

Participant Information Sheet

Research Title: Assessment of the competency requirements for supervisors in the coal mining, mineral mining and quarrying industries

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Thank you for your interest in participating in this research project. Please read the following information about the project so that you can decide whether you would like to take part in this research. Please feel free to ask any questions you might have about our involvement in the project.

Participation in this research is voluntary. Choosing not to take part will have no negative consequences. If you participate in an interview or complete the survey, you may withdraw within one (1) week of your interview or survey submission, without giving a reason; if you withdraw within this period, your information will be removed and not included in the research. After one week, your interview or survey data will be de-identified and can no longer be withdrawn. If you contribute a position description, documents are collected anonymously and cannot be withdrawn after submission because they cannot be linked back to you.

You will be sent the Participant Information and Consent Form electronically to sign and you will be given an electronic copy to keep. Your decision whether you take part, or not to take part, or to take part and then withdraw, will not affect your relationship with the University of Queensland.

Organisational Gatekeeper Consent

Before any participation (interview, survey, or uploading a position description) can proceed, the research team will obtain organisational gatekeeper consent from your employing organisation. Gatekeeper consent is an organisational-level permission that confirms your employer is aware of the study and agrees that their staff may be invited to participate. Its purpose is protective: it affirms that participation is voluntary, that the organisation must not encourage or discourage individual involvement, and that the organisation will not be told who participates and will not receive access to identifiable data. Gatekeeper consent does not obligate you to participate and does not allow your employer to access your responses or influence your decision. If gatekeeper consent is not granted by your employer, you will not be able to take part in the project; your Expression of Interest will be securely retained and will not be shared with your employer.

What is this research about?

This research aims to understand what skills, knowledge, and experience frontline supervisors need to safely and effectively carry out their roles in Queensland's coal mining, mineral (metals) mining and quarrying industries. Frontline supervisors play a critical role in managing safety and health on mine and quarry sites, yet the expectations of the role can vary between operations. To support supervisors and improve safety outcomes, this project will develop a clear, evidence-based Training Needs Analysis (TNA). A TNA is a structured way of identifying the tasks supervisors perform and the specific competencies required to perform those tasks well.

To achieve this, the research will gather information directly from supervisors through interviews and an online survey and will also review position descriptions from different sites and sectors. By combining these sources, the study will map supervisory duties to the skills and knowledge required under Queensland's mining safety and health legislation and identify where current training programs meet these needs or where improvements are required.

The research is being conducted by The University of Queensland's Minerals Industry Safety and Health Centre (MISHC). It is supported by the Coal Mine Safety and Health Advisory Committee (CMSHAC), the Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee (MSHAC), and the Queensland Resources Safety and Health Commissioners Office. The study is independent and is being undertaken by the UQ research team to help strengthen supervisory capability and support safer work practices across the industry.

Selection criteria for involvement in the interviews

Participants in this study must be current frontline supervisors as defined under Queensland mining and quarrying safety and health legislations, working in coal (open cut or underground), metalliferous (open cut or underground) mines, or quarries. To ensure interview findings reflect supervisory duties only, supervisors who hold dual statutory roles—such as Supervisor/Open Cut Examiner or Supervisor/ERZ Controller—are not eligible for interviews. The study also aims to capture a breadth of experience, including at least one newer supervisor (less than two years in the role) in each sector.

Supervisors who cannot participate in interviews due to dual statutory responsibilities, or who prefer not to be interviewed, may still contribute by completing the survey or uploading a supervisory position description.

What will I need to do?

If you agree to participate, you may take part in one or more of the following activities, depending on how you choose to contribute to the study. All activities require organisational gatekeeper consent from your employer prior to your individual consent and participation.

Interview participation:

If you volunteer for an interview, you will take part in a 30–45 minute online interview using videoconferencing (such as Zoom or Microsoft Teams). You will be asked about your day-to-day supervisory tasks, safety and health responsibilities, the skills and knowledge you believe supervisors need, and your views on training and competency requirements.

With your permission, the interview will be audio-recorded so that the research team can accurately capture your responses. The recording will be transcribed using Otter.ai, which uses large language models (LLMs) to convert speech to text. AI tools (such as Claude.ai) may also be used to assist with the analysis of interview data; however, only de-identified information will be processed through these tools. In accordance with UQ's data security requirements, no sensitive, identifiable, or protected data will be uploaded to AI tools at any stage.

You may stop the interview at any time. You will have one week after the interview to withdraw your participation; after this time, the recording will be de-identified and cannot be removed. Gatekeeper consent is required before scheduling the interview, and you will then complete individual informed consent immediately prior to participation.

Survey participation:

If you choose to complete the online survey, you will be directed to a secure Qualtrics link. As part of the survey, we will collect your name, organisation, and basic demographic information. This information is required to confirm gatekeeper approval and to understand the demographic profile of participating sites and the experience of the people completing the survey. The survey contains similar questions to the interview and will take approximately 20–30 minutes to complete.

Although identifiable information is collected initially, all survey responses will be de-identified before analysis. AI tools (such as Claude.ai) may be used to assist with the analysis of survey data; however, only de-identified information will be processed through these tools. In line with UQ's data

security requirements, no sensitive, identifiable, or protected information will be uploaded to AI tools.

You may withdraw your survey data within one week of submission by contacting the research team; after this time, responses will be de-identified and cannot be withdrawn. Gatekeeper consent is required before you can access the survey. You will then provide individual consent at the start of the survey.

Use of AI in Data Processing and Analysis

Interviews will be audio-recorded for transcription purposes using Otter.ai software, which employs large language models (LLMs) for speech-to-text conversion. AI tools (such as Claude.ai) may also be used to support the analysis of both interview and survey data. Only de-identified information will be processed through these tools. Claude.ai is listed on UQ's Reviewed Software List as conditionally approved, and in accordance with UQ's conditions of use, no sensitive, identifiable, or protected data will be uploaded at any stage.

Please be aware that some AI-enabled data processing may involve third-party services (such as OpenAI and Zapier) that operate beyond the direct control of the researchers. While the research team will take all reasonable steps to maintain confidentiality and comply with UQ data security requirements, the security policies and infrastructure of these external services are not controlled by the University.

All information collected about you will remain confidential and will be securely stored using university-approved third-party cloud platforms. Only members of the research team will have access to the identifiable data. The data collected from you may be used in future research that is an extension of, or closely related to, this project. It is anticipated that the results of this research will be published and/or presented in a variety of forms. In any publication and/or presentation, information will be reported in a way that prevents identification of individual participants, except where express permission has been granted.

Position description (PD) contribution:

If you volunteer to submit a supervisory position description (PD), you will upload the document through Checkbox, a secure UQ-approved platform. Submitting a PD will take only a few minutes. All PDs are collected anonymously, and only the industry sector (coal, metals, or quarries) will be recorded. Because the documents are anonymous, they cannot be withdrawn after submission. AI tools (such as Claude.ai) may be used to support the analysis of PD content; however, only de-identified PD text will be processed through these tools. In accordance with UQ data security requirements, no sensitive, identifiable, or protected information will be uploaded to any AI tool. Gatekeeper consent is required before the upload link will be provided. Before submitting a PD, you will be asked to confirm that the document contains no personally or organisationally identifiable information and to provide consent for its use in this research.

Location:

All participation activities are completed online, so you may take part from any location that is convenient for you.

Acknowledgement:

There are no payments, incentives, or reimbursements offered for participation. We are grateful for your time and expertise, and your contribution will directly support improvements in supervisory training and safety outcomes across the industry.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

There will be no direct benefit to you from your participation in this research. You will not receive payment, incentives, or reimbursement for taking part.

However, your contribution will help improve understanding of the skills, knowledge, and experience supervisors need to effectively manage safety and health in Queensland's coal mining, mineral mining, and quarrying industries. By sharing your experience, or by providing a position description, you will help build a clearer picture of supervisory roles across different sectors and operational contexts.

The findings from this research will support the development of a comprehensive Training Needs Analysis for supervisors. This will help industry, training organisations, and regulators identify strengths, gaps, and opportunities for improving supervisory training.

What are the possible risks and disadvantages of taking part?

There are no physical risks associated with taking part in this project. All participation activities take place online and involve only discussion or written responses about your supervisory role.

Some people may experience mild discomfort when talking or writing about work responsibilities, organisational pressures, or past challenges in supervision. To minimise this, all questions focus on general supervisory tasks, skills, and responsibilities rather than on sensitive personal information or specific incidents. You may choose not to answer any question that makes you uncomfortable, and you may pause or stop the interview or survey at any time.

If you feel distressed or concerned at any point, you are encouraged to contact the research team to discuss your concerns. You may also contact your workplace Employee Assistance Program (if available) or speak with your GP or another trusted health professional. If you contact the University's Ethics Office, staff can also provide information about appropriate support services.

There are no foreseeable disadvantages to participating, and your employer, colleagues, or industry bodies will not know whether you have taken part. Gatekeeper consent does not permit the employer to know who participates, access identifiable data, or influence your decision to participate. All data will be de-identified, and position descriptions are collected anonymously to further protect your privacy.

What will happen to the information about me?

All information collected about you will remain confidential. Because the number of participants is relatively small and some supervisors may have unique experience profiles, complete anonymity cannot be absolutely guaranteed; however, every effort will be made to remove or disguise identifying details. Interview and survey data will be de-identified as early as possible, and position descriptions are collected anonymously through a secure upload system. Information will only be shared outside UQ in summarised or aggregated form, ensuring no individual participant or organisation can be identified.

All data will be stored on The University of Queensland's approved storage systems, in accordance with UQ's research data management requirements. Only the research team named on this project will have access to identifiable data. Once interview transcripts and survey responses have been de-identified, any identifying information (such as names or contact details) will be stored separately and securely, with restricted access. Audio recordings will be deleted once the transcripts are checked for accuracy.

De-identified research data including interview transcripts, survey responses, and position descriptions will be retained for five years after the completion of the project, as required by UQ policy. After this period, all data will be securely destroyed. Information will only be shared outside

UQ in summarised or aggregated form, ensuring no individual participant or organisation can be identified.

The results of this project may be used in publications or presentations, including academic papers, conference presentations, or industry reports. Any such outputs will present findings in a de-identified, summarised format.

Only de-identified data may be used in future research projects. If the research team wishes to use the de-identified data for another project, this will occur only if the use is consistent with the consent provided; no identifiable information will be used in any future project. Position descriptions are collected anonymously and therefore cannot be withdrawn or linked to individual contributors.

What will happen if I decide to withdraw?

If you participate in an interview or the online survey, you may withdraw your involvement and request removal of your data within one (1) week of your interview or survey submission. If you withdraw within this period, all information you have provided will be deleted and will not be included in the research. After one week, your data will have been de-identified and combined with other responses, and at that point it will not be possible to remove it.

If you choose to submit a position description (PD), these documents are collected anonymously, and only the industry sector (coal, metals, or quarries) is recorded. Because PDs cannot be linked back to individuals or organisations, they cannot be withdrawn once submitted.

Withdrawing from the study will not affect your relationship with The University of Queensland or with any other organisation involved in the research. Gatekeeper consent does not affect your right to withdraw within the specified timeframes and does not oblige you to participate.

Can I hear about the results of this research?

No. Because all data for this project undergoes essential de-identification processes, the research team will be unable to verify the identity of individual participants. As a result, we cannot provide summaries of findings to participants.

The broader findings from this research will be shared through academic publications, conference presentations, and industry reports and publications. Any results that are shared outside The University of Queensland will be presented in a summarised and de-identified form, ensuring that no individual participant or organisation can be identified.

Who can I contact if I have any concerns about the project?

This study adheres to the Guidelines of the ethical review process of The University of Queensland and the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research. Whilst you are free to discuss your participation in this study with the researcher contactable on [e.humphries@uq.edu.au] if you would like to speak to an officer of the University not involved in the study, you may contact the Ethics Coordinator on +617 3365 3924 / +617 3443 1656 or email humanethics@research.uq.edu.au

This research Ethics ID number: 2026/HE010088