

## **University of Cape Town Conflict Resolution Process for a Supervisor-Postgraduate student relationship**

This process relates to conflict in the context of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and Planned Progress Activity (PPA) report agreed between a student and a supervisor.

Conflict is not necessarily to be avoided; it can result in creative new ideas, and the advance of knowledge. The very nature of the academic enterprise assumes that ideas may be challenged. Conflict should be handled early; it is easier to deal with small issues, as and when they arise. The longer an issue is left, the less likely the possibility of a resolution.

### **Conflict Resolution**

If a conflict arises between a postgraduate student and a supervisor, the parties should, if possible, first try to resolve it amicably.

If informal discussion is ineffective in resolving the conflict, then the parties should put their disagreement in writing, and submit this record to the Head of Department (who may refer the conflict to the appropriate Faculty structure) for resolution. If the supervisor is the Head, the record should be referred directly to the Deputy-Dean charged with Postgraduate Affairs.

If this does not resolve the conflict within a month then the student or supervisor should refer the record to the Deputy-Dean. If the supervisor is the Deputy Dean, the record should be referred to the Dean.

If this does not resolve the conflict, (or if the supervisor is the Dean), the student or the supervisor should refer the record to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Research and Internationalization.

If at any stage the student or supervisor has any reservations about this conflict resolution process, they may consult the office of the Ombud.

### **Grievance Procedures**

If the conflict between a postgraduate student and their supervisor is not resolved by the above process, the student should refer to Senate Procedures for [Student Complaint in Handbook 3](#).