Coaching-Informed Conversations for Doctoral Supervision

Webinar 1 **4 Nov** **1:30-3:00pm**	**Listening in Supervision: What shapes what we hear?** Supervisors do not enter a conversation as neutral listeners. We listen through existing assumptions, interpretations and habitual concerns: for the problem to solve, the gap to correct, the reassurance to offer, or the answer we are preparing to give. This session explores these default and automatic listening patterns, how they narrow what we hear, and the internal pull that makes it difficult to remain with the researcher's thinking. Participants begin to notice what gets in the way of their listening and experiment with creating more choice before they respond.
Webinar 2 **11 Nov** **1:30-3:00pm**	**Creating Thinking Space: Presence, Silence, and Time to Think** The quality of a researcher's thinking is affected by the quality of attention they receive. Drawing on the Time to Think approach, this session explores presence as a supervisory practice: offering sustained attention, resisting interruption and allowing silence to do its work. Participants consider what makes silence difficult, how quickly they move to fill it, and what changes when a researcher is given genuine time to articulate and develop their own thinking.
Webinar 3 **18 Nov** **1:30-3:00pm**	**Choosing Your Supervisory Stance: When to advise, ask, challenge or support** Supervisors move among several legitimate positions: disciplinary expert, mentor, challenger, supporter, coach and institutional representative. Drawing selectively on Transactional Analysis, this session explores how supervisors can slip into habitual relational positions and what these positions may invite from the researcher. Participants consider how to recognise the stance they are taking and choose more deliberately when to advise, challenge, support, or leave responsibility with the researcher in response to the person and situation.

How the sessions work

Each webinar combines concise input with individual reflection, discussion of recognisable supervisory moments, demonstration and brief practice. Participants are invited to identify one small experiment to test in a subsequent supervision conversation and to reflect on what changes.

Participants may bring a live challenge or recurring pattern to work with, but are not asked to disclose confidential information. The emphasis is on practical judgement and reflective experimentation rather than lecture-style delivery.

Programme Overview

Doctoral supervisor development regularly focuses on the responsibilities and procedures of supervision: institutional requirements, roles, milestones, feedback, progress, and difficult situations. These are essential. Yet supervision is also shaped by something less procedural: the disposition a supervisor brings to the conversation - what they assume, what they listen for, how quickly they move to solve, how they use expertise and authority, and how much space they create for a researcher to think.

This coaching-informed series develops that less visible dimension of practice. It shifts attention from supervision only as a set of tasks to the way a supervisor is present and relates within the conversation, and how this shapes when they advise, ask, challenge, support, or step back. The aim is not to turn supervisors into coaches or replace disciplinary expertise, but to help them use their expertise more deliberately while supporting researcher judgement, confidence, and ownership.

Who it is for

- Doctoral supervisors and co-supervisors across SWDTP partner institutions.
- Suitable for colleagues who are new to supervision and for experienced supervisors interested in reflecting on their conversational practice.
- Relevant across disciplines and stages of the doctorate; no previous coaching experience is required.

What supervisors will develop

- Recognise how assumptions, default listening patterns and the impulse to solve shape a supervision conversation.
- Distinguish when a researcher may benefit most from thinking space, challenge, information, or direct advice.
- Use attention, presence and silence more deliberately to support clearer thinking.
- Adapt their supervisory stance to the researcher, the situation and the stage of the doctorate.
- Support researcher ownership without withdrawing appropriate academic guidance, challenge, or responsibility.
- Conclude conversations with clearer decisions, responsibilities, agreements, and next actions.

About the facilitator

Dr Oliver Hayakawa is a Lecturer in International Relations, an ICF Professional Certified Coach (PCC), coach educator, and Head of Coaching Skills across Sino-UK collaborative degree programmes. His work sits at the intersection of coaching, leadership and higher education, with a particular focus on developing the listening,

questioning, reflective and relational capacities that support more effective conversations, deeper learning and greater ownership.

Drawing on a professional background spanning government, academia, coaching and leadership development, Oliver brings extensive international experience across the UK, China and wider global settings. Alongside his teaching and research, he has designed and facilitated coaching and leadership-development programmes for academic and professional audiences and is increasingly applying this work to researcher development, academic supervision, and higher education practice.

What past participants have said

Selected reflections from participants of previous coaching-skills programmes delivered with academic and professional cohorts.

"I have learned to 'wait'"

"It was an incredible experience to participate in the coaching course delivered by Oliver. I am now more attentive and have learned to "wait" when talking to others, especially my students. The outcome has been delightful: my friends and family are happy to have me actually be there, listening and caring when they talk, while my students are encouraged to explore more ideas before any interruption from me. Personally, I am also glad to be more capable of building deeper connections with the people around me."

— *Participant, Introduction to Coaching Skills in Higher Education, 2023–24*

"The coaching training transformed my perspective"

"Before this programme, I approached both my teaching and academic pursuits with a rigid focus on outcomes, often struggling to balance the demands of my PhD research and classroom responsibilities. The coaching training transformed my perspective entirely. Professionally, I now integrate coaching techniques such as the GROW model, active listening, being present and solution-focused questioning into my teaching, fostering more dynamic student collaboration and confidence.

This programme does not simply teach coaching; it cultivates a mindset that empowers educators to thrive in different areas of their work and life. Oliver's expert guidance, patience and ability to create a safe space for growth not only deepened my coaching skills but also inspired me to embrace these principles in both professional and personal challenges. The impact of the programme will resonate far beyond its duration."

— *Participant, Introduction to Coaching Skills in Higher Education, 2024–25*

"More curious and open-minded about other people's thinking"

"The programme taught me knowledge and skills that I can use for better communication. I learned how to use more trust, good questions, silence and empathy to understand and support my students and other people in my life. I also became more curious and open-minded about other people's thinking and feelings, instead of having the tendency to judge them, which has been a transformation for me.

I would also like to thank Oliver for being very supportive and helpful throughout the programme, and for bringing knowledge, skill, enthusiasm and kindness."

— *Participant, Introduction to Coaching Skills in Higher Education, 2023–24*

"A transformative experience that reshaped my mindset"

"This coaching programme stands out as one of the most impactful endeavours I have embarked on in recent years. It offered invaluable benefits that extended far beyond my professional work, enriching my relationships and fostering my wider growth. It was a transformative experience that equipped me with essential skills to communicate more effectively with others and reshaped my mindset for the better. I have already recommended it enthusiastically to a colleague dedicated to nurturing students, and I would recommend it to anyone eager to embark on their own development."

— *Participant, Introduction to Coaching Skills in Higher Education, 2024–25*

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