Combining Supervisor Training with Generic Skills Programs for HDR candidates

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This paper discusses a program introduced at Deakin University which combines:

1. The first is a program of generic skills support targeted at particular stages of candidature with the aims of encouraging collegiality, initiating the formation of peer support groups and promoting planning as follows:
   a) Commencement: workshops on the development of a critical approach and the creation of a specific line of inquiry to encourage the formulation of a properly formulated research question;
   b) Midphase: workshops on the various features of the writing and review process involving assignments of specific writing tasks and evaluation of particular texts;
   c) Conclusion: workshops which focus on the ‘bookend’ chapters of the thesis and management of the final 12 months; and

2. An ‘ECR fast track supervision program’ which enables ECRs to become principal supervisors after a year of self-documented involvement in the conduct of the generic skills programs (rather than the path of qualifying to be a principal supervisor by supervising to completion as an associate).

Particular features of the program include:
* direct contact between candidates and early career researchers in a supported context
* the use of early career researchers as role models for PhD candidates
* the allocation of specific tasks to candidates whose preparation is mentored by ECRs