The supervisor's responsibilities

Any reflective project submitted for assessment must be the students' own work. However, the supervisor plays a crucial role in supporting the students while they are undertaking the reflective project.

The role of the supervisor is to:

- explain to students the role of the supervisor
- discuss with students:
    - the nature of the reflective project
    - the most appropriate research methods to use
    - the formal requirements for the completion of the task
- help students to plan and undertake their research for the reflective project
- ensure students know what the assessment requirements are for the reflective project
- ensure students understand that they are responsible for their own work and should take pride in the finished product
- encourage students to ask their supervisor for advice and information
- ensure that students are familiar with the ethical guidelines for the reflective project.

If a student is unable to complete the reflective project without substantial help from the supervisor, the supervisor should record this on the appropriate form from the *Handbook of procedures for the Career-related Programme.*

If the student has received substantial support from a supervisor or other person, but has not reported this on the RPPF, then this too must be recorded.

It is **required** that the supervisor:

- is familiar with the regulations governing the reflective project and the assessment criteria
- ensures that students understand the meaning of ethics, particularly in light of their career-related study as this is fundamental to the reflective project
- ensures students understand the concepts of "authenticity" and "intellectual property" in relation to the reflective project and that they have access to *Academic honesty in the IB educational context*
- provides the students with instruction and guidance in the skills of undertaking research
- through discussion, helps the students to devise a well-formulated and focused research question
- ensures that the chosen research question satisfies appropriate legal and ethical standards with regard to health and safety, confidentiality, human rights, animal welfare and environmental issues
- encourages and supports the students through the research and writing of the reflective project
- ensures that students have access to exemplars, the *Reflective project guide*, the *Reflective project additional guide* and the IB publication *Effective citing and referencing*
- holds informal and formal meetings with the student; the formal meetings are held to enable the students to complete the formally assessed RPPF

- reviews and comments on only one complete draft of the reflective project (but does **not** edit the draft)

- monitors the progress of the reflective project to offer guidance and to ensure that the reflective project is the student's own work

- confirms the authenticity of the finished reflective project

- marks the finished reflective project

- completes the supervisor's report (if the reflective project cover is not signed by both the student and the supervisor, the reflective project will not be accepted for moderation and may be returned to the school)

- provides an explanation in the report in cases where the number of hours spent with the student in discussing the reflective project is less than the recommended three to five hours (in particular, it is necessary to describe how it has been possible to guarantee the authenticity of the reflective project in such circumstances)

- writes a report and presents it to the school's Career-related Programme coordinator if malpractice, such as plagiarism, is suspected in the final reflective project.

It is **strongly recommended** that the supervisor:

- reads recent reflective project assessment reports

- spends between three and five hours with each student, including the time spent on the three formal meetings

- ensures that the chosen research question is appropriate for the subject

- advises students on:

  – access to appropriate resources (such as people, a library, a laboratory)

  – techniques of information, evidence and data gathering and analysis

  – documenting sources

- conducts a number of interviews with the students.

The students may work with or consult external sources, but it remains the responsibility of the supervisor within the school to complete all the requirements described above.

Commenting on the reflective project draft

Commenting on one completed draft of the reflective project is a very important stage and is the last point at which the supervisor sees the reflective project before it is finally submitted. It is therefore vital that the level of support given is appropriate. Too little support and the reflective project will go forward as a weaker piece of work than it needs to be; too much help and it will not be the work of an independent learner.

After the supervisor comments on the completed draft of the reflective project, he or she does not read it again until the student submits the final reflective project. The supervisor's comments and subsequent discussion with the student are therefore very important. However, the supervisor must at no point edit or heavily annotate the draft.

The IB recommends that the student gives the reflective project to the supervisor before they meet so the supervisor has time to consider it and write comments.

When they meet, the student and supervisor can go through the comments together. They provide a starting point for a dialogue about the reflective project.

During this discussion, the supervisor can advise the student on how to improve the reflective project.

The next version the student hands to the supervisor must be the final one.

What help supervisors are permitted to give students with their draft reflective project

Supervisors can add comments that indicate that the reflective project could be improved. These comments should be open ended and not constitute editing. For example:

*   The research question is expressed differently in some places.

    Comment: Look at the research question in these places. Do you notice anything?

*   The reflective project's argument is not clear.

    Comment: Your project lacks clarity here. How could you make it clearer?

*   The student has made a mistake in the calculations.

    Comment: Check this area carefully.

*   The student has left out a section.

    Comment: You are missing something here. What is it? Check the reflective project against the requirements.

*   The reflective project places something in the appendix that should be in the reflective project or vice versa.

    Comment: Are you sure this belongs here?

*   The conclusion is weak.

    Comment: What is it you are trying to say here? Have you included all your findings? Have you looked at unanswered questions?

*   The bibliography is not in alphabetical order.

    Comment: Check your bibliography against the requirements.

*   The reflective project has an incomplete citation.

    Comment: You need to check this for accuracy of referencing.

What help supervisors are not permitted to give students with their draft reflective project

Supervisors must not:

*   correct spelling and punctuation

*   correct information, data, statistics etc

*   rewrite or reproduce any of the reflective project

*   indicate where whole sections of the project might be better placed

*   proofread the reflective project for errors

*   correct bibliographies or citations.

The reflective project submitted for internal assessment must be the student's own work. The supervisor nonetheless plays an important role in supporting the student during the planning stage and throughout the time the student is working on the reflective project. See Role of the supervisor.