

Cherie's confusion

The university where I did my doctoral work ran a very tight ship in that, if you didn't finish in four years without a very good excuse, you were given a very hard time. Supervision was tight, and most studies were not carried out without discussion with supervisors. I met mine every week. Most people finished in four years.

This is very different from the regime I have found at the university where I now teach. Students in my new department generally only meet their supervisors every two to four weeks. They often have to re-run experiments because they have made mistakes that could have been rectified if they had discussed their designs with their supervisors first.

And I know of students in my department who are in years six and twelve and are very miserable. This tradition is particularly difficult for international students whose funding has had to be extended where possible.

I am confused. Is there a right way to supervise? Is it institutionally specific? Is it up to the supervisor and the student to work out how they want to go about it?

Team task

On the acetate provided please suggest guidelines for

1. Cherie, and
 2. her department
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