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**Abstract**

This study examines the beliefs of supervisors and PhD candidates about higher degree supervision and three other academic domains: research; teaching; and learning. Interview data from 34 participants were categorised into four distinctive orientations to supervision, each consisting of a network (plexus) of beliefs about the four domains. Although each orientation comprised many beliefs, the orientations clearly differed in terms of two broad distinctions: whether the supervisor should direct and take responsibility for the research (controlling beliefs) or should guide the process (guiding beliefs), and whether the focus of supervision should be more upon the research tasks to be completed (task-focussed beliefs) or upon the development of the candidates (person-focussed beliefs). These distinctions, plus the types of interconnections between the beliefs comprising each orientation, support the conclusion that beliefs about teaching are central to each orientation, even though supervision is intimately concerned with research. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)