UNIVERSITY OF
GLOUCESTERSHIRE
at Cheltenham and Gloucester

RESEARCH DEGREES STUDENT HANDBOOK 2016-17

(To be read in conjunction with the Academic Regulations for Research Degree Provision)

Welcome to research degree study at the University of Gloucestershire. As research students you form a valuable part of the University's research community and we hope that that your period of study with us will be both fulfilling and successful. The following pages will help you understand the University's expectations, processes and regulations and will act as a guide to your research journey at our institution.

Professor Ros Jennings (Head of Postgraduate Research)

Contents

Please add (+44) if phoning any of the below numbers from outside the UK.

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School based administrators contact details available on Research Degrees Infonet page.

WELCOME TO THE UNIVERSITY

Welcome to the University of Gloucestershire and to your research degrees programme. This Handbook will provide you with much of the information you require at key stages in your programme lifecycle. It should be read in conjunction with other published materials and especially in connection with the *Academic Regulations for Research Degrees Provision*.

The main purposes of a research degree are:

- To enable you to develop originality, to contribute new ideas, and to make a positive contribution to knowledge and creativity in your discipline;
- To provide training in research and research methods that will enable you to assume the role of an independent scholar and research worker, capable of planning and carrying out a well-conceived plan of research directed towards a given objective be that in academia, other forms of employment and personal projects.

The University offers the following research degrees: MA by Research, MSc by Research, Masters of Research (MRes), Masters of Philosophy (MPhil), Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), European Doctorate and Professional Doctorates. Students can study on a full- or a part-time basis. Students select a subject, usually in the form of series of research questions, conduct a research project to answer the questions and write a thesis on the findings. Students are also encouraged to pursue a programme of research methods and skills training in support of their research. The University's aim is to support the development of excellent research and excellent researchers.

Management of the programme of research

The University Research Degrees Committee oversees the research degrees provision for the institution. The Terms of Reference of the committee is published on the University's website here.

Enrolment and Induction

All students of the University must complete an annual enrolment process for each academic year of study until they have formally completed their studies (i.e. post submission *and* while doing any post-viva corrections).

Once the enrolment process has been completed, including payment of tuition fees, the student is entitled to receive academic advice and to use the University's learning support facilities, office space and computer facilities as appropriate. Please see APPENDIX 2 for a full list of Student Entitlements.

All new students will be invited to attend an induction programme which covers key aspects of the support provision given to research students at the University. Students will be introduced to both the central and School teams that work together to support Postgraduate Research (PGR) in the University.

Please refer to the Academic Regulations for Research Degrees Provision (ARRDP) for detail of the expected periods of registration associated with each of the programmes of study.

Students studying under a Tier 4 visa must ensure that they are fully aware of obligations and the conditions of their visa. This includes student attendance monitoring the dates of which will be published on the University's website here.

Building and Maintaining the Supervisory Relationship

Appointment of supervisors

A supervisor is considered by the University to be experienced after successfully supervising two research degrees to completion and having undertaken appropriately related professional development.

The supervisory team must have combined experience of supervising to successful completion at least two candidates for research degrees, one of which must be at the level of the degree to be supervised. Individual supervisors will normally not supervise more than 8 research students at any time.

It is the responsibility of the School for nominating the supervisory team. One supervisor will be identified as the **first** supervisor with responsibility for supervising the candidate on a regular and frequent basis. The first supervisor must be a member of University staff.

The second supervisor(s) is/are appointed to add subject/methodological expertise or experience to the team. On occasion, a supervisor external to the University may be engaged where there is a specific case to do so.

In addition to the supervisory team, an adviser may be required for part of the thesis in order to bring further subject specialist or professional expertise.

A record is required of each formal supervisory session using the form available in Gloucestershire Skills Forge. It is the student's responsibility to initiate and maintain this process.

The supervision records will contribute to the annual academic monitoring process that will evidence that the candidate is actively engaged on the research programme and is maintaining regular and frequent contact with the supervisors.

For a description of the responsibilities of the student and supervisors, please see APPENDIX 3.

Change in supervisory arrangements

On occasion, there may be a need to make changes to a supervisory team. The student will be advised at the earliest opportunity of the required change.

Students wishing to discuss their supervisory team should contact their PGR Lead. In the event that the PGR Lead is acting as supervisor for that student, the student should seek advice from either the Research Degree Student Advocate or the Head of Postgraduate Research.

Research Methods and Skills Training for Students

Students who have **not** recently completed advanced research methods training at Master's level, will usually be required to follow a postgraduate course in research methods (with the exception of students enrolled on Professional Doctorates). This is normally two of the modules from the University's **Master of Research (MRes)** programme. It has been designed to provide a programme of training to ensure that students understand and can employ a *range* of research methods and skills within and beyond their subject area. It is expected that the student will undertake the modules during their first year of enrolment with the University. The programme also offers students opportunities to network with others to share common difficulties and concerns, and to gain peer support.

During the modules, students are required to engage with both generic and more specific methods and skills. Provision is made for specialisation in particular research methods directly relevant to the student's research project. This is mostly accomplished through assessment tasks (a written assignment) where the supervisor has a vital role in guiding students. This will not only involve discussions about assessment content itself but also feedback, as the supervisory team is responsible for the final assessment of the written assignments.

Further development opportunities in research skills, methods, techniques and processes are provided by way of School programmes (often in response to specific disciplinary and subject needs) and also by the Academic Development Unit in the form of the annual Research Student Workshops Programme.

Monitoring of training needs, supervision and academic performance

Each student must regularly complete a Training Needs Analysis (TNA). This process requires students and supervisors to review training and plan targets for the academic year and beyond. Reflection on TNA should contribute to supervisions throughout the year and forms part of the University's monitoring of academic performance.

Training Needs Analysis is carried out via Gloucestershire Skills Forge. The Research Administration Office will communicate key dates in relation to TNA.

*During the academic year 2016/17 we will be releasing some new resources to enable our students to undertake a more detailed Training Needs Analysis. Further information on this will be sent out in due course.

Research Degree project (RD1) Approval process

The School will assign responsibility to an academic adviser or supervisor to guide the student in developing a proposal for a research programme to enable this to lead to an application for project approval on form *RD1 Application for Approval of Research Degree project*.

Students are strongly advised to aim to have their project approved (RD1 approval) within 9 -12 months if studying full-time, or 12-18 months if studying part-time of enrolment, or as soon as possible after the satisfactory completion of any taught modules or equivalent specified mandatory training.

Students must work with their adviser or supervisor to submit their RD1. The PGR Lead for the School will be required to have oversight of the approval process.

Prior to submission for review, the student and supervisor must ensure that the proposed project operates within the guidance as defined in the Research Ethics: A Handbook of Principles & Procedures.

Project approval process

Once submitted to the there are three possible outcomes. The review process may:

- Approve the application;
- Require that the application be modified or further information provided;
- Reject the application.

Students should note that an RD1 application will not be reviewed more than 3 times (Ref: Regulation 3.14). In the event that an RD1 is rejected for the third time, a student may be guided to withdraw from the programme or register on a different award.

In considering applications for project approval, the reviewer will seek to satisfy themselves as far as possible on the following points:

a) That the project outline shows indication of the student's ability to produce a sustained piece of work at the level of the programme that they are enrolled upon in accordance with Academic Regulations for Research Degrees Provision, section 1. Principles;

b) That the project is regarded as worthwhile and will make the required contribution at the level of the research degree undertaken.

c) A suitable programme of research study can be defined and properly supervised and resourced, or the previously published materials intended to

be submitted as part of the submission show prima facie evidence of suitability;

d) The appropriate mode of study, the required research methods training and the period of study have been agreed;

e) The supervisory team are engaged in ongoing professional development;

f) Appropriate external advice has been taken, if confirmation of the prospective supervisor's opinion of the quality of the proposal cannot be provided by University staff;

g) The students and supervisors are aware of and have agreed to operate by the ethical principles and guidelines of the University;

h) If appropriate, any arrangements with any collaborating establishment are clearly defined and a letter of confirmation from the collaborating establishment is attached to the application.

The student and the supervisor will be informed of the decision of the review process and provided with full details of any conditions of approval or further work to be undertaken.

Once informed of RD1 approval formally, **it is the responsibility of students and supervisors to be aware of deadline for thesis submission.**

Annual Review Process

The Research Administration Office is responsible for coordinating academic monitoring and will send out the deadline for completing the Joint Annual Progress Report (JAPR) to students and supervisor towards the end of each academic year. The JAPR is carried out via Gloucestershire Skills Forge. The student and supervisory team should fill out the report jointly. The purpose of this activity is to ensure that the student is making suitable progress towards your recorded submission deadline. It is an opportunity to review, reflect and plan for the forthcoming year.

Completion of the Joint Annual Progress Report (JAPR) is **mandatory** and failure to submit a report may result in the student being required to attend a formal interview. An outcome of the formal interview may be a recommendation to require a student to withdraw.

As part of the JAPR process, conditions may be applied to a student's progress. Conditions may be set by supervisors, Schools or as part of the formal interview process.

Changes in the programme

Students studying under a Tier 4 visa must ensure that any changes to their programme are notified to the Immigration and Compliance team for report to the Home Office.

Registration periods

The candidate may register on a full-time or a part-time basis. Full-time students are expected to devote on average 35-40 hours per week to their research and part-time students on average 15-20 hours per week.

The period of registration may be shortened to a minimum of 12 months when the submission consists of previously published material accompanied by a critical reflection and commentary on the submitted publications. This should usually be agreed as part of the RD1 *Approval of Research Degree Project* process.

For a full description of the registration periods for research degrees, please refer to the *Academic Regulations for Research Degree Provision*.

Change of mode of study

Application for a change of mode of study from full-time to part-time or vice versa should be made on form **RD6/7** *Application to Change Candidature* by the student in consultation with the supervisor, and submitted to School PGR Lead who will approve all changes of mode of study. An application for change of mode of study may be refused by the PGR Lead. In such cases, the student must be provided with feedback giving explanation for the decision.

Extension of registration

Exceptionally, an application may be made for an extension of registration. An extension is sought in cases where the student is actively engaged upon the research and clearly intends to produce a thesis, but is likely to be unable to submit within the maximum period of registration. The supervisor should consult with the student during the final 6 months of the registration period to ascertain whether an application for extension may be required. The extension should normally be for a specified period of time, e.g. six months. The student may be asked either by the supervisor, or School staff to provide evidence as to why such an extension is required.

Application for an extension of registration should be made by the student on form **RD3** submitted to the Research Administration Office **no later than 8 weeks** before the normal maximum registration period is due to end. The applications must be supported by the first supervisor and approved by the School PGR Lead.

During the period of extension, the student continues to pay fees and is entitled to all the facilities normally available to a registered student.

Students studying on a Tier 4 visa **must** ensure that they have sought the advice of the International Student Adviser and/or the Immigration and Compliance team prior to applying for extension to their registration.

Changes in the programme of research (including change in degree sought)

Application for a substantive change in the programme of research should be made on form **RD6/7** *Application to Change Candidature* by the student and submitted to the School PGR Lead for approval. The student must discuss any proposed change(s) in the programme of research with their supervisor in order to establish whether an application is actually warranted. By approving the application, the School PGR Lead will satisfy themselves that the student will be able to commit sufficient time to the project. Students may not apply for an upgrade of their programme via the RD6/7 form, the RD2 form should be used.

Upgrade of registration

A candidate who wishes to upgrade their research degree cannot apply to upgrade before all mandatory research methods modules (or agreed equivalent) have been passed. Students registered for the MRes are not permitted to upgrade to a higher level degree (they must complete their MRes and then apply to study for a PhD).

To apply for an upgrade to a higher level degree students should have been engaged in their research for a sufficient period of time to provide evidence of development.

> For MA/MSc by Research students wishing to upgrade this is normally a period of about **10** months of full-time study or **15** months of part-time study from date of registration.

> For MPhil students wishing to upgrade to PhD this is normally a period of about **10-14** months of full-time study or **15-21** months of part-time study from date of registration, provided sufficient evidence of development to permit application for upgrade to higher level of degree is produced.

A candidate who wishes to apply to upgrade should notify her/his supervisor. If the supervisor and School PGR Lead supports the application for upgrade, an interview will be held at which the candidate is required to satisfy the upgrade panel (chaired by an experienced research supervisor who is not a member of the supervisory team) as to the progress made and the suitability of proposals for the upgraded stage of the work.

As part of the application, the candidate must prepare a full upgrade report for consideration by the upgrade panel, and should give a detailed overview of the work undertaken so far and how this will form the basis for the intended new award. The report should be word-processed and **3,000 – 6,000** words long. The candidate may, with the permission of the supervisor and Chair of panel, also submit other output for assessment, for example in the case of research degrees which combine a written thesis and practical work. The candidate is required to produce a statement (which should not exceed 1,000 words) as part of the interview report. The content of this section will form part of the interview discussion.

An upgrade panel should comprise the supervisors, a Chair of panel appointed by the School PGR Lead and an independent member of appropriate standing and expertise with knowledge of the general subject area. Where no internal member of staff has appropriate subject expertise, an external person should be appointed to the panel. The independent panel member cannot be used as an examiner for the student's thesis if used in the upgrade process.

The panel will satisfy itself that the candidate has made sufficient progress and that the proposed programme of research provides a suitable basis for work at MPhil or PhD level, which the candidate is capable of pursuing to completion.

The student will be informed of the decision of the panel.

Temporary De-registration

Application for temporary de-registration should be made by the student on form **RD4** as soon as it is clear that s/he is unable, for good cause, to continue to be actively engaged upon the research for a significant period, but does intend to resume the research programme at the end of the period of de-registration. The application must be for a period of deregistration of not less than three months and not more than twelve months. Longer periods of de-registration may put the currency of the research in jeopardy and will require careful discussion with supervisors and the approval of the School PGR Lead. If granted a clear plan to deal with the currency of research must form part of a return to study interview.

Any event or consequence of an event that prevents the students from undertaking any work upon the thesis for a significant period of time may be considered as grounds for de-registration, including but not limited to ill health. The student should ensure that they have read the guidance on student de-registration available here.

Temporary de-registration is a formal status and the student is consequently not entitled to use any University facilities, including libraries and research centres, nor to receive supervision during the period of de-registration. Students who have been awarded a University Studentship must ensure that a period of deregistration is permitted under the terms of their contract before applying. If the student is in receipt of a University Studentship or Department/Institute Bursary, payments will be suspended. Should a Studentship or Bursary-funded student seek temporary de-registration which includes a back-dated period of time, then s/he will be required to repay the appropriate portion of the Studentship or Bursary.

Students studying on a Tier 4 visa must consult with the International Student Adviser before making an application for de-registration as once granted it might temporarily affect their right to remain in the UK. De-registration from the programme of study will result in the withdrawal of the Tier 4 visa and requirement for the student to leave the UK.

When the student is able to resume work on his/her research, s/he **must** immediately inform the Research Administration Office and arrange a return to study review with their supervisors.

The expected end date will be recalculated to take in to account any period of de-registration.

Withdrawal of registration

A student may elect to withdraw from their programme of study. Prior to withdrawing, the student should ensure that they have read the published guidance here. All students withdrawing from their programme will be required to complete the Student Declaration. **Students studying on a Tier 4 visa** must consult with the International Student Adviser and Compliance team prior to indicating their intention to withdraw. Withdrawal from the programme of study will result in the withdrawal of the Tier 4 visa and requirement for the student to leave the UK.

Students wishing to withdraw should contact the Research Administration Office advising their intentions to withdraw and the date from which the withdrawal should take effect. Students should also inform their supervisors.

Additionally, withdrawal of registration is a possible outcome of the Annual review of progress   if evidence is presented that the candidate is no longer active on the

project and will not complete the work to the expected end date. If, in addition to the progress review process, the supervisor is aware that the student is no longer active on the project and will not complete the work then it is the supervisor who is responsible for initiating the procedure for notification of withdrawal as soon as possible. The supervisor should first advise the student of this course of action and discuss the case with the School PGR Lead.

Preparing for Submission

Thesis format

For a full description of thesis presentation, candidates should consult the *Academic Regulations for Research Degree Provision*, section 13.

Thesis submission

The candidate should **submit a printed and bound copy of the thesis for each examiner. These copies should be submitted to the Research Administration Office** on or before the last day of the maximum period of registration. The Research Administration Office will inform the candidate if an/the examiners require a digital copy of the thesis for the examination. The **digital copy** must match the printed copies exactly. The **RD15** *Candidature Form and Author's Declaration* and should also be submitted along with the copies of thesis.

Application for an embargo or moratorium on a thesis

Where a candidate wishes the thesis to remain confidential for a period of time after completion of the work, application for approval is normally made at the time of final submission. The period approved should normally not exceed two years from the date of the viva voce examination.

An **embargo** withholds your electronic thesis from inclusion in EThOS and the Research Repository, and no consultation, loan or photocopying of the printed copy will be permitted during the period granted. Permission to apply an embargo to a research degree thesis can only be granted by the Head of Postgraduate Research in exceptional circumstances.

A **moratorium** includes your printed thesis in the University library for consultation, but loan or photocopying of it is not permitted, and the electronic thesis is withheld from inclusion in EThOS and the Research Repository for the period granted.

Once the embargo or moratorium period has expired, the thesis will be included in the Research Repository and EThOS, and made available for photocopying.

Examination arrangements

At least three months prior to the likely submission date, the first supervisor should submit to the Research Administration Office form **RD8** *Application For Approval Of*

Examination Arrangements proposing examination arrangements, including full details of the proposed examiners, for consideration by URDC.

The candidate should normally be given at least 14 days' notice of the date of the viva. The date of the viva examination is not normally confirmed until the preliminary reports have been approved.

Preliminary report

The first stage of the examination is the examiners' independent preliminary assessment of the thesis. The examiners should each compile a preliminary report on the thesis and return to the Academic Service administration contact.

In the case of the MA/MSc by Research and the MRes, the preliminary report should be returned at least **14 days before the proposed viva voce** examination. For MPhils, PhDs and professional doctorates this should be at least **7 days before the proposed viva voce** examination.

The examiners may recommend that the viva voce examination be postponed to enable the candidate to undertake further work and to represent the thesis. In this latter case, the examiners should specify the grounds for their recommendation and should forward a separate sheet containing guidance for the candidate.

In the event of a postponement to the viva voce, students will be notified at the earliest opportunity.

Examination procedure

For MA/MSc by Research and MRes award, the viva may be dispensed with if the submission is thought by both examiners in the preliminary report to be of a sufficiently good standard to warrant this.

If the viva is to take place, the examiners should bring with them to the viva voce copies of their own preliminary report for discussion and to generate an agenda for the viva.

Viva voce examination

The viva voce examination should normally be held in the University, but exceptionally may be held elsewhere, in which case the application for examination arrangements must specify the location. With the permission of the candidate, the candidate's supervisor(s) may be present at the viva voce examination in a non-speaking capacity. Others may, with the permission of the candidate and agreement of the examiners, be present at the viva voce in a non-speaking capacity. All the examiners should attend the viva voce examination unless prior approval has been requested in the RD8 for a specified external examiner/s to undertake the examination remotely, by Skype, for example.

The purpose of the viva voce examination is to assess the candidate, and the strengths and weaknesses of the thesis. Examiners should attempt to make the candidate feel at ease throughout the examination.

Examiners' report

Following the examination, the examiners will submit a report to the University Research Degrees Committee (URDC), where their recommendation will be considered and ratified.

The report should recommend a specific outcome and be sufficiently detailed to enable URDC to reach a well-founded decision and should explicitly address the headings that are set out on the examination report form.

Notification of outcome

The Research Administration Office will inform the candidate, the supervisor and the School PGR Lead of the decision of URDC. Only URDC has the power to approve the

award. A letter will be sent by the Research Administration Office to any candidate required to make corrections or amendments to the thesis before the award of the degree can be confirmed.

The student must submit both a digital and a hard bound copy of their final thesis to the Research Administration Office.

Monitoring and Enhancement of the research environment

A key component in the monitoring and enhancement of the research environment is the articulation of the student perspective through the research student representatives who are members of URDC.

Student Representatives will be elected from the student body and will be required to attend URDC. The Student Representative will be asked to collect current student issues relating to academic matters for pro-active discussion at URDC.

Other events may be organised by the student representatives. The Research Administration Office will facilitate booking of rooms and notifying the postgraduate researcher community of events of interest.

Exit questionnaires are provided for all students on completion of their research programme.

Monitoring of student welfare: Research Student Advocate

The Advocate for Research Degree Students provides an advisory contact independent of the formal monitoring systems. S/he is available to discuss on an individual or group basis issues that a student feels to be particularly sensitive or inappropriate for discussion through the structured evaluation system. The Advocate submits an annual report to URDC.

Procedure for complaints and appeals

The following routes for raising complaints or problematic issues are open to all research students:

a) The annual progress monitoring exercise (including JAPR and Progression reviews) coordinated by the Research Administration Office;

b) Any evaluation questionnaires circulated at the annual research student social and feedback event;

c) Confidential discussion or correspondence with the Advocate for research degree Students;

d) Via the Chair of the viva voce examination, on the examination report form.

Complaints relating to supervisory arrangements or practice should first be raised with the School PGR Lead, unless s/he is a member of the supervisory team, in which case students should contact either the Chair of URDC or the Advocate for Research Degree Students who will, if appropriate, bring the matter to the attention of URDC.

Issues relating to resources, for example studio space, should, after discussion with the supervisor, be raised with the appropriate budget-holder, normally the Head of School or Institute, or with the School PGR Lead.

If a complaint cannot be resolved through the above channels then it can be pursued under the University Student Complaints Procedure (see here for details of the University's Student Complaints procedure).

Students have the right to appeal against a decision of a Board of Examiners – which for Research Degrees Provision is the URDC. For a full description of the Appeals procedure, please refer to the published guidance, which can be found here.

Research Studentships

University-funded full-time research studentships are sometimes available for full-time study for PhD by thesis or MA/MSc by Research and are offered on the following basis. Some School or Institute funded bursaries may vary in terms of amount and inclusion of teaching/ demonstrating hours. Any variance from the terms and conditions given below will be clearly set out in the letter of offer. For a full description to the procedure for appointment and terms and conditions, please see APPENDIX 4.

Research Studentships

General Information

Holiday and Leave

With the exception of students who hold a studentship where an annual leave allocation is defined, research students are not required to log their leave arrangements with their supervisor.

Students who are studying under a Tier 4 visa **must** ensure that they are fully aware of the requirements to maintain contact with their supervisor/adviser.

Work outside the UK

An application may be approved from a person proposing to work largely outside the UK. If any part of the research project is undertaken outside the University, including outside the UK, the University will require:

a) Satisfactory evidence of the adequacy of the facilities and support available for the research at the place of work or study;
b) That the supervisory arrangements enable frequent and substantial contact between the first or second supervisor and the candidate;
c) That there is sufficiently frequent personal contact between the student and the first supervisor; in order to assure the supervisor of the candidate's continuing progress;
d) Elements that may require attendance may include, but are not limited to: interview where required, research methods training, upgrade panel, annual progress board, and viva. These will be outlined to students during the admissions process;

Students who are intending to work outside of the UK at any point in their programme of study may be required to provide information to the University Insurance Manager.

Students who are studying under a Tier 4 visa **must** ensure that they are fully aware of regulations pertaining to their location of study.

Group projects

An applicant whose work forms part of a larger group project should clearly state the individual contribution and its relationship to the group project. Each individually

registered project must in itself be distinguishable for the purposes of assessment and be appropriate for the award being sought.

Creative work

A candidate may undertake a programme of research in which his or her own creative work forms, as point of origin or reference, a significant part of the intellectual enquiry. See the *Academic Regulations for Research Degree Provision* for full details.

Published work

A candidate may undertake preparation of a thesis for which his/her previously published work forms a point of origin or reference for a significant part of the intellectual enquiry.

Funded research

Where a project is part of a piece of funded research, the University will establish to its satisfaction that the terms on which the research is funded do not detract from the fulfilment of the objectives and requirements of the applicant's research degree.

APPENDIX 1: LIST OF THE UNIVERSITY'S FORMS RELATING TO RESEARCH DEGREES

RD Forms

Form	Title	Reporting Structure
RD1	Approval of Research Degree project	School based review process
RD2	Transfer report for upgrade from degree of Master (MA/MSc/MPhil) to degree of Doctor of Philosophy	School PGR Lead
RD3	Application for extension of period of registration	Request lodged with School
RD4	Application for temporary de-registration	Request lodged with Research Administration Office
RD5	Application for change in approved arrangements for supervision	Changes in supervisory team recorded by School
RD6/7	Application for to change candidature	Changes agreed at School level.
RD8	Application for approval of examination arrangements	School PGR Lead
RD9	Examiner's preliminary report and recommendation on a thesis submitted for MA/MSc by Research/ MRes	URDC
RD10	Examiner's preliminary report and recommendation on a thesis submitted for MPhil	URDC
RD11	Examiners' preliminary report and recommendation on a thesis submitted for Doctorate	URDC
RD12A	Examiners' report on a candidate for the degree of MA/MSc by Research / MRes	URDC
RD12B	Examiners' report on a candidate for the degree of MA/MSc by Research / MRes (without viva)	URDC
RD13	Examiners' report on a candidate for the degree of MPhil	URDC
RD14	Examiners' report on a candidate for the degree of Doctorate	URDC
RD15	Research degrees candidature form	Not considered at committee. Form lodged with Research Administration Office

Most forms are available in electronic form from the Research Administration Office via email or can be downloaded from the Research Degree pages on the University website (direct link: here)

APPENDIX 2: STUDENT ENTITLEMENTS

Student Charter Promises Relating to Teaching, Learning and Research for Postgraduate Research Students

1. Teaching, Learning & Research

1.1. You will have access to experienced supervisors.

1.2. You can expect your supervisors to be allocated hours in their workload for formal supervision time.

1.3. You will be allocated a supervisor as soon as you start your degree (PhD, MPhil, MA/MSc by Research, MRes) or, for Professional Doctorates (DBA, DMC, DEng), once you complete the taught elements of your programme.

2. Research Degree Lead

2.1. There will be a Postgraduate Research Lead responsible for the overall coordination of your research degree in your School.

3. Advice and Guidance

3.1. You will have access to a range of services within the University where you can seek information, advice and guidance related to your student life and your course.

3.2. Each School has Academic Services administrator(s) to support Postgraduate Research Students.

3.3. In addition to the Academic Services Administrator, students can seek advice and guidance from the Research Administration Office (RAO), the Academic Development Unit (ADU), the Student Helpzone and the Students' Union.

4. Assessment

4.1. For the **taught** component of your research degree programme (if applicable), you will receive:

4.1.1. Information on assessment tasks including dates for both the submission and the return of work being clearly communicated within all assessment briefs (this will normally be issued at the beginning of a module).

4.1.2. Guidance on assessment regulations and procedures.

4.1.3. You will receive feedback on every piece of work you are formally required to submit within 28 University days (assuming that work is submitted on time).

4.2. For the **research** component of your programme, you will receive:

4.2.1. Advice and guidance on the thesis examination procedures. We offer a workshop on the final stages, i.e. submitting your thesis, preparing for your Viva Voce, and the next stages.

4.2.2. Guidance on assessment regulations and procedures, in accordance with current University Research Degree Regulations.

5. Engagement in Quality Assurance and Enhancement

You will have the opportunity to:

5.1. Evaluate your programme and any modules that you might be required to take.

5.2. Engage with the student representative system.

5.3. Be actively involved in assuring the quality of your course and helping identify improvements for the future.

6. Employability

You will have the opportunity to develop skills that employers seek in 'Early Career Researchers' through being enabled to:

6.1. Participate in workshops, seminars and conferences.

6.2. Participate in the annual University Summer School and Postgraduate Research conferences.

6.3. Access a wide range of Research Degree Student Workshops to enhance your research skills and employability.

6.4. Access the University's Professional Development Programme.

6.5. Receive up to date and supportive information, advice and guidance from the Careers Service.

6.6. Access University support systems to search for development opportunities, to map your professional development against the Researcher Development Framework (RDF) and to generate a training record.

These commitments are what the University intends to deliver for each postgraduate research student. If we cannot fulfil these commitments due to exceptional circumstances, we will ensure that we inform you and give you reasons why.

APPENDIX 3: RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE STUDENT, FIRST SUPERVISOR AND SECOND SUPERVISOR

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE STUDENT

a) To ensure that s/he completes administrative enrolment with the University at the start of each academic year and pays the appropriate fee for postgraduate research study;

b) To maintain their University student email account at all times and to check it regularly;

c) To ensure that his/her standard of English is satisfactorily maintained or developed for the purposes of undertaking a research degree;

d) To keep in contact on a regular basis with his/her supervisors during the period of study, to arrange supervisions and to agree with the first supervisor a programme of contact points during each term;

e) To maintain the progress of the work in accordance with the stages agreed with supervisors, including in particular the presentation of written work as required, in sufficient time to allow for comments and discussion before progression to the next stage;

f) To initiate and maintain the supervisory record process;

g) To discuss with his/her supervisors the kind of guidance and evaluation considered to be most helpful;

h) To complete the programme of Research Methods training (unless formal exemption has been given by the School PGR Lead), to ensure that appropriate use is made of any programme of related studies undertaken, and to engage in continuing research methods training and researcher development;

i) To raise any problems or difficulties concerning the progress of the research with the supervisor or the School PGR Lead, as soon as such problem or difficulties are manifest;

j) To ensure that s/he understands and fully complies with the University's principles and procedures relating to research ethics, available here;

k) To provide regular progress reports as requested by the Research Administration Office by the required deadline, to attend Progress Board as required, and to signal via the reports any issues of concern;

l) To submit drafts of the thesis to supervisors in sufficient time for them to read and comment upon the document;

m) To decide, with appropriate guidance from the first supervisor, when to submit the thesis and to notify the supervisor of this;

n) Unless otherwise stated in the above procedures, to complete and submit all research degree forms for project approval and any changes of registration (see appendix 2 for a list of the forms);

o) To ensure that s/he reads thoroughly, and is familiar with, the appropriate regulations and procedures as given in the *Research Degrees Student Handbook*, *Academic Regulations for Research Degree Provision*, the *Handbook of Research Ethics Principles and Procedures*, *The Student and Supervisor's Handbook and Guide to Good Practice*, and any other handbook relating to research study;

p) Where relevant adhere to the regulations attached to the Tier 4 student visa.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FIRST SUPERVISOR

a) To give guidance of the nature of research and standard expected, the planning of the research programme, literature and sources;

b) In relation to the Research Methods modules (MR401, MR402, MR403 and MR404) to promote the student's attendance at sessions, to integrate the content of modules into the student's research degree process, to mark agreed assignments;

c) To regularly review training needs and agree a continuing programme of research training and development;

d) To be accessible to the student at the agreed and other reasonable times and to try and ensure as far as practicable that supervisory sessions are uninterrupted;

e) To give detailed advice on the necessary completion dates of successive stages of the work in order to encourage the submission of the thesis within the agreed registration period;

f) At an early stage in the supervisory relationship to discuss explicitly with the student any expectations concerning possible co-authorship of publications arising from the student's work and to negotiate an agreement on such co-authorship;

g) To request written work as appropriate and to return such work with constructive criticism and in reasonable time;

h) To arrange as appropriate for the student to talk about his/her work to staff or at research student seminars and if necessary to have practice in viva voce examinations;

i) To ensure that the student is made aware of inadequacy of progress or of standards of work below those generally expected, including through the formal process available;

j) To undertake those administrative tasks appropriate to the role of the supervisor, including the provision of regular progress reports on the student's work, as requested by the Research Administration Office, and participation in any formal processes required to monitor student progress (including those attached to the monitoring of students studying under a Tier 4 visa). These should include a recommendation about whether or not the student should be allowed to continue and whether his/her registration status should be changed;

k) To propose the names of examiners for the thesis (RD8);

l) To alert the Research Administration Office if at any time s/he considers that the student is unlikely to achieve the degree for which s/he registered;

m) To read and give constructive comments and advice on the content and presentation of drafts of any thesis well before the end of the registration period;

n) To ensure that s/he reads thoroughly, and is familiar with, the appropriate regulations, codes of practice and handbooks relating to research study;

o) To have a clear understanding of the usage of the Change of Study Location and Leave of Absence forms in connection to Tier 4 student monitoring.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SECOND SUPERVISOR

In addition to the responsibilities set out above and the *Academic Regulations for Research Degree Provision*, it is the responsibility of the second supervisor:

a) To be in contact with sufficient frequency to form an opinion on the student's progress, or lack of progress, it being the student's responsibility to initiate such contact;

b) In consultation with the first supervisor to provide subject specialist advice and/or general guidance to the student concerning the nature of research and the standard expected;

c) To provide the required annual progress report on the student's work, including any recommendations concerning the registration, as requested by the Research Administration Office.

Note

External second supervisors will be paid an annual fee each autumn for each full year of supervision, upon receipt of evidence of their participation in progression monitoring activities and a fully completed fee claim form. Claim forms are sent out annually by the Research Administration Office. The current rate of payment is available from the Research Administration Office (contact address at the front of this handbook).

APPENDIX 4: RESEARCH STUDENTSHIPS AND DEPARTMENTAL/INSTITUTE BURSARIES: PROCEDURE FOR APPOINTMENT AND TERMS AND CONDITIONS

I. Offer of studentship or bursary

An offer of a studentship or bursary will be confirmed to the student in writing by Admissions. Form ORS must be submitted to the Research Administration Office (a minimum of two weeks before the course start date) by the Head of School or Institute in order to initiate the enrolment procedure and/or the financial arrangements.

II. Enrolment and registration

a) Following receipt of form ORS, the Research Administration Office will inform Fees Administration.

b) Students should be encouraged to submit form RD1 (Application for approval of Research Degree project) as soon as their research proposal is ready. This is particularly important for students in receipt for a bursary for a one year full-time MA/MSc by Research.

III. Length and amount of award

Normal research study fees will be met by the University, for the minimum period of the intended award and are subject to a successful JAPR before annual renewal. The studentship or bursary is payable, tax-free, in advance in monthly instalments.

IV. Start date

The start date will be specified in the letter of offer but will normally be either 1st October or 1st February.

V. Absence

If a student is absent for a continuous period of 2 weeks or more (including weekends) due to illness or other valid reason, s/he must inform the supervisor and the Research Administration Office within 14 days of the first day of absence. During a period covered by a medical certificate or other appropriate documentary evidence, the award will be paid at the full rate for the first 4 weeks and at half rate for the next 4 weeks, within any 12-month period from the first day of absence. The amount of studentship/bursary paid at the next instalment will be calculated to take into account any periods of absence. After 8 weeks absence, the award will normally be held in suspension. The

supervisor must inform the Research Administration Office immediately of any unauthorised absence.

If the student is studying under a Tier 4 visa they must follow the published Leave of Absence procedures.

VI.   Holidays

Students in receipt of studentships or bursaries are allowed up to 8 weeks holidays (including public holidays) in 12 months (pro rata for parts of a year), to be taken subject to agreement by the Head of School or Institute. No more than 4 weeks holidays may be taken at the end of the period of research studentship or bursary.

VII.   Temporary De-registration

Although it is expected that studentships and bursaries will be held on a continuous basis, URDC may be prepared to consider de-registration if a strong case can be made. If the student wishes formally to de-register temporarily, the usual procedure should be followed.

a)   Studentships: De-registration periods (unless in exceptional circumstances) cannot be backdated and should be planned for carefully. In cases of financial hardship, the University may agree to deduct from future studentship payments the amount already paid to the student in advance, rather than requiring the student to repay the sum immediately.

b)   School/Institute Bursaries
Procedures for the suspension of school bursaries are the same as those relating to University studentships with the exception that the Head of School or Institute must sign the RD4 form to support temporary de-registration. The Bursary will be suspended for the period of de-registration

c)   Tier 4 student requirements
Students studying on a Tier 4 visa must consult with the International Student Adviser before making an application for de-registration as once granted it might temporarily affect their right to remain in the UK. De-registration from the programme of study will result in the withdrawal of the Tier 4 visa and requirement for the student to leave the UK

VIII.   Termination of award

a)   A student whose progress is unsatisfactory may have his/her award terminated. The supervisor must use the Joint Annual Progress Report to indicate that the student's progress is considered to be unsatisfactory. Unsatisfactory progress will be reviewed at the formal interview and may

result in both the termination of the award and withdrawal from the University. If a student is required to withdraw, or if the studentship or bursary is terminated part way through a term, the student may be required to repay the appropriate proportion of the studentship or bursary for that term.

b) The supervisor must inform the Research Administration Office immediately if a student decides to withdraw or is required to withdraw. Students who withdraw from their programme of research, accept full-time employment, or change their mode of study part way through a term may be required to repay the appropriate proportion of the studentship or bursary for that term.

c) **Students studying on a Tier 4 visa** must consult with the International Student Adviser and Compliance team prior to indicating their intention to withdraw. Withdrawal from the programme of study will result in the withdrawal of the Tier 4 visa and requirement for the student to leave the UK

IX. Additional sponsorship

No student in receipt of a full-time University studentship or bursary, who is subsequently successful in obtaining funding from another source or sources, whether external or from within the University, should be in a position where the total of his/her awards is in excess of the current studentship rate of the appropriate Research Council. S/he must notify the Research Administration Office immediately, and the level of any University/ School /Institute/ bursary may be reduced or terminated in such circumstances.