Capstone Supervision Policy

1.   Context

All CHARM -EU students registered in Phase 3 of the 'Global Challenges for Sustainability' Masters programme undertake a Capstone Project where they, working with academic and extra-academic actors, identify, investigate and address authentic, real-world and inter- and transdisciplinary challenges.

This Policy applies to Phase 3 of the 'Global Challenges for Sustainability' Masters programme and is to be reviewed in light of the experience of the pilot phase, prior to Phase 3 of the next iteration of the Masters.

2.   Purpose

The purpose of this Capstone Supervision Policy is to (i) articulate the roles and responsibilities of those involved in the supervisory relationship and (ii) to ensure a consistent and positive learning experience by students irrespective of their location or the mode of delivery of supervision.

3.   Benefits

3.1   The policy provides a framework of understanding of the supervisory components of the Capstone phase of the CHARM EU Masters Programme Pilot and the basis for learning to design a CHARM -EU Capstone Supervision Policy for future iterations of the programme.

4.   Scope

4.1   This Policy applies to Lead Academic Supervisors, co-supervisors, second readers, students, external stakeholders and other actors involved in Capstone Projects

undertaken in Phase 3 of the Global Challenges for Sustainability Masters programme.

5.   Principles

5.1   This Policy is underpinned by the [CHARM EU Education Principles](#)

5.2   All CHARM EU Lead Supervisors, co-supervisors and members of the supervisory team are KCT CHARM-EU trained members, who have fully understood and integrated into their practice the pedagogical principles of CHARM-EU, knowledge of the CHARM EU Masters and the competence-based approach developed through programmatic assessment.

6.   Definitions

6.1   Lead Academic Supervisor is the person with primary responsibility for the academic supervision of a CHARM-EU MSc student during the Capstone phase.

6.2.   External stakeholders are extra-academic actors that can include government agencies, intergovernmental organisations, NGOs, grassroots, social movements, businesses, etc.

6.3.   Low and High impact assessment: judgement of student's performance in line with the Programme learning outcomes domains and Module learning outcomes (MLO's) as registered in the student's e-portfolio;

6.4.   High stake decision: final assessment and mark for the entire phase;

7.   Policy

7.1 Who can act as a Lead Academic Supervisor?

7.1.1. Lead Academic Supervisors are employed by a CHARM-EU university (or if external are guided by a University employee) and are based at the university where the challenge is mainly taking place.

7.1.2. Lead Academic Supervisors have a PhD degree and have expertise that directly relates with the broader field of the challenge.

7.1.3. Lead Academic Supervisors have experience in Master and/or Bachelor thesis supervision.

7.1.4. Lead Academic Supervisors are familiar with and able to connect to extra-academic actors.

7.1.5. Lead Academic Supervisors may be supported in their role by members of the supervisory team. This may include one or more co-supervisors, second readers or assessors, all of whom have a PhD degree or are guided by someone who has a PhD degree.

7.2. Lead Academic Supervisors are responsible for supporting Students and Student Teams through:

7.2.1. the process of defining, analysing and addressing the Capstone challenge; the development of a research plan and overall design of the Capstone challenge.

7.2.2. the provision of continuous feedback in regular (i.e., weekly if practicable) meetings.

7.2.3. assessing student team and individual products (Ref 9.1 Supervisor Guidelines).

7.2.4. advising students on the need for upholding academic integrity and local procedures for obtaining ethical clearance.

7.2.5. advising students on managing their relationships with external stakeholders.

7.2.6. directing students to appropriate (academic) resources.

7.2.7. assisting students in reflecting on their group process i.e. individual and group development over the course of the Capstone Project and success in delivering against the research plan, etc.

7.2.8. maintaining records (hard copy or digital format) that relate to the Capstone work and its assessment (ref 9.3 Assessment and Progression Regulations) in a manner that complies with EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

7.3.   Responsibility of Students

7.3.1. The ultimate responsibility for developing Capstone challenges, conducting research and developing a convincing Capstone report and product rests with the students.

7.3.2. Students work together in teams of 4-6 students to organise and define teamwork and workload, with each student having a team role (as agreed by students and set out in the Team Agreement) crucial for the support of the project and the delivery of the team assignments including the final Capstone report and product.

7.3.3. Students are responsible to plan, set the agenda for, and actively participate in regular supervisory meetings to discuss progress against challenge goals and milestones, using the appropriate tools as agreed with the supervisory team.

7.3.4. Students are responsible for upholding academic and professional standards as advised by the supervisory team in relation to academic integrity, ethics and data protection (EU-GDPR) in the conduct of their Capstone project.

7.4.   Role of External Stakeholders

The main external stakeholder of the Capstone is the representative of the organisation who submitted a challenge to the CHARM-EU Capstone team. This stakeholder meets with the student team at least once a month and may have one or more of the following roles:

7.4.1. co-define the challenge together with students and the Lead Academic Supervisor and members of the supervisory team.

7.4.2. collaborate with students and academic supervisors in analysing, evaluating and addressing the Capstone challenge.

7.4.3. provide one-off or longer-term expertise, technology, tools, methods, guidelines, etc.

7.4.4. grant students access to data in the form of interviews, databases, facilitation of field work, etc.

7.4.5. assist students in the communication and outreach of the final Capstone product.

7.4.6. provide feedback to students on their final Capstone presentation.

7.4.7. give lectures or workshops as appropriate for skill development, or (co) organise training.

7.4.8. invite students for their events, workshops, webinars.

7.5 Role of others involved in the Capstone Project

7.5.1. Teachers, including KCT members, will be responsible for giving workshops or working sessions, including sessions where students receive additional advice on their Capstone project. These can be focused on empirical themes, theoretical/conceptual frameworks, or research methods.

7.5.2. In coordination with Lead Academic Supervisors, second readers co-assess the high-impact (individual and team-based) Capstone assessments (Section 7.1 of this policy also applies to second readers).

7.5.3. Based on all the team-based and individual Capstone assessments, the Lead Academic Supervisor and second readers determine whether the high impact assessments are of sufficient quality (i.e. advanced level).

7.5.4. The Portfolio Assessment Committee (PAC) determines the final phase grade.

7.6 Dispute Resolution

7.6.1. All students develop a Team Agreement prior to the start of the Capstone phase. The Team Agreement is expected to include procedures for conflict resolution.

7.6.2. If a dispute arises that the Team Agreement cannot resolve, students can escalate the dispute to the Phase 3 Facilitator, in the first instance.

7.6.3. All CHARM EU students have access to the CHARM EU Mentors who can provide support, coaching and guidance and can bring students attention to additional supports where necessary.

7.6.4. In the event that the dispute cannot be resolved, the student may contact the JVAO (CHARM-JVAO@uu.nl) for information on the CHARM-EU complaints and appeals processes ([CHARM EU Policies and Regulations](#))

8. Responsibility

8.1 The CHARM -EU Academic Board is responsible for this Policy

9. Related Documents

9.1 Capstone Supervision Guidelines (July 2022)

9.2. Capstone Module Descriptor

9.3. [CHARM EU Assessment and Progression Rules](#)

9.4. Appeals [Policy](#) and [Procedure](#)

9.5. Capstone assessment descriptions

9.6. Complaints [Policy](#) and [Procedure](#)

10. Document Control

10.1 Date of initial approval: Academic Board 19/12/2022

10.2 Date policy effective from: 2023/24

10.3 Date of next review: Academic Year: 2025/26