

# Studying Doctoral Supervision Quality

## An approach to methodological design

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### Is Your Research **IMPOSSIBLE?**

Take the Quiz!

Does it violate the Laws of Physics?

Yes No My research *is* to figure out the Laws of Physics

Why hasn't anyone done it before?

- a) They were not as smart as me (I am the chosen one!)
- b) No one's bothered to do it (Meh, it's not that useful)
- c) Someone *has* done it, I just don't know about it. (Do I really want to know??)

**Results:** Realistically, it can't be done.  
Academically, it can still be published!

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Is the doctorate really about the product (thesis) or the process (developing the researcher)?

What are the implications for research funders of the changing context of doctoral education?

How effective are current systems for assuring the quality and standard of doctorates?

How can the employability of doctoral students be enhanced?

In what ways are the current and emerging drivers of change having an impact on the nature and quality of the student experience?

How might the demands and expectations of the new knowledge economy impact upon doctoral education?

(adapted from Park, 2007, p.37-39)

**IN PORTUGAL** - Lack of theoretical and empirical research regarding this subject

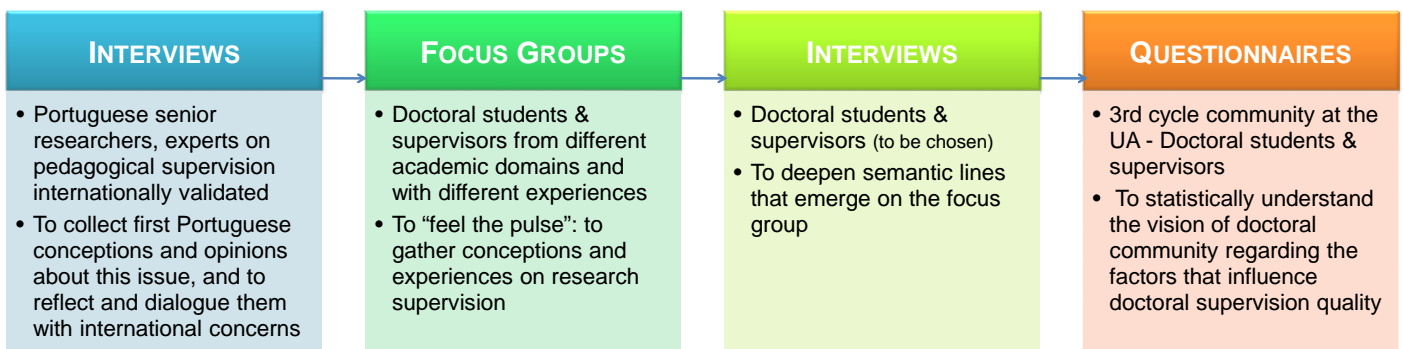
### DESIGN OF THE STUDY

**Main objective:** To design a reference framework about doctoral supervision quality

**Type of study:** Case study – with an exploratory and explanatory character (Yin, 1994)

**Sample:** Doctoral students and supervisors from several academic domains – University of Aveiro (UA)

### METHODOLOGICAL DESIGN



### Design of a reference framework about doctoral supervision quality

(holistic reference framework that will always dialogue the findings with international literature and previous results)

“Doctoral education across Europe is evolving quickly and, even as universities shift their focus from traditional training based largely on individual relationships to structured programs, in-depth research must remain at the core of Ph.D. work (...)”  
(A. Labi, in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 6 June 2010)

**The need of continuously reflecting and rethinking this issue within HE institutions & national centres, and also with international community**

“Doctoral studies are facing epistemological changes, as consequence of political and economic circumstances, not always following scientific or social interests.” (From one interview)

“Doctorates require a high level research, where creativity and innovation ask for a profound commitment, a transformative and dialogical relationship.” (From one Focus Group)