# Research Compass supervisor user guide

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**Introduction**
Research Compass is the online system used to support research students and their supervisors at Stirling and is a one-stop web-based system providing a framework of support, formal and informal progress monitoring and an interactive skills development and skills training system for our research postgraduate community.

**Accessing Research Compass**
To access Research Compass, log in to the portal. Click on the “Administrative Links” tab, then click “Research Compass” and you will be taken in to the system:

![Administrative Links](image-url)

**Push Poll Question**
From time to time you will be required to answer a push poll question before proceeding. Questions will be short with a single click response required - along the lines of that displayed below:

![Feedback](image-url)

Please click ‘yes’ or ‘no’ to answer the question. Once you have answered you will proceed to your Research Compass.

**‘Help’ and exiting Research Compass**
At the top of the page on the left hand side underneath the Research Compass logo, there is a ‘home’ and a ‘contextual help’ button:

![Contextual Help](image-url)

These buttons will remain at the top of the page regardless of which tab you are in. If you wish to exit Research Compass and go back to the portal, click the ‘home’ button then click ‘yes’:

If you click the ‘contextual help’ button, this will give you guidance relevant to the tab you are in, for example:
Home tab
The first tab (shown below) is the ‘Home’ tab and consists of four features; ‘news’, ‘how to’, ‘contact’ and ‘feedback’. Each of these is covered in more detail below.

News Items
The first thing you will see on the home tab is news items. These will typically be University and/or research student specific items. Use the arrows to scroll up and down through the news items. If you would like further information, click on “read details”:

You will then be taken to the relevant article:
How to
The ‘How to’ section allows you to search and find help/advice on a topic you need further information on. Click the dropdown arrow on the ‘how to’ box and scroll down until you find the relevant topic. Alternatively, you can start typing the information you are looking for in the “select a category” box as shown below:

![How to section image]

The system will automatically suggest a category based on what you have entered. Click on the category you're looking for and information on the topic will be provided, as shown below:

![Contact image]

Contact
Similar to the ‘how to’ feature, the ‘contact’ section will find the contact details for any area in the University you wish to make contact with. Click the dropdown arrow on the ‘contact’ box
and scroll down until you find the relevant area. Alternatively, you can start typing the information you are looking for in the “select a contact” box as shown below.

The system will automatically suggest a category based on what you have entered. Click on the area you’re looking for and its contact details will be provided, as shown below:

**Feedback**

The feedback feature allows you to leave your comments on Research Compass. Simply enter your comments in the text box and click ‘Submit Feedback’ as shown below:

**Meetings**

The meetings tab is the place where students record their meetings with supervisors. Once a student has recorded a meeting the supervisor is required to confirm or dispute the record of the meeting. You will know you have a meeting to respond to when the meeting tab is red
A traffic lights system is used to indicate confirmed, unconfirmed and disputed meetings:

When the student records details of a meeting, the status initially will be shown as ‘unconfirmed by supervisor’ and indicated by the colour amber (?)

Meetings that have already been confirmed by the supervisor will be in green (✓) and those which are disputed by the supervisor will show in red (!).

**Confirm or dispute a meeting record**

Where a meeting is unconfirmed, click on the appropriate date to view the record that was entered by the student. Click ‘Process Meeting’ and enter your comments/notes where indicated. If you are happy with the meeting record, tick the ‘No’ button and then click ‘Process’. If you wish to dispute the record, tick the ‘Yes’ button, enter your reason(s) and then click ‘Process’.

**Keyword search of recorded meetings**

The search function allows you to quickly pick out information relating to a particular meeting by searching using a keyword.
When the search finds a result, the relevant meeting(s) is highlighted. You can then click into the meeting and view the information you searched for.

**Skills analysis tab**

Students are expected to complete the skills analysis questionnaire which is based on the Vitae Researcher Development Framework and lists the attributes of a well-rounded researcher. The supervisor view shows % completion of the skills analysis for each student. Supervisors are expected to support students in completing the questionnaire.

Under each subdomain heading there are a series of questions. Students are asked to use the slider to indicate a level of experience and to answer the questions and save the answer:

**Skills matrix tab**

The skills matrix is a graphical representation of each student’s self-determined skill level.
The skills matrix tab and the skills development tab are linked in the student view and students should be encouraged to regularly consider their skills development and to make the most of the training opportunities available to them.

Skills development tab
The skills development tab allows students to record information on developing each of their skills. This interlinks with the skills matrix tab.

Supervisors can see recorded development tasks for each of their students.
Calendar
Tasks recorded in supervisory meetings are displayed in the calendar. These can be viewed as day, week or month view. An example is shown below:

If you click on a task you will be taken to the meeting for which the task was recorded.

Formal stuff
The formal stuff tab allows students and supervisory teams to manage the administrative aspects of a research degree. Within this tab supervisors can

View the status of all their students including
  • relating to progress, progress reports and formal meetings
  • applications for leave of absence, annual leave and fieldwork
  • View academic details
  • View personal and next of kin details
Click on one of the categories, for example “leave of absence”. Within this tab you will see a record of any request for leave of absence. An example is shown below: