervisor archetype: Doktor-Vater.
- D. Dr Poe doesn't pressure Moe into any specific direction, encouraging them to use the first months of a PhD to explore the potential avenues the project affords and to test out possibilities. Supervisor archetype: Mentor.

2. Moe leaps into the project by developing the post-human theoretical position implied by their Master's thesis. The growing anxiety about their level of knowledge tempers their initial enthusiasm, and they spend all their time reading. Moe is deep into post-human theory and expects their academic production to match the level of the theorists they are reading. Meanwhile, they've forgotten their educational background and not painted a stroke since starting. How do Dr Poe and Moe understand their motivations, how do they agree to continue?

The scenario is relevant to the following areas of supervision: Academic Crisis, disciplinary expectations, time management, develop the candidate's process.

#### Responses

- A. Dr Poe spends some time coaxing Moe to pick up a paintbrush. It seems that Moe's appearing creative block might be a symptom of strain from beginning a stressful new program and the relative complexity of the material. Moe must maintain their mental health in this case. Supervisor archetype: Psychologist.
- B. Dr Poe proposes to develop a seminar on post-human representations in art as a discussion platform that can enable Moe to interact with other interested graduate students. Supervisor archetype: Instructor/Pedagogue.
- C. Dr Poe does not worry about Moe's progress. Moe will eventually have to cover this material, so it does not matter if they have not painted recently. Supervisor archetype: Administrator.
- D. Dr Poe urges Moe to try to paint some of the ideas they are reading about; even if it does not accomplish the artistic aims of the project, it begins to bridge the gap between different forms of knowledge production. Supervisor archetype: Mentor.

3. About one year into the project, Moe becomes enthusiastic about the trans-disciplinary field of science fiction studies to frame artistic research. While Dr Poe has a good grounding in contemporary critical theory, their knowledge of the field of SF studies is non-existent. The American Studies department at their university has a specialist in SF television, Dr Toe, and Moe wonders about the possibility of external supervision from Dr Toe.

The scenario is relevant to the following areas of supervision: Managing interdisciplinary knowledge, co-supervision.

Responses:

- A. Dr Poe discourages Moe from seeking additional supervision, as they have a particular method and research agenda planned out. After all, Moe came to Dr Poe to learn their specific technique and area of knowledge. Any new input, especially from a different discipline, will only disrupt the ongoing project. Supervisor archetype: Doktor-Vater/Drill Sergeant.
- B. Dr Poe invites Dr Toe to a meeting to speak about Moe's project together. If they agree that they can help Moe, they work out a schedule for joint-supervision. Supervisor archetype: Helicopter Supervisor.
- C. Dr Poe thinks that inviting a new supervisor is an excellent idea and that any additional knowledge or insight is productive for the project. They do not consider that another disciplinary viewpoint might muddy the waters of the project. Supervisor archetype: Cheerleader.
- D. Dr Poe agrees with Moe that the perspective from another discipline would be helpful; they agree that first, they need to decide how they wish to benefit from Dr Toe's supervision, defining the scope and boundaries for the supervision. Dr Poe reminds Moe that such trans-disciplinary meetings provoke friction, which may or may not be productive, and it is crucial to keep in mind what each discipline can contribute. Supervisor archetype: Mentor.

4. SF scholar Dr Poe has provided much-needed insight and contextualisation for Moe. However, Dr Poe can see that Dr Toe's background in the humanities has not prepared them to understand how an artist might conceptualise knowledge production and therefore criticises Moe's theoretical development as inadequate. They have begun supervising Moe together, but Dr Toe still seems somewhat dismissive of the project and the faculty as a whole, as they do not follow the more established research methods and protocols of the humanities. While Dr Poe would like to stop supervising Dr Toe, Moe relies on Dr Toe for helpful knowledge and career connections. How can the team progress?

The scenario is relevant to the following areas of supervision: co-supervision conflict, disciplinary protocols, Balance Artistic & Research Contribution, Career Development.

Responses:

- A. Dr Poe begins bad-mouthing Dr Toe in private conversations with Moe, suggesting they don't understand art and cannot offer real insight into the project. Perhaps Moe would be better off if they just focused on the connections Dr Poe's has prepared for them? Supervisor archetype: Diva.
- B. The conflict with Dr Toe significantly challenges many of the Art school's disciplinary protocols, and Dr Poe is uncertain about how to respond, especially in the confrontation with the more established humanities methods. They suspect they will need to spend more learning from Dr Toe and challenging their ways of working. Supervisor archetype: Peer.
- C. Dr Poe decides that the supervision with Dr Toe can continue on a limited basis but that they will no longer supervise together. Their original agreement has set aside a limited number of hours for external supervision, and Dr Poe intends to keep the agreement. Supervisor archetype: Administrator.
- D. Dr Poe seems to sense that the criticism has gotten to Moe. They were already unsure of their academic credentials, which seems to have made them even more self-conscious. While Dr Toe discusses the academic material, Dr Poe spends most of their supervision time reassuring Moe. Supervisor archetype: Psychologist.

5. While the conflict between supervisors was disruptive, Moe used the negotiation between qualitatively different disciplinary protocols to elaborate their research to provoke their

artistic production. After meetings to establish limits and expectations, the supervision with Dr Toe resulted in Moe's greater use of writing as a discursive and creative tool, and they have been able to present at SF conferences with academically qualified material. As they prepare to submit their thesis, they begin to organise the diverse material they have amassed during the project. How does the team start organising the thesis, comprising paintings, creative writing, and academic writing?

The scenario is relevant to the following areas of supervision: Structure of the Thesis.

Responses:

- A. Dr Toe argues that the thesis needs to be text-based to confirm general academic norms for doctoral dissertations. They suggest Moe develop the writing in continuation of the successful SF conference presentation. Moe is also warned that doctoral candidates with fine arts backgrounds often need to delay the hand-in as extra time is necessary to develop the academic writing sufficiently. Dr Toe suggests including the paintings and creative writing as background material in an appendix. Supervisor archetype: Helicopter Supervisor.
  - B. Dr Poe urges Moe to push the boundaries of doctoral dissertations by insisting that the paintings are the research. The artworks embed knowledge and insights that artistic peers can understand without texts and theoretical discussions as unnecessary scaffolding. To emphasise this, Dr Moe suggests to only handing in original artworks as representations of the painting or text will only deter the embedded knowledge. Supervisor archetype: Diva.
  - C. Dr Poe refers to the dissertation guidelines of the faculty of Fine Arts. They stress the importance of not exceeding the 80000-word limit stated in the guidelines. Dr Moe is very open to Moe's intention of combining artworks with creative and academic writing in the dissertation as long as they layout the content in the provided A4 template with the faculty logo prominently featured on the front. Supervisor archetype: Administrator.
  - D. Dr Poe encourage Moe to place all the material produced during the doctorate in one of the faculty's workshop spaces. They will then engage in an intense supervision workshop to go through all the material and reorganise it in space to form links, connections and arguments between the various outcomes. Dr Poe argues that this spatial disposition will create the structure of the dissertation and the concluding doctoral exhibition. Supervisor archetype: Peer.
6. Supervising Moe has been a challenge, especially as it included other disciplinary protocols. However, Moe intends to submit a doctoral thesis in the Fine Arts Faculty. The administration in the faculty is concerned that the committee which evaluates the thesis should adequately represent the knowledge that a doctorate in fine arts would signify. So the administration insists that those with expertise in Fine Arts should comprise the committee.

Such a committee might be appropriate if Moe aims to work inside this disciplinary frame. However, there will be more opportunities in exposing the work to a transdisciplinary committee. They suspect that the current administrator is being a stickler for the rules at the expense of the doctoral candidate. The head of the school seems to assert their agenda using Moe as a pawn in the game. How does Dr Poe address this conflict with the administration? Do they go over the head of administration? How is Moe involved in the decision?

The scenario is relevant to the following areas of supervision: Conflict between administration and supervisor, professional development.

Responses:

- A.** Dr Poe agrees with Moe that the administration's intervention in the assessment process is unacceptable interference in artistic and academic freedom. They encourage Moe to boycott the assessment and withdraw the dissertation. Instead, Dr Moe proposes to exhibit the produced material at an independent gallery framed as a critique of the power of institutions in art. Supervisor archetype: Diva.
- B.** Dr Poe attempts to convince Moe to accept the administration's Fine Arts assessment committee proposal. After all, they should support management decisions as faculty employees; and compliance with the proposal might also benefit their future career opportunities. Supervisor archetype: Administrator
- C.** Dr Poe discusses the pros and cons of a pure Fine Arts committee instead of a transdisciplinary committee with Moe. Moe prefers a transdisciplinary committee, and Dr Poe write a carefully argued proposal for this choice. They send the argument to the administration with a copy to the research board of the faculty. Supervisor archetype: Mentor
- D.** Dr Poe finds that only a transdisciplinary committee will provide appropriate feedback to Moe's research. They go directly to the dean to address the administration's completely inappropriate interference in the appointment procedure. Dr Poe threatens to inform significant research funds and national media about the faculty's unscientific practices if a transdisciplinary committee is not appointed immediately. Supervisor archetype: Doktor Vater/Mutte



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