

Lynda's dissertation

As Lynda's MA dissertation supervisor, I expected to read some drafts during the writing up process. However, Lynda wrote copious amounts and I must have read more than 30,000 words for a dissertation designed to be no more than 20,000 words long. Much of the draft material was unsuitable for inclusion in the final version, or was badly written. Among the many problems associated with Lynda's work were the following:

- poor grammar and spelling
- the use of inappropriate and colloquial language
- haphazard referencing
- inappropriate and over long literature reviews
- a great deal of repetition
- lack of structure
- lack of argument
- over long and rambling chapters
- self plagiarism

I wrote extensively on the drafts and spent much time going over my comments with Lynda.

Supervisions were stressful occasions (for me at least) given that most of my suggestions for necessary change were challenged by Lynda who told me that she did not see why she needed to do things in the way I suggested as she had been awarded a 2i in her undergraduate degree by adopting the methods employed in the dissertation.

When the dissertation was submitted (6 weeks ahead of the deadline) I could see that Lynda had ignored many of the suggestions I had made for improvement. As it stood, the dissertation would not have achieved a Pass mark. I called Lynda in to see me and told her that I was willing to treat the submission as a draft and give her an opportunity to improve it taking into account my comments. I had expected that she would be disappointed that she had more work to do but had thought she would be grateful for a second chance. I was thus unprepared for the hostility she demonstrated towards me when she accused me of having let her down. After all, as she pointed out, I had read many thousand of words written by her, thus the inadequacies of the resulting work must be my responsibility. As she said, if there were still grammatical and spelling errors in the version submitted, it must be because I had missed them the first time round...

Q1 Discuss the attitude of both Lynda and her supervisor

Q2 Suggest a course of action for the supervisor